

**Currently watching:**

Pokemon: 285

**SHELVED:**

Time Bokan 6: It's ok but I feel a little embarrassed watching what's kinda just Yatterman Time Travel.

W Tiger Mask 6: Sorta middling, not enough wrassle action, too much talky talk.

Keijo 7: The joke got old.

Yuri on Ice 2: I don't really care enough about Ice Skating to keep watching.

**Amnesty?:**

Attack on Titan

Re:Zero

**Excellent**

Mazinkaiser- A fantastic retelling of Mazinger Z, the highlight of this six episode commercial for Nagai's newest and most ridiculously over the top mecha is the final battle against Hell King Gordon, but if you're pressed for time and would like to avoid an episode's worth of Nagai's trademark fanservice indulgence, skip to the movie: Mazinkaiser vs The Great General of Darkness and *enjoy*.

Armored Trooper VOTOMS- A rough and tumble science fiction about one gifted soldier- Chirico Cuvie- and his one man war against a secret society to find a peaceful place in the galaxy. A real robot show, VOTOMS provides an excellent array of comedy, tragedy, action, adventure and romance that I found gripping the whole way through.

Do You Remember Love?- An excellent retelling of the original SDFM which addresses nearly all of its problems, ties the series together thematically, and is beautifully animated.

Giant Robo- Imagawa > Your favorite anime director. Dude seriously knows how to gather elements and combine them into an engaging tale. Giant Robo is a story about a struggle between Big Fire! A nefarious criminal organization, and the Experts of Justice, who are trying to prevent the collapse of society as Big Fire! Shuts down all power sources the world over.

Gundam Build Fighters- One of the best Gundam series ever made, Gundam Build Fighters is an example of how to take a series that should be a bland toyetic piece of drivel and make it into a stellar example of characterization combined with some of the best fights Mecha has seen in years.

Shin Mazinger Z- A retelling of the original Mazinger series with an added emphasis on villain Baron Asura, follows the adventure of Kouji Kabuto and his Mazinger as he struggles to defeat the evil Dr. Hell. I'm a huge fan of Imagawa shows so I ate this one up. It's some good old super robot, bombastic, flashy fun.

Gunbuster- A six episode OVA about a girl who wants to join the war against space aliens to find her missing father. A true testament to pacing, not a moment in this production is wasted. Noriko's character develops consistently throughout the series, and her struggle, along with all mankind, to end the war does a better job of showing the lengths humanity will go to achieve victory, and the dire human cost, than many a Gundam show could ever hope to do.

Full Metal Panic!:The Second Raid- My all time favorite mecha show, The Second Raid is the sequel to FMP!, and serves as a character study of the hero and heroine, as well as an examination of their relationship. It's darker than its predecessor, but the animation is much improved, and the action is possibly the best mechanical action I've ever seen.

Martian Successor Nadesico- In the eternal words of Cajun, "Nadesico is always a treat." A 90s space opera/mecha comedy/harem/examination of the effects of anime on the human mind, Nadesico is capable of flawlessly shifting tone from comedy to serious at a moment's notice. Once considered by me the Greatest Mecha Anime of all time, there are few shows which truly manage to stand on this show's level.

Neon Genesis Evangelion- It's freaking Eva. If you haven't heard about it, it's a disservice to explain it to you, if you HAVE heard of it, I shouldn't need to. Just watch it, cuz it's freaking Eva, man.

Eureka Seven- If you only ever watch one mecha anime, and that can't be Eva, watch this. Eureka Seven is the most endearing love story in anime I've ever seen, has a style all its own, and characters who you can hate the hell out of one moment and love with all your heart the next. Few shows are as pure and good as Eureka. It's like holding hands with your true love when you're 80.

The Big O- Take Batman, Film Noire, Giant Robots, Isaac Asimov's Robots Series and combine them into a show so damn good and crazy it rivals Eva and you're about where you need to be to begin to understand The Big O. This show has more class than you can shake your monocle'd cane at. Also you may find yourself craving produce during the second season . . .

Mobile Suit Gundam 0080: War in the Pocket- If a Gundam show were ever to win serious awards, it should be this one. Regardless of how much one hates mecha, you will love this story. War in the Pocket does everything 08<sup>th</sup> MS Team aspired to do, but sets it to the backdrop of 80s space suburbia instead of Future Viet Nam. You'll laugh, and you WILL cry if you still have a soul.

Mobile Fighter G Gundam- This is the best Gundam show ever made. It has high comedy in the form of the greatest mechanical designs ever, absolutely no shame in what it is doing, moments so manly you'll sprout chest hair just watching them, and stars a man who is essentially the father of Kamina from TTGL and Kallen from Code Geass. This is a show about fists and souls and men. Men who beat the souls of others into friendship with their fists. Are you still listening to me? GO WATCH THIS NOW.

Megas XLR- While not an anime, MEGAS XLR is a tribute to Mecha as a whole, and stands on its own merits, too. As it is rightly described, this is "Gurren Lagann before that was a thing." It's a show about two (three) bros who have a mech and use it ostensibly to save the world but really for the sorts of things that you yourself would probably use a mech. Megas can and will defeat your favorite anything. How? Probably has a button right there on the console for specifically that function.

Symbionic Titan- Tartakovsky's take on a FMP is the best way to describe this show. It's a delightful super robot show centered on three kids from a faraway world: Lance, Ilana, and their increasingly human robot Octus, as they struggle to hide from the Mutradi aliens who invaded their world and evade Earth's attention while protecting it. Definitely worth your time.

## **Very Good**

Great Mazinger- Although I was unfortunately kept from being able to see the entire series, Great Mazinger is a huge improvement over its predecessor, and although animation in Great Mazinger is not as good as it is in its Getter counterpart, I feel that the writing, especially the episode dedicated to Jun, is better.

Gargantia on the Verdurous Planet- While many prefer the speculative fiction/slice of life aspects of this show, I really still enjoyed the more straight-cut mecha aspects. Gargantia is about Ledo, a futuristic space soldier engaged in a war against freakish aliens, who one day finds himself stuck on a planet with no means of going home, and only his sarcastic mech, Chamber, for moral support as he attempts to integrate into the human society he finds there.

Gun x Sword- Imagine a spaghetti western with giant robots and you're right on track. Featuring an amazing soundtrack, and centered on the quest of drifter Van to get revenge on the man with the Claw, Gun x Sword is a resounding tale of adventure, revenge, and also condiments.

Tengen Toppa Gurren Lagann- One of the very best and most over the top mecha anime to have ever been made, and perhaps Imaishi's Opus, Gurren Lagann is about one boy, his drill,

and how they're going to pierce the Heavens. From the fluid animation to the unending stream of memetic phrases to the memorable, colorful cast, to that glorious final battle at the end of Lagann Hen, you are in for a wonderful ride.

Code Geass (Season 1 Only)- The first season of Code Geass is an alt. history story about a young man with an incredible power: he can tell anyone to do anything he wants one time, and they will obey. Armed with this power, and not a whole lot of answers, Lelouch sets out to change the world, and not entirely for the better. Geass is one of those shows you just need to see to believe.

Rin-ne: The Flower of Lagrange- As it was once called, Rin-ne is a show about "bodacious bisexual babes who battle bad boys in 'bots." Full of more pandering to the yuri fans than you can shake a stick at, and no small amount of advertisement for the city of Kamogawa and its Sea World, Rin-ne is still a heart-warming tale of the strength of friendship, examined first among its principle protagonists, and then its principle antagonists. For a story in which 2/3 of the cast are aliens, it's got a lot to do with very human feelings. It's also very, very pretty.

GaoGaiGar- GGG begins as a story about a world in which you are still five and everyone still loves you and heroes will always conquer evil. Every week a new Zondar alien shows up for Cyborg Guy to fight, and that's that for maybe half the series. Then the primevals arrive, your childhood is fucking over, and you're going to be a fucking grown up and bust your ass and bleed your life away to scrap out that happy ending. And you're going to do that by shoving a goddamn Hammer and Nail through evil's heart. And you had BETTER be screaming while you do that.

GaoGaiGar Final- Remember how childhood ends during GGG? So you realize you're sort of a screwed up adult, and there's a lot of really kinky fan service now, and as it turns out, heroes do lose, and do die, and evil does win. How much do you believe in the ultimate triumph of good over evil? That determines the entire outcome, and that's what this show is about. I'm 25 and I cried like a goddamn baby at the end of this show. Open your heart to GGG and let the COURAGE wash over you.

Full Metal Panic!- FMP is one part espionage/action, one part high school/romcom, and one part Real/Super Robot show. It follows Sousuke Sagara as he's trying to do his best to adapt to a normal life in high school while also keeping his job- to protect fellow student Kaname Chidori and pilot rad mechs- a secret.

Full Metal Panic? Fumoffu!!- GAF's favorite of the three FMP shows, and the one that isn't mecha. It's a comedy slice of life show, except that, since this is FMP, the slice is definitely different from usual. You need to watch it for the rugby episode alone.

The Vision of Escaflowne- I'm not one for girl's shows, but Escaflowne is amazing. There's a bunch of beautiful, bishonen dudes in this show, but there's also some incredibly raw

mechanical fights in which giant robots get torn to shreds by a berserk mecha. Also cat-girl lesbians, an evil plan so hilariously shojo I smile just thinking about it, and the true identity of the villain is perhaps the most amazing moment in the history of anime, because it just makes the rest of this that much crazier.

Mobile Suit ZZ Gundam- My favorite UC Gundam show, with my favorite protagonist. The tyrannical Earth Federation's Titans having been rammed, the Federation in shambles, the cunning and crafty Haman Khan now moves her Axis forces to capture the Earth and all her territories once and for all. Meanwhile, war-weary captain Bright Noa recruits a couple of young punks, chief among them one Judau Ashta, to save the world and win the war. ZZ Gundam is a great show, but it has a slow beginning.

Mobile Suit Gundam- The first Gundam show, and an old one at that, this is the grand daddy of Real Robots, and you can see it. Amuro Ray is an ace mechanic who is forced by war to fight in the prototype mecha: The Gundam, which his father built. Amuro starts out selfish, arrogant, and immature, but is molded by the horrors of war into someone else entirely.

Mobile Suit Gundam Unicorn- Boasting the best damn production values of any Gundam show, Unicorn is essentially the conclusion to the Zeon arc of the Universal Century, and it is incredible. Sexy sexy robot fights, a great sound track, and a plot that ain't half bad all combine to give us a Gundam show that's well above most of the franchise's recent output. Unicorns never looked so cool.

Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam- Although I consider Zeta Gundam the weak link of the original Universal Century Trilogy, my opinion of it has improved considerably. The show has several terrible characters (Katz, Beltorchika, Recco and Sarah all spring to mind immediately) it also has a number of very memorable ones (Kamille, Emma, Yazan, Haman and Quattro/Char.) Where it really excels, I think, is the space segments and the space combat. I don't quite buy into "Gravity weighs down the souls of men" but free from its clutches, mobile suit combat becomes a spectacle of fun. Although Tomino struggles frequently to write good character dialogue, principally during combat, the world of the Universal Century that he builds is his true strength, and continues to stand as one of the best classical science fiction settings in anime.

Rebuild of Evangelion- The first two movies are great and make it seem like the franchise is going to go in a different and interesting direction from the tv series. The third movie makes good on that promise in the worst way possible.

Dai-Guard- A show about what it would be like to work for a company that financed a giant robot, Dai-Guard is basically The Office but with Super Robots, and follows the hot-blooded Akagi and his struggle to break free of the harsh reality of the business world, the haunted Ibuki who seeks to come to terms with the monsters who murdered her father, and the upstanding playboy Aoyama, who takes a lot of flak from people rather than admit to his secret. Also a horrible scientist named Rika who actively tortures Ibuki and rapes her emotionally.

Turn A Gundam- Another great Gundam show, Turn A is an anniversary celebration of the Gundam franchise. It has a really rustic feeling to it, and focuses on themes which are both unusual in the Gundam series (the coexistence of Earth and Space, the burden of immortality) and more usual (war between Earth and Space, and the horrors of war). Respect the stache, kids, or butterflies will punish you!

## **Good**

Getter Robo G- Formulaic as the show tends to be, there are still some gems to be found in the continuing adventures of the Getter crew in their battle against the Pandemonium Empire. The animation is much improved from the original, and Benkei, the new addition to the cast, succeeds at filling in Musashi's very large shoes.

Dual!! Parallel Trouble Adventures- Imagine if someone combined Evangelion with Tenchi Muyo. So instead of being terribly depressed, Shinji is just a loveable loser. Now add to that the plot of Chrono Cross before it got all disc 2. That's basically what you have here: a harem mecha comedy, and it works.

Macross +- An excellently animated OVA set in the Macross series with a somewhat less excellent story about somewhat less excellent characters. Watch as the world's biggest asshole/idiot gets super lucky and saves his not-girlfriend by showing up to save her from AI tentacle rape!

Broken Blade- Broken Blade has some really outstanding combat sequences, and I feel that, when focused on the warfare segments of the show, it is really good. When it focuses on domestic events, though, the plot tends to suffer, especially since the domestic plot tends to focus on the Queen, who is an awful person all around, actively trying to cheat on a husband who is waging a war he would gladly surrender for the single sake of keeping her alive. Also there's a 12 year old with a 25 year old's body and a 25 year old with a 12 year old's body, and both are awful. But don't let that deter you! The war segments of the show are truly stellar!

Zoids: New Century Zero- It's your average tournament arc, but Zoids is still not a bad show, especially not if you're in the mood for a light-hearted show about a junk-dealer turned mech pilot who wants to be the very best, like no one ever was.

Godannar- Using piloting a giant robot as a metaphor for sexual relations, Godannar is an unusual love story in that the principle lovers, Go and Anna, are already married before the show begins. There's giant robots with booty and breasts that bounce and more fan service than you can choke down, and one or two very unfortunate implications in the plot, but on the whole, it's a good show with a fair amount of heart.

Mobile Suit Gundam SEED- A reimagining of MSG, while Hirai faces abound, SEED still does a good job of reimagining several key things in MSG, especially casting both the Federation and the Spacers as equally horrible. Also introduces us to Jesus and Lacus, who are the most popular anime characters like, ever, according to Newtype mag.

New Mobile Report: Gundam Wing- Wing has the best designs in the entire franchise, and while the plot isn't that great, it also introduces us to Zechs Merquise and Treize Khushrenada, and I must reiterate that it has amazing suit designs and action, which make it one of the best shows to enter the franchise on.

The 08<sup>th</sup> MS Team- It's Vietnam, with mechs! And beam saber jaccuzis. The 08<sup>th</sup> MS team starts out a strong show about soldiers during the original One Year War of MSG fame. It ultimately deteriorates into a Romeo and Juliet story with a villain whose plan is almost as dumb as the Zanscare Empire's need to tack wheels onto everything. There's a Gundam vs Gouf fight in this that is almost as good as Amuro's showdown with Ramba Ral.

Majestic Prince- A light-hearted, goofy, Saturday Morning Cartoon style show about a rag-tag bunch of loser mech pilots who are nevertheless entrusted by a fiercely incompetent Earth to fight off an alien invasion. It has horrible CG mechs with one or two episodes of really good action. Hirai is at his worst in this show, but in spite of it all, the show is really not half bad.

Super Dimensional Fortress Macross- One of the most famous and beloved anime franchises of all time, SDFM is a love triangle with a war between Humanity and the Zentradi as its backdrop. Beautifully animated, the show suffers several major drops in quality of story-telling along the way. It is, nevertheless, an enjoyable series worth watching at least once.

Getter Robo- A classic of the genre, Getter Robo is held back somewhat by being a product of its era. It's highly episodic, formulaic, and repetitive, but when it does decide to take its kid gloves off, it can deliver some real sucker punches. There's also an underlying, implicit theme of the need for something like Getter Robo in Japan.

## **Neutral**

Armor Hunter Mellowlink- Although this series set in the VOTOMS universe comes highly recommended, I'm afraid I was unable to finish it due to a terrible sub job, poor video quality and a lack of interest in the sustained episodic format. I confess I did not find Mellowlink himself to be very engaging, although his plight and efforts were a well grounded foundation for the series. Marked neutral for numerous reasons, not the least of which is the need to review the series, and do so under markedly better conditions.

Mobile Suit Gundam: Char's Counter Attack- You're dropped half way into the story and it ends without concluding ANYTHING. For two hours you must endure one of the worst women in the history of anime, as she tries to ride the dicks of all famous men in Gundam ever and gets

denied again and again and again. Oh, and LOTS of jokes about Char being into little girls (even as he repeatedly refuses one). Char should've stayed dead and the only thing that justifies this movie's existence is the fight between the Nu Gundam and the Sazabi. If they'd taken the time to explain things, not dropped you in half way through, and NEVER included Quess, the movie could've been much, much better.

Gundam Wing: Endless Waltz- Has the best mechanical designs ever, period. Unfortunately the plot is pretty dumb, with the chief mech piloting antagonist just being Wu Fei while he throws a bitch fit. At the end of the movie the heroes learn nothing, especially since they do exactly the thing that lead to all of the events of the movie anyway. The plot is HORRIBLE but the mechs are so so so so so so good.

Mobile Suit Gundam F91- Beautifully animated and terribly paced, F91 was meant to be a full series before being crammed into a single film. It's not the most amazing Gundam product, but it does introduce us to characters who will become awesome in Crossbone Gundam.

## **Bad**

Betterman- A genuinely good horror show that is ruined forever by its grating, cartoonish hero. To this day I have no idea what happened during the ending. Stuff got WEIRD.

Mobile Suit Gundam 0083: Stardust Memory- Ensign Kou Uraki won't eat his carrots! Love interest Nina Purpleton is a colossal bitch! It's like Metal Gear Solid with Gundams except it isn't as serious as MSG nor as goofy as MGS. It's just lame, and no matter what you guys say, the Dendrobium still isn't that cool.

Mobile Suit Gundam SEED: Destiny- Rehashing many plot elements of its predecessor, whilst failing to retell Zeta, Destiny introduces us to the worst protagonist in the series, Shinn Asuka, makes us sit by and watch while Jesus helps Haman Khan conquer the universe, and also doesn't give Athrun the screen time he deserves. Oh and those horrible three guys from the last show are back but now one is a girl and they're somehow worse.

00 Gundam S1- Having moved up considerably since I saw it, 00 is basically equal parts Gundam Wing and Full Metal Panic, and I can see how that would be attractive to people. It had some good mechs and action, but the show isn't focused enough, and the master plan becomes increasingly apparent that there isn't one. Still, the first season is okay, so don't feel bad if you like it more than I did.

## **Very Bad**

Macross II- Don't do like I did. Don't watch this. Hibiki Kanzaki is a shit (recurring theme among Macross protagonists, really).

## **Horrible**

Mobile Suit Victory Gundam- FUCK DON'T EVER WATCH THIS SHOW I BEG YOU PLEASE DON'T TELL YOUR CHILDREN THIS SHIT EXISTS. PLEASE. IT'S LIKE AIDS AND CANCER IN A BULLET YOU SHOOT INTO YOUR BEST FRIEND'S HEAD. BUT WITH WHEELS

Mobile Suit Gundam AGE- Pedophile Space Hitler uses an army of giant robots to commit nuclear holocaust on Martian Jews. I'd call his relationship with women rape, but there are no women in this show and I'm not sure that you can rape what isn't a living thing. I'll have to ask a table from Geass.

00 Gundam S2- Literally the least most coherent anime I've ever seen. You'll have an easier time trying to lay out the physics of an Escher painting than understanding what the fuck is going on in this show.

00 Gundam: A Wakening of the Trailblazer- Just don't watch this shit, man. Even the action is fucking terrible.

Eureka Seven Pocket Full of Rainbows- What if one morning you got up and someone had skinned your wife alive and then put her skin on and pretended they were her? And it was obvious they weren't, but they insisted they were? That's Pocket Full of Rainbows.

Eureka Seven Astral Ocean- This show is like if someone raped your wife to death, while making your children slit her throat with plastic spoons. Then broke one of her ribs out, painted a picture of your mother on it with your children's vital fluids, put your dog's head on for a mask, then broke into the prison where you were being held and shanked you with it in the showers when you were at your weakest and most vulnerable. Then asked you why you didn't love them.

Rah Xephon- I hated it, but some guys will defend it tooth and nail. But I hated it.

## **Beyond Mortal Terminology**

Code Geass R2- It's a show about oranges and their importance to the human body. #Team Suzaku

Valvrave the Liberator- It's Geass in space!

## **NON MECHA**

## **Excellent**

Kino's Journey- An inquisitive, unassuming show about a traveler and a talking motorcycle, Kino's Journey makes numerous criticisms of humanity and human civilization without ever really explicitly doing so. It's reserved tone allows it to invite the viewer to draw their own conclusions about the questions the show asks.

Higurashi/ Higurashi Kai- A horror story about a series of unexplainable murders in a small town in 1983 Japan, the second season manages a glorious reversal of tone and becomes a cosmic tragedy, slowly turning most every unsympathetic character into one the viewer cares for.

Inferno Cop- So you think Evangelion is good? Shut the hell up you don't know anything. Inferno Cop is Evangelion if Evangelion were AMAZING.

The Count of Mecha Cristo- It's literature, bitch! If you don't know what the Count of Monte Cristo is, it's a story of revenge, of one man who was wronged by like, everyone he trusted to their advantage. This is an alternate retelling and is visually beautiful. I highly recommend this to everyone who has even a passing interest in good shows.

The Flowers of Evil- Anime of the Year for me, the Flowers of Evil is a drama about three young people who are caught up in a cycle of torment, solitude, and boredom. I've posted a LOT about this show, but for those who haven't read, let me just say that it is a visual, audio, writing tour-de-force that draws you in and shows you what people are like behind the walls of their hearts.

GTO- Eikichi Onizuka is a former gang member, pervert, and ruffian. He's also just gotten a job as a middle-school teacher, and is out to change the lives of his students, and the education system, for the better. Faces are the highlight of the show, but Onizuka and his class are an endearing story of a former screw up who is doing his best to keep children from doing the same.

Wolf Children- A heart-warming story of a mother doing her best to raise her children. In a way, it feels like the major motion picture equivalent of Bunny Drop. It's about what it means to be family, and what it is like raising children [spoiler]in the absence of a father[/spoiler]. It's also scenery porn for the Japanese countryside. I highly recommend this to anyone who can sit down and watch it.

Azumanga Daioh- Oftentimes considered the mother of the Cute Girls doing Cute Things craze, Azumanga is a story of a group of high school girls, but in spite of that, young male viewers should have no trouble relating their own high school experiences. The show is an amazing comedy, and the girls are sure to win you over by the end. Especially Sakaki.

Slayers NEXT- The best series of the best fantasy anime of all time, Slayers NEXT follows the continuing adventures of Lina Inverse and Gourry Gabriev as they find themselves on the run

from Monsters and in search of the mysterious Claire Bible. Lina's in it for power and money, Gourry's in it for Lina, and their friends are along for the ride.

Cowboy Bebop- It's Cowboy Bebop, man. It's the Big O of space opera.

Bunny Drop- This is an endearing show about a stand up guy (who is also something of a loser) who takes in his grandfather's young daughter and raises her as his own. Along the way, he learns what its like to be a parent, does a lot of growing up himself, tries to cope with the enigmatic mother of the child he is raising, and meets Kouki's mom, who is like, waifu of the forever. NEVER EVER EVER READ THE MANGA. DON'T LOOK IT UP. JUST WATCH THE SHOW.

Revolutionary Girl Utena- Utena Tenjou is a girl who dreams of being a prince. She attends Ohtori Academy in French Japanland, and one day stands up for a girl being bullied by a member of the Student Council. Unwittingly, Utena finds herself drawn further and further into the covert world of the Rose Duels. The show is considered the Eva of Shojo, and while I apologize for invoking Eva once again, it's an apt comparison. Things get crazy and some nights when you're listening to Pink Floyd, you can have some really wild conversations about this show. The most important thing to note is that you will never see sexier cars again.

Casshern Sins- A reimagining of classic anime, Casshern Sins tells the story of a robot who wakes up in a postapocalyptic wasteland, surrounded by robots who want to "Kill Casshern, devour Casshern!" While the show has a few pretentious moments "The Sun Named Moon," it also has some legitimately profound moments, and serves as an inquisition to the value of life in the absence of death, and the struggle of life against death. Show is heavy as hell, but so good.

JoJo's Bizarre Adventure- An incredibly manly show about men in fabulous outfits with fabulous hair doing fabulous battle with one another. It's manly. And maybe a little weird.

### **Very Good**

Persona 3- Movie 1- The animation is much improved from Persona 4, and the film does a pretty good job of adapting the first few key events in Persona 3. It's Persona 3, check it out.

Space Dandy- Critically acclaimed and highly eclectic, its hard to really hate on Dandy. The show has a very unique feeling, and an undeniably brilliant premise. Episodic adventures of a Dandy guy through space. The only thing I can really throw at Dandy is that not every episode struck a chord with me. That said, I wouldn't be against persuasion to promote the show to Excellent ranking, because when Dandy was good it was just that good.

Hyouka- Although I am not the biggest fan of KyoAni's show about a group of teens who solve mysteries of variant size and import, the show ultimately proved to win me over in spite of myself. Boasting beautiful production values and a cast of well-rounded characters whose

characterization solidifies them, I found myself with very few complaints about the show's latter half. While I think the show's beginning is rough and a bit tedious, everything from the School Festival onward is an enjoyable half hour dose.

Paranoia Agent- A gripping police/psychological thriller about the investigation into the mysterious Lil' Slugger assaults, in which an assailant attacks with a golden baseball bat. The show is full of many a twist and mind warp, but is actually a fairly competent critique of Japanese culture.

Persona 4- So the animation looks pretty bad and every single face is hilariously off model 90% of the time. That said, for people who've played the game, and maybe even if you haven't, it's still a pretty good show.

Kill la Kill- A bit of a base breaker and perhaps still too recent to avoid controversy for its location here on my list, Kill la Kill is a sort of entertaining mashup of cues from Gurren Lagann and Utena. It falls flat here and there, and I did not care much for the protagonist and found certain segments—which I suppose were intended for this very purpose—sort of uncomfortable. That said, the supporting cast are really what make the show. Especially Mako and Satsuki.

Bakemonogatari- A romantic comedy about a young man who makes a habit of solving the paranormal problems of his peers. The show is visually stimulating, and while it can be dialogue heavy, there are really good action sequences, too, and the writing isn't all bad. The cast is memorable and enjoyable, and the show is a good, lighter show to enjoy.

Monogatari Second Season- In this season of the hit series, the character set ups all come together for a good deal of development for the cast. Though in one or two places the CG comes across as shoddy, on the whole it is an emotional ride through the world thus far built, and definitely the equal, if not the better, of the original series.

Hanamonogatari- Continuing where Second Season left off, Hanamonogatari is a tale of lies mingled with the typical teenage growing up. As per usual, its pretty monologue heavy, but it remains a visually interesting walk through some memorable characters.

Puella Magi Madoka Magica- It's hard to tell you why this show is so good without spoiling very much. Even spoiling the initial impact, all I feel comfortable saying is that one of the main points of this show is that you really need to read the fine print in life. The other is that [spoiler]Satan isn't necessarily going to have cloven hooves, and will often show up where you least expect him.[/spoiler]

The Devil is a Part Timer- An homage to the Fantasy anime of yore, "Maou-Sama" as it is most commonly known, is about a stereotypical demon overlord who finds himself sapped of his magic and stranded in modern day Japan. The hero who had defeated him later shows up, too, and there are some interesting dynamics explored thereafter. The unfortunate failing of the

show was that it never explained [spoiler]why Maou did what he did, leaving his relaxed disposition compared to the demon we first meet at severe odds.[/spoiler]

Slayers TRY- The third season of Slayers, this one seeks to subvert a lot of common Fantasy tropes without falling into the equally trite opposites. We see forces of good doing increasingly horrible things, but the forces of evil are not necessarily any better, morally. Lina and company kind of feel like accessories to the story, though, and newcomer Filia feels like the real star of the show.

High School of the Dead- A zombie comedy which delights itself in frequently switching between overtly sexual situations and incredibly not sexy zombie sequences. Like all Zombie stories, it follows a tight knit group of survivors, but unlike most, there is still some semblance of government and order in the world. SOME. For the most part, though, it's five kids, a dog, and a school nurse against the dead. Definitely a fun show.

Record of Lodoss War- The OVA is a hard core, straight forward, classical fantasy anime, featuring people with massive shoulder pads, giant armor and swords, and ornate dragons. The cast is fairly generic, therefore, but also memorable. It's super detailed, and scenes like the battle of the kings are a visual treat.

ScryEd- The one Hirai show that isn't about giant robots, this one is about a part of Japan which is literally broken off of the mainland, leaving people with super powers the government must try to reel in, even as they struggle for rights and survival in this new world order.

The Time of EVE- An excellent speculative fiction piece about the boundaries between machine and human, the Time of EVE is about a café in which humans and androids and robots are forbidden from revealing their identity as one or the other. Really quite worth it, especially since episodes are a brief 15 minutes.

Blood-C- A show about a shrine maiden whose father tasks her with slaying the ominous Elder Bairns (human eating monsters). Young Saya must face this evil foe while also tackling the responsibilities of high school life, and to tell you more would be to spoil the experience.

Mad Bull 34- A raunchy, raucous 80s Cop OVA, Mad Bull 34 is the goofy tale of Sleepy and his partner Daizaboro, two Beat Cops in NYC, and the wacky hijinks they get into as the story goes.

## **Good**

The Violinist of Hamelin- Imagawa's brooding, fantastic retelling of "The Devil Went Down to Georgia." Like many of his works, he takes major elements from the original manga and recombines them into new and exciting themes. In Hamelin's case it's as much about human weakness as it is about what it takes to be human. The show loses points, however, for not exactly being animated at all.

Nisemonogatari- A raunchy tale of sibling love and dental hygiene.

Orphen- An okay Fantasy/comedy anime from the 90s. Follows the angsty sorcerer Orphen and his oddball companions as they go on a quest to turn his crummy girlfriend back into a human. I loved it as a kid, but I feel I don't enjoy Orphen's character as much during the serious segments anymore.

Princess Tutu- I'm not a very big fan of Magical Girl shows. This was enjoyable, and cute, but cute's not really my thing and the whole thing seemed to want to be meta about Magical girls and I don't know enough about the genre to get it. Still worth a watch, however. DON'T BELIEVE THE NINJAS.

Tomb of Dracula- Dracula turns out to be just a guy who wants to have a normal life and care for his family, but is caught up in a struggle between Heaven, Hell, and Man. The dub is a bit crummy and the plot is more than a little contrived, but all in all it isn't that bad of a watch if you have the time.

Nekomonogatari- A short prequel series to Bakemonogