

# The Tacoma Ledger

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# News

## Amidst high theft rates, Kia and Hyundai owners can now receive free steering wheel locks



*IMAGE: Some student drivers now have access to free theft deterrent devices, courtesy of The Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force and local Kia and Hyundai dealerships.*

*Photo by Alexa Christie*

**Key start Kia and Hyundai vehicles made between the years 2011 and 2021 can qualify for the program.**

By Katie Scott

The Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force (PSATTF) has partnered with local dealerships to provide free steering wheel locks to owners of some Kia and Hyundai vehicles.

Local law enforcement agencies are distributing the steering wheel locks to owners of key start vehicles, made between the years 2011-2021. Owners who present their registration and key to a participating law enforcement office are eligible to receive the free steering wheel lock device.

“It is important to note that the Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force, in partnership with Kia and Hyundai, is providing these devices to aid in deterring vehicle theft. The locks do not guarantee protection from theft,” said the Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force in a recent news release.

This coordinated effort is in response to a social media trend going viral on the app TikTok where individuals, identifying themselves as “Kia Boys”, demonstrate how to steal key start Kia or Hyundai vehicles in under thirty seconds. In the short social media videos, individuals show how to bypass the engine immobilizers by taking off the steering column covers and inserting a USB-A drive into the key ignition. This enables the car to start without a key, allowing the individual to drive off with the vehicle.

Isabella Pettis-Infante, a UWT Senior who is majoring in Writing Studies, knows this trend all too well. On February 16, after parking her 2013 Hyundai Sonata at the Tacoma Armory to attend a meeting on campus, Pettis-Infante returned to where she parked her vehicle, only to realize it had been stolen.

“At first, I thought (my car) had been towed, but then someone who was with me said that something else was probably more likely. Then it dawned on me that it had been stolen,” Pettis-Infante recalled, “...after a few days, I was angry because I kept remembering things that I had in my car. It was really inconvenient and disconcerting coming out and realizing it was completely gone. I had only had this car for about a year.”

Pettis-Infante said, after reporting the vehicle as stolen, it was recovered just a few weeks later. Pettis-Infante says her gym bag, and other valuables were taken from the vehicle. The car is currently in the repair shop, due to damage to the steering column, key and dash..

Pettis-Infante said “There was no broken glass even though I locked the doors, so I assume there is some kind of tool they can use to unlock the door... I would suggest that if someone has a Hyundai or Kia, they take extra precautions. The police weren't much help so don't expect that reporting the crime will do much.”

The Tacoma Police department declined to participate in the free device program.

Sergeant Jeff Carroll, with the Lakewood Police Department and the Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force (PSATTF), stated there are many reasons individuals and groups are taking Kia and Hyundai vehicles, overall, there has been an extensive increase in car thefts for these models in Pierce County over the past year and a half.

“Certain model Kias and Hyundais experienced about a 900% increase in thefts from November 2021-January 2022 (and) November 2022-January 2023... We reached out to Kia and Hyundai to see if they would provide steering wheel locks free of charge to owners of the affected models. They agreed and have so far provided nearly 1500 devices to PSATT. PSATT has distributed them to the listed agencies so that the public has many options on where to get one. We stress that the devices are a deterrence and do not guarantee theft prevention,” Carroll said.

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department, South Hill Precinct, along with many Pierce County and South King County police departments, are participating in the giveaway program.

A list of participating departments can be found below. If your local police or sheriff's department is not listed, you can visit any participating one to collect your device.

“There is no residency requirement, so students can go to any of the participating agencies to pick up a lock,” said Heather LaLiberte, with the Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force.

In addition to the steering wheel locks, the Kia and Hyundai companies have announced plans to release theft deterrent software upgrades for qualifying vehicles. These security updates will become available in phases, rolling out over the next six months. Carroll recommends contacting your local Kia or Hyundai dealer to get the most up-to-date information on the software download and accompanying window theft-deterrent device stickers, as supplies last.

Carroll said “In addition to those (Sheriff and Police departments) listed, PSATT is also supplying Fircrest PD, Buckley PD, Enumclaw PD, Steilacoom PD, and Sumner PD with steering wheel locks to distribute. Also, Kent PD, Renton PD and Tukwila PD are running their own programs to distribute these devices.”

Participating police and sheriff’s departments who are offering the free steering wheel devices are:

**Pierce County Sheriff’s Department**

South Hill Precinct  
271 John Bananola Way E, South Hill

**Lakewood Police Department**

9401 Lakewood Dr SW

**Puyallup Police Department**

311 W Pioneer

**Edgewood Police Department**

2224 104th Ave E

**Eatonville Police Department**

201 Center St W

**University Place Police Department**

3612 Drexler Dr W

**Bonney Lake Police Department**

18421 Veterans Memorial Dr E

**Fife Police Department**

3737 Pacific Hwy E

**Federal Way Police Department**

33325 8th Ave S

**Auburn Police Department**

340 E Main St

**Des Moines Police Department**

21900 11th Ave S

**SeaTac Police Department**

4800 S 188th St

## Tacoma Art Museum opens new Patha exhibition



*IMAGE: Patha painting her name in Camille in Color, a new short film streaming now at her new exhibition, Passion Pleasure Power at Tacoma Art Museum.*

*Photo by Tacoma Art Museum*

**Seattle-based visual artist Camille Patha opens a new exhibition, Passion Pleasure Power, of more than fifty new pieces created over the last three years, now open at Tacoma Art Museum.**

By Steph Caronna

Camille Patha is through with labels. “I’m not a woman artist, I’m an artist,” she said at the preview for her new exhibition, Passion Pleasure Power.

The Seattle-based visual artist’s latest showing, is now open at Tacoma Art Museum. It features over 50 paintings and mixed media pieces by Patha.

Woman artist, Northwest artist, abstract artist—for Patha, none of these labels accurately express the depth and purpose of her work.

“What do you mean, ‘abstract’? It’s not abstract, it’s real. It’s very specific, it’s very articulate. It’s not abstract at anything,” Patha said about her work.

Emotions in a Patha piece are usually conveyed not through easily categorized subjects, but intense bursts of color. Her latest collection of work is no exception: the gallery is filled with vivid hues dancing across black backdrops in these pieces created by Patha over the last three years.

“Color has a voice, and it’s not an audible voice. There’s no words but it talks to you, and it leads me,” Patha explains in a short film titled “Camille in Color.”

The new short film, directed and edited by Seattle-based filmmaker David Wild, premiered at the exhibition’s opening event on March 3rd. The film is a playful glimpse into Patha’s mindset and approach to her art. It is streaming within the gallery throughout the run of the exhibition.

The centerpiece of the show is “Cascade,” a mixed media piece made up of glittering gold fabric draped on black pentagonal boards, accented with red along the edges. It towers above the rest of the exhibition at twenty-eight feet tall. Other pieces include the mixed media “Moon Struck,” a series of colorful pastels on black paper called Night Thinking and a painting titled “Scheherazade” inspired by the musical composition of the same name.

Patha has always been acutely aware of the glass ceiling women face in the art world. When she first started as a young painter, she signed her work with only her initials.

“I won just about every show I entered with C.D. Patha,” Patha said, “But after I graduated from graduate school...I was entering one time and they said, ‘You’re C.D. Patha? I thought you were a man. You paint just like a man.’ I was shocked. I said, ‘I paint like a painter.’...When it came out, I didn’t win as many shows.”

Rather than letting this discourage her, she channeled her experiences with gender discrimination and power imbalance into a visual art career that has spanned over half a century. She continues to find inspiration through constant discovery, such as her newfound love for hard rock.

“There’s always something out there that you can hunt and find, and go ‘Oh wow, this is interesting!’ And don’t stop,” said Patha.

Her attitude is defined by living in the moment and an unending passion for the sensual. “It is my life by breathing in and out right now,” Patha says in Camille in Color. “That’s what it is. It’s all about that. That’s all there is. That’s all there is: now.”

“Get coffee. Coffee helps. It’s a drug that’s legal,” Patha quipped when asked what advice she would give to people who want to create art but experience self-doubt. “Go on with life. Get on it. Go forward. Don’t worry about yourself. You worry about yourself, you cut yourself off at the knees.”

“Don’t let anybody steal your mojo,” she added later.

Camille Patha: Passion Pleasure Power will be on view at Tacoma Art Museum until September 3, 2023. There will also be monthly meet and greet events with the artist in the gallery, and additional events are to be announced. For more information, visit [tacomaartmuseum.org](http://tacomaartmuseum.org).

The museum hosts various programs to reduce admission costs for visitors, such as admission-free Neighborhood Nights every Thursday from 5-8 p.m. Free admission is available year-round to all children under 18, as well as active military/veterans/reservists and their families. Details about these programs and more can be found on the TAM website.



# Opinion

## The fire beneath the femme skin



*IMAGE: An image of protestors with Code Pink, a women-led grassroots organization.  
Photo by Ben Schumin*

### **The cultural phenomena that encourages a woman's right to be angry.**

By Heidi Ortiz Candelaria

What is rage? Is it the feeling you get when you spill your coffee all over yourself or when your car breaks down in the middle of the road? What about when you get stuck doing all the work in a group project? Is that rage? No, rage runs deeper and is more complex.

To most, rage and anger are immediately associated with men. You can watch the news, listen to the radio or scroll through your phone. It's right there, unavoidable proof; aggressive comments flood a girl's TikTok because she's plus-sized and proud, another YouTuber outed as a groomer, abuser, or rapist, even how Andrew Tate has brainwashed an entire generation of teens to believe that the sigma male is entitled

to a woman's body. Male rage is the urge to destroy, to be cruel and snarky with no apparent reason other than because they're a man, and they can.

To men, a woman's anger is psychotic and crazy. They talk about women as unstable, controlling, and demanding. When a woman is angry, she cries, she screams hysterically, she begs for their attention, she isn't capable of independence and doesn't know what she would do without them – again, a reflection of a man. But we women know we have layers and depth. There is more to us than the tears men tell us we shed.

Feminine rage can be best described as a recent cultural phenomenon that has swept through art, media and pop culture. In recent years, social media has allowed feminist movements to mobilize and raise their voices unapologetically. The world has never been more aware of misogyny and hate crimes, even if they refuse to accept the truth. I am sure that everyone remembers the rise of the #MeToo movement on Twitter on October 15, 2017, and how it changed the internet forever. Millions of women used this movement to confess their experience as SA survivors: victims of abuse, assault, and rape. Foundations were built in solidarity with every single woman that came forth, and from then on, the internet became a confessional for minorities across the globe.

Many people will argue about the negative impacts of this. How many will take advantage of this medium and lie about their experiences for clout, profit, or simply pettiness? But this applies to anything in life. There will always be a downside to everything, and there will always be horrible people who try to ruin things for those who are actually suffering. But when the pandemic hit, the world was thrown into further disarray. When people began feeling depressed, positivity was implemented throughout pop culture and media. While this positive lifestyle trend helped many people, it also spawned a new movement that was already a bit prevalent in the mid-2000s: “forced positivity,” or “toxic positivity.”

Women encouraged each other to be beings of light and love. The words “manifest” and “good vibes” became the golden standard in women, as if everyone suddenly was riding the good vibes train. While I believe this mindset can be helpful, I also believe that it isn't healthy. Showing any form of the human flaw was called out for being “toxic.” Making mistakes became a mortal sin, and if you weren't happy 24/7, you were a horrible person.

It was only three years later that women acknowledged how damaging this lifestyle is. Almost globally, we've seen a shift in behavior among women throughout all cultures. Women have begun being unapologetically honest, to the point that they don't care if it makes men uncomfortable. Mostly speaking up about important female-centered situations and their own experiences; crimes, their everyday lives as women and their struggles with mental illness and trauma. TikTokers have flooded the app with women screaming at the top of their lungs and speaking passionately about their unhappiness. We'll see clips from movies like Jennifer's Body, Black Swan and Hidden Figures where the main characters are experiencing moments of unfiltered rage and the video comments will be filled with “same” and “omg me.”

Musicians like Halsey have embraced this and created an entire album revolving around how they embrace their fury to flame their ambitions: “If I can't have love, I want power.” Other examples include the recent hit “Kill Bill” by singer SZA, based on the movie by the same title, where a woman sets out on

a journey of revenge against all the people who did her wrong. In this song – though – SZA talks about her jealousy. This shows the generalization men tend to have against angry women. Except here, SZA reclaims that and owns it by showing that she is not hysterical, but instead is methodical and calculated. As of today, it is in the top 40 most replayed songs worldwide.

Touching on more than just music and film, women have begun applying these philosophies to their daily lives. Feminine rage has been a trending hashtag in TikTok since October of 2022 and is still highly relevant today. Influencers like self-proclaimed “bimbo” Chrissy Chlapecka have taken to social media to spread the message of sexual liberation and the rage against men, all while looking super cute in pink outfits. New metal singer, Banshee, has made her entire discography based on her hate against abusers and her own struggles overcoming sexual trauma. Jeanette McCurdy, the ex-Nickelodeon star, wrote an entire memoir of the abuse she endured from her mother and how she accepted that her closure was allowing herself to hate her mother. Lil Mariko, a screamo singer and model, began making songs about being dominant in life and in the bedroom, making fun of the 4-chan incels that fetishize Asian women.

Truthfully, I could go on for hours about all the women who have continued to apply these philosophies to everything they do and encourage others to do the same. As a victim of bullying, abuse, and sexual trauma, I have struggled with self-esteem issues for almost my entire life. I felt ashamed to be a woman because I was so often sexualized. I lived in fear because I never knew when it could happen again. But finding this community, this movement helped me find a part of me that I didn’t know existed. I began prioritizing myself and allowing myself to feel anger. I no longer felt shame for my negative emotions or for struggling. Instead, it helped me find strength in even my lowest moments. Now, I can scream along to my favorite musicians who perfectly encapsulate OUR rage. I can appreciate the art by women who have survived and endured. I can fill my life with women who also aren’t afraid to say no. If he doesn’t like it, he’ll have to go through us – and we won’t go down without a hell of a fight.

## 600-year-old vampire boyfriends and being not like other girls



*IMAGE: Some romance tropes just scream “lazy writing.”*

*Photo by Alexa Christie*

### **Romance novel trends that need to go away in 2023.**

By Ruth Ogden

I’m not ashamed to say that I love romance novels. As a genre, they’re deliciously formulaic, predictable and filled with tropes. That doesn’t make them bad - a trope done well adds, rather than detracts, from the reading experience. However, my extensive background with romance novel reads has led me to conclude that some tropes just need to fade out of existence. Not only are they done to death, but they’re just toxic and lazy.

Here are my top 5 tropes that need to go away in 2023:

#### **The Mayfly-December Romance:**

Your boyfriend may look 23, but he is actually a 600-year-old vampire.

This trope is gross and is a way to romanticize age gaps while ostensibly making it “not weird” by having him appear to be the female lead’s age. Despite the fact that he is hundreds of years older than your grandmother, he somehow forms an emotional connection with a modern woman.

Interestingly enough, this trope hardly ever touches upon the historical ramifications of this. These characters rarely have issues that you’d expect of someone born in the 1400s, like old-fashioned ideas of women’s roles or overt racist tendencies. If I had a 600-year-old vampire boyfriend, I’d really like to know what he was doing during the Civil Rights Movement. Where was he during the AIDS crisis? An immortal man who doesn’t use his immortality for the greater good is no boyfriend of mine. I’m looking at you, Edward from “Twilight.”

### **She was Born Sexy Yesterday:**

This female character only entered this universe yesterday, but don’t worry! She may be a day old, but she looks like she is 23.

This is another sneaky attempt to make gigantic age gaps “not weird,” but fails miserably, more so than the Mayfly-December Romance trope. She knows nothing about anything, which is a lazy literary tool for explaining everything about the world. Despite the fact that she is literally new to existence and has a childlike curiosity about the world, she exudes overt sexuality. Common iterations of this include man-made entities (like AI or a robot) or a girl catapulted into an entirely new world (like stepping through a portal or being transported to the Feylands). I like female leads acting like actual adults with worldly experience and critical thinking skills.

### **Babies Ever After:**

The kingdom is saved, the curse is broken, and the two main leads are finally in love... and expecting a baby.

This trope is the easiest way to ruin a good book in the last 20 pages. As someone who isn’t interested in getting pregnant right now, this plot reveal always throws me for a loop. It isn’t sexy, it doesn’t move the plot along, and it just feels... tacked on. Unplanned pregnancy is stressful and not always a joyful experience. It’s especially icky when combined with a Mayfly-December Romance or a Born Sexy Yesterday scenario. Not all women dream of having babies and shoe-horning this in at the very end can feel like the female lead’s newfound power and independence is artificially cut short. I don’t want my romance novels to feel like they were written by Disney.

### **Love At First Sight:**

The moment the two leads lay eyes on each other, they are instantly in love. No buildup, no awkward dating phase, and certainly no second thoughts.

This trope seems to conflate sexual attraction and romantic compatibility as the same thing. This is different but related to the Fated Mates trope, which is the idea that two people are destined to be together. For this one, there’s no justification as to why they’re in love, they just are. It’s also unrealistic, even for a romance novel. There are some things you discover in the process of dating that are so important for

compatibility: Who did they vote for in 2020? Are they employed? Do they have a criminal record? Love At First Sight is a boring cop-out and a way for the author to avoid writing sexual tension and romantic exploration (which, in my opinion, is one of the best parts of a romance novel!).

### **Not Like Other Girls:**

All other women are misogynistic strawmen that only care about makeup, boys and being shallow. Luckily for the reader, the main female lead is an actual person with motivations, emotions and a personality.

No list of bad tropes would be complete without mentioning Not Like Other Girls. I think the popularity of this trope is primarily due to internalized misogyny. It's a way to differentiate a female lead when she otherwise lacks a strong personal narrative. It's also a lazy justification for why all the men in the universe are solely attracted to the female lead. The Not Like Other Girl is also known as the Pick Me Girl - she tends to enjoy activities that are stereotyped as masculine, such as sports, combat, getting dirty, and being emotionally cold. This trope sucks because other women are really cool, and distancing a female character from other women as a method to make her seem unique is just another way for the writer to show that they don't see other women as people.

I like to think of myself as open-minded, but encountering one of these tropes in my current read means that I'm setting it down and moving on. There are other tropes that could have made this list, but these are the worst offenders because they are harmful, show lazy writing and perpetuate bad stereotypes. If I'm spending my precious free time reading, it's gotta be worthwhile. Life is too short to waste your time reading bad books.

## Winter quarter 2023 reading list



*IMAGE: "Yellow Rain" by Mai Der Vang  
Photo by Celia Williams*

### **What have you been reading this quarter?**

By Celia Williams

With the Winter 2023 quarter coming to a wrap, I wanted to share some of the texts I've read as a Creating Writing major here at the University of Washington Tacoma. I read a lot as a writing major so I have plenty of recommendations for your upcoming travels this spring break.

#### **"Yellow Rain" by Mai Der Vang**

"Yellow Rain" is a poetry collection written by Hmong-American poet Mai Der Vang. It discusses the painful history of the Vietnam War and the yellow rain that fell in the 1970s after the war ended. Vang

also explores “what it means to have access to the truth and how marginalized groups have forbidden that access,” touching on the oppression minorities experience on a systemic level.

As a poetry collection, the mode in which the information and argument are conveyed can be off-putting for some, difficult to comprehend even. However, if you are able to get past that and are willing to work with unconventional writing devices, it approaches the information in a way that goes against colonial standards established over time.

I was inspired by this work and used that inspiration in my writing throughout the quarter in both my poetry and academic writing. If you are looking for something to spark your creativity or passion for something, this is definitely the read for you.

#### **“When My Brother was an Aztec” by Natalie Diaz**

“When My Brother was an Aztec” by Natalie Diaz is another collection of poetry that offers an understanding of the Indigenous perspective. It discusses culture, genocide, and systemic oppression. While it can be a tough read, specifically in regard to content, it is worth the read.

This poetry collection is similar to “Yellow Rain” in the sense that it also defies colonial standards of poetry too. It addresses both the ramifications of colonialism that we are still feeling today and the many times throughout history that Indigenous people have been oppressed and targeted for their culture and beliefs. The poem “When My Brother was an Aztec,” specifically talks about the hand colonization played in alcoholism and addiction in the Indigenous community and the impacts it has had on individuals and the community.

If you ever find yourself wanting to learn more about Indigenous culture or history, or even just the Indigenous perspective, this book along with many other Indigenous authors’ works is a great place to start. However, it is worth a mention to tell you that Indigenous cultures differ from tribal nation to tribal nation, meaning this is only one perspective of Indigenous culture.

#### **“Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned” by Wells Tower**

“Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned” by Wells Tower is a collection of short stories rather than poems. It is a bit less serious and has many of the attributes of contemporary short stories from its time. These stories explore the concept of a grotesque and what exactly that is in literature in a way that is adventurous and encompasses a variety of life experiences.

From the “dropout” to the “failed inventor,” Tower explores people at their lowest. In “The Brown Coast” he writes the story of an alcoholic father who moves to Florida and kind of discovers himself and what he needs to do in life. It was rather interesting, especially with the obsession the narrator had with catching fish and other sea life from the bay keeping them in a tank at home.

This is a great read for entertainment and being able to see that everyone has their flaws, despite how flawless they may seem.

This last quarter has been a whirlwind of assignments and readings, but I think I gained a lot from it. I hope you give these recommendations a chance when you’re considering your next read.



## Arts & Entertainment

Chad & JT were far from entertaining



*IMAGE: Chad, Jack, and JT for the meet and greet.  
Photo by Tacoma Comedy clubs via Instagram*

### **Out-of-touch jokes about sex, women and almond milk that seemed to beg for relevance.**

By Kiarra Blakely-Russell

A cold and windy night brewed as I decided to do something I normally wouldn't do: go see a comedy show. Tacoma Comedy Club hosted two acts at 7:30 p.m., Chad Kroeger and JT Parr, two comedians

from the Netflix special “Chad & JT Go Deep.” Personally, I didn’t know who these two were, but I decided, why not?

A bouncer was sitting at the door, trying his best to be as intimidating as possible as he led us to the front desk. You needed to get checked in and seated, like a restaurant – something different from my past experience in 2017. There was massive change to the vibe of this club, multiple round black-clothed tables with candles lit for each—intimate lighting dimming with each minute.

I was shocked when I noticed I had been seated in the front row, until I saw other couples beside me; anticipating the possible easy crowd interactions that the comedians would take. The waiter came up and told us the rule of the club, “You need to order two drinks or two items, or you get kicked out.” I thought about how excessive this was the whole time after.

The lights fully dimmed, as a half-empty room began to cheer for a projected advertisement. The host, Jack Slattery, told many jokes as he opened up for the two. Many of them were corny and couldn’t really get into the groove of the atmosphere, something along the lines of “oat milk” and “light ice,” a tired jab that is somewhat taxing by now. With minimal laughter from the crowd, they also weren’t feeling these jokes.

The food came to save the day, or maybe it was the drinks, but the nachos were mediocre and the onion rings were slightly okay. As I stuffed my mouth, the first of the two acts, Orange County native JT Parr, walked onto the stage. The first main act has to be good right? Wrong. Think of early 2000’s “Jackass,” except a not-so-funny version filled with cringe. His jokes on climate change, and countless references to women and sex could hardly save his clear and shaky nerves.

As he called towards the couples in the crowd, to support his relationship jokes, I somehow felt left out. At that point, the only high points of his set were the nachos and drink in front of me as he blabbed on about trauma. JT ended his time with a more “edgy joke,” he liked to say. Of course, he took the easiest path and made a corny joke about how you should be friends with school shooters. I felt as though my humor might have been broken as I noticed everyone found everything so incredibly humorous, but I was in a crowd of middle-aged people and married couples.

I’d rate his act a 2/5. He could’ve been funny, but he was indeed not.

The second act of the two, Chad Kroeger, who is also from Orange County, came on stage in a more confident manner—this made me a bit more hopeful that this set would be more entertaining. Kroeger took a different approach by preparing for his set with notes on his phone. He used topics such as true crime docs set in the PNW, along with his girlfriend’s and other women’s obsession with them. He took more time using crowd interaction to his advantage, even acknowledging how this is an essential part of a comedian’s set.

However, despite the minimal smiles he got out of me with his zodiac, government, ADD and food jokes, his set was also easily forgotten. He had a final joke that was about Hinge, though I also can’t seem to remember it, saved the set.

I’d rate his act a 3/5, his planned-out tangents lacked creativity.

Chad & JT ended the show by coming together for what I thought was a back-and-forth act, but was merely a crowd Q&A session which was again, filled with bad jokes and weird banter between the two that made me regret even attending.

With it being a Thursday night and the wind storm approaching, I realized that the stale nachos and sweet alcohol did not save this night at all. I indeed felt more funnier than the acts –mind you – I am far from a comedian. Tacoma Comedy Club will have more acts coming soon, but I encourage people to attend their open mic nights as those are more casual from what I remember. You can find more on the date and times located on their website.

## Four short games about exploring the mountain tops



*IMAGE: A screencap of the game "Getting Over It with Bennett Foddy"  
Photo by Bennett Foddy*

**All filled with harsh trials followed by stunning yet peaceful conclusions.**

By Cole Martin

There's a lot of symbolism involved with exploring natural environments such as mountains, with the heavy sentiment and character growth attached to the climb. There's a lot of potential for exploration of these themes; here are four games that find unique ways to embody this message beautifully.

### 1. "A Short Hike"

"A Short Hike" is a solo project from Adam Robinson-Yu released in 2019, and is self-described as "a little exploration game about hiking up a mountain."

Players start the game playing as a small bird named Claire who has no cell reception and is coerced by her aunt May to head up to Hawk's Peak for the best chance to receive a call. Along this journey, you forge bonds with the residents of the island and collect golden feathers to help you soar through the sky.

The game is only around two hours long, but even with that limited time, it manages to tell an extremely compelling story. Despite Claire's initial reluctance to go on this hike, she manages to deeply connect with her community and her environment.

This game pushes the notion that it's important to connect yourself with others during hard times in your life—that nature and community are healing. If these themes resonate with you, the game is only \$8 on PC and all major consoles.

## 2. “Journey”

“Journey” is a smash-hit indie adventure game from 2012 by “Thatgamecompany,” and might be a bit of a stretch for this list. Yes, most of the game is running around in various environments ranging from sunbaked deserts to dangerous ancient ruins. However, I had to include it here for the way the journey starts, ends, and repeats with its dangerous yet beautiful mountain.

The climb to the top in “Journey” is a very emotional ride, and it touches on a lot of different ideas. The journey itself is significant, but I'd say the key thing to notice while playing is the game's theme of connection.

The primary example of this is how you go through the long trek to the top of the mountain with a silent stranger you meet along the way. “Journey” is so phenomenal because that stranger is a real person. Even though communication is restricted, players end up creating a deep bond with their new friend. The journey up to the mountain is directly tied to the bond you and your friend create.

It doesn't matter if you've never touched a controller before, I would highly recommend “Journey” because there's something in it for everyone. It's about 3 hours long, and is available for \$15 on Playstation consoles, PC, and also the iOS App Store.

## 3. “Celeste”

“Celeste” is an expertly-crafted indie precision platformer from 2018 by Extremely OK Games, and spearheaded by lead developer Maddy Thorson. The gameplay alone is fantastic; its tight controls, optional challenges and great accessibility options make this game one of the best platformers I've ever played.

“Celeste” shines just as bright with its design as it does with its amazing story. Players are put in the shoes of Madeline, a stubborn, young woman who is dead-set on climbing Celeste Mountain for her own personal introspection. Throughout the climb, she battles with a magical manifestation of her own anxieties, and is forced to come to terms with herself.

The main character's story is also loosely linked with Thorson's, as she went through her own trials of mental health and gender identity. In an article titled “Is Madeline Canonically Trans?” Thorson writes “Well, yeah, of course she is,” going on to talk about how she wasn't sure of her own gender identity while creating “Celeste,” and how the journey of creating the game and writing Madeline's character helped her tremendously in figuring these things out.

Climbing up Celeste Mountain is inherently about mental health and understanding oneself. This idea is already something incredibly multifaceted, but the game pulls it off wonderfully. If you'd like to pick up this game, it's available for \$20 on all major platforms.

## 4. “Getting Over It with Bennett Foddy”

“Getting Over It with Bennett Foddy,” created by Bennett Foddy in 2017, is not the kind of game I would go about recommending to everyone. This punishing climbing game is going against all sorts of intuitive game design by having players climb through surreal piles of digital trash while battling unintuitive architecture and terrible controls. Because of this, falling down the mountain and losing all of your progress is inevitable.

In contrast to the disorganized and difficult gameplay, you have the relaxing voice of Bennett Foddy spouting philosophies and insights that cement what the game is about. Foddy talks about frustration and failure, and how challenge is underlooked. A mountain isn’t designed to be easy, and neither is this game.

Despite its difficulty, the game is genuinely really satisfying once you get a grip of it. If you think you’re up for the challenge, it’s available on PC and mobile app stores for \$8.

‘Operation Fortune’ is a satisfactory action-comedy movie doomed to be forgotten



*IMAGE: Aubrey Plaza, Jason Statham and Bugsy Malone in “Operation Fortune.”*

*Photo by Lions Gate Entertainment*

**Hugh Grant is in his villain era and it’s the best thing about this movie– combined with Aubrey Plaza’s quirky humor, the film is an easy watch.**

By Emilia Bell

Guy Ritchie, known for films such as “Snatch” and two “Sherlock Holmes” films, is a competent filmmaker with films that are shiny, fun, comedic and never waste a moment. They often leave audiences feeling perfectly chuffed. However, it seems many of them are cursed to be disregarded practically as soon as they are released.

Many of his films never find a place in popular culture, while other less quality films do. “The Gentlemen” (2019), despite a fantastic cast and a fun premise, is hardly remembered by anyone. While it would have been nice to see more of Ritchie’s work favored the way “Snatch” was, “Operation Fortune: Ruse de Guerre” will likely be no different. It may be that Ritchie’s stylish take on action films aren’t bold or creative enough to stand out, but “Operation Fortune” deserves a chance from audiences. It boasts a stacked cast, funny quips, solid action and sleek editing – but will anyone be talking about it in the next five days, let alone the next five years? Based on his track record, it probably won’t.

The film doesn’t beat around the bush and we are immediately introduced to the cast of characters we will be with for the duration of the movie in a fast-paced way. Nathan (Cary Elwes) recruits Orson Fortune (Jason Statham), JJ (Bugsy Malone) and Sarah (Aubrey Plaza) to investigate a mysterious item that is being sold at an exorbitantly high price. They must infiltrate billionaire arms dealer Greg Simmonds’ (Hugh Grant) inner circle to find out more. But, it can’t be done without the help of naive movie star Danny Francesco (Josh Harnett), with whom Simmonds is obsessed, spurring an enjoyable (if unoriginal) bromance.

This film is packed full of punches, curse words, guns, cool cars and suave outfits. It hits the beats of a classic spy film but it doesn’t take itself so seriously. It doesn’t go five minutes without some type of gag or banter; which is believable due to most of the actors having good chemistry. Jason Statham plays a British hard-edged action-hero who never runs out of jokes – something he does best. He makes shooting a man in the foot funny and classy.

Aubrey Plaza brings her own unusual sense of humor to Ritchie’s more conventional witticism. Her deadpan comedic dialogue plays well off of Statham. Hugh Grant is hilarious and hugely enjoyable to watch as the billionaire and Josh Harnett sells the goofy actor-turned-spy who hilariously finds the whole situation stressful. Ensemble casts have a tendency to get messy, but each character has their place – though it would have been nice to get more of Bugsy Malone and Cary Elwes.

Finer plot points were ignored, and many events were simply glossed over in dialogue rather than shown – which felt a bit clunky at times, but helped keep the movie moving. While the pacing was efficient, it did feel rather long. This could be due to the nature of the plot being fairly simple yet drawn out, as they spent practically the whole film conning Hugh Grant.

I don’t personally love action films – it’s easy for my eyes to gloss over two bland buff guys fist fighting for five minutes. This film thankfully didn’t really have that problem. The fights were brief and the comedy carried over; no action sequence was too stripped back and serious. You could always count on Statham to make a funny remark each time he was engaged in a fight. It’s not particularly artistic, but the stacked cast and fun style make it worth it.

3.5 / 5 stars