



Vital signals strong for *Trauma Center*

Like its cardboard cousin, *Trauma Center* is sure to make the classic-game cut

Trauma Center: Second Opinion

Nintendo Wii
 Atlus
 ESRB rated T for Teen
 On Sale Now

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Remember Operation? That weird board game with the fat guy who had all of the missing organs and a large, red nose that lit up if you put those organs back in the wrong way? Well say hello to Operation's modern-day successor, *Trauma Center: Second Opinion*.

Now, I know what you're thinking: "Operation sucked because I could never beat my mom at it." That's okay. *Trauma Center* offers up its very own brand of thrills and twitchy excitement for Wii owners that's nothing like the dark nights of your board game past. Through competently written dialogue, stylized manga art and groundbreaking game play, *Trauma Center* shows off just how fun life-or-death surgical procedures can be.

The game has you slicing, bandaging and suturing all with the help of Nintendo's new wiz-kid, the Wii remote. The Wii-mote functions as your surgeon's hand inside the patient during the course of the missions. By selecting any tool necessary for the

job, via the analog stick on the nun chuck, players can use their forceps by pinching both the A and B buttons together (mimicking the motion one would make with real forceps) in order to pry a shard of glass from a patient's arm.

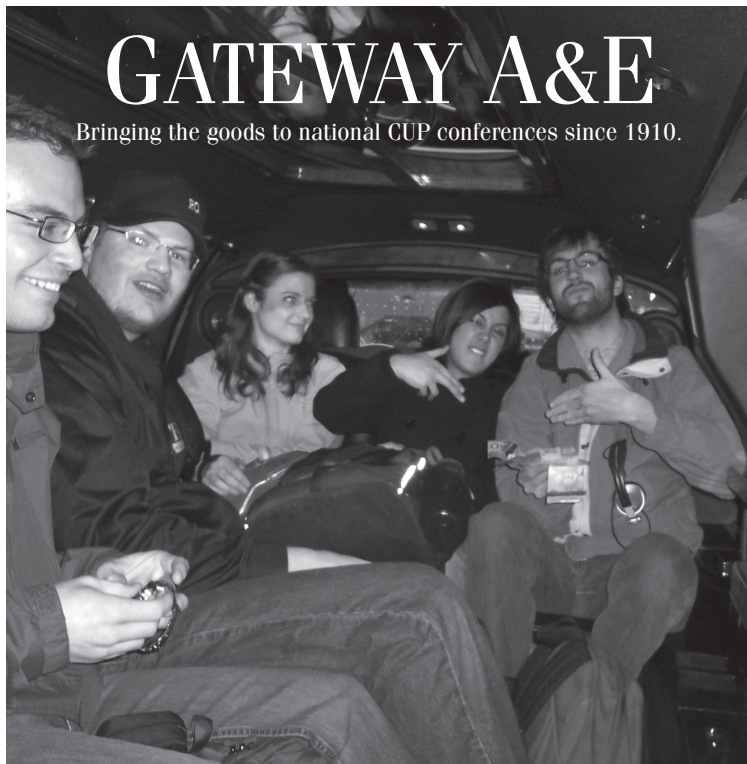
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Being the anime-inspired game that it is, it won't be long before *Trauma Center* takes off from the runways of reality and into the skies of terrorists-created-super-viruses that only you can stop because you have the mysterious "Healing Touch." According to a cryptic conversation with your hospital's senior surgeon near the beginning of the game, the "Healing Touch" is an unexplainable property that affords doctors unbreakable focus and unmatched surgical skill when performing an operation. What this means to you is, simply, that you get to slow down time when it matters most in order to save a patient. While it does come out on paper sounding

fairly gimmicky—after all, bullet time doesn't belong in every game—it's a technique that's absolutely necessary to use in order to progress through *Trauma Center's* lengthy storyline.

The big question with the game, though, is whether it works. Everything that's been released on the Wii so far has had this question asked of it, for obvious reasons, and with *Trauma Center*, the proof is in the pudding. Every aspect of Nintendo's new controller is put to use here and it's put to use with both style and flair. The game gets you to play with the Wii-mote and the nun chuck attachment together, but the real focus is, of course, on your dexterity with the Wii-mote. Unless you're playing on easy, you'll find out mighty quick that Atlus forgot to program forgiveness into the game. But then again, it's not as though the surgeon's table has ever been thought of as forgiving in the first place. Fortunately, you can swap difficulty settings between missions, or after having failed a mission, to adjust to your current level of frustration.

In short, *Trauma Center* is definitely something unique, challenging and, without question, worth picking up. It shows off all the best parts about playing on a system that has a gyroscopic controller and a nun chuck attachment over hi-def options and the promise of *Halo 3* or *Metal Gear Solid 4*.



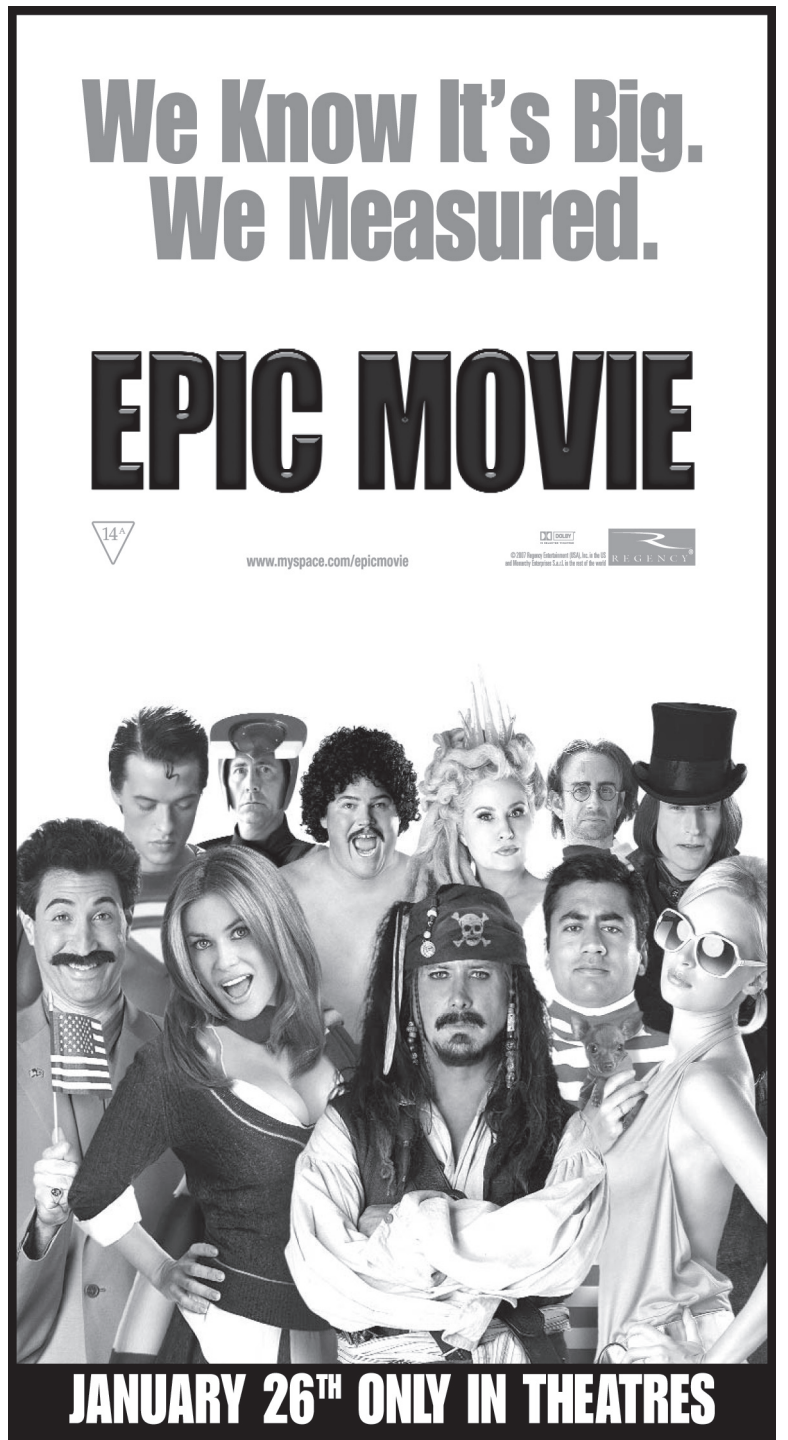
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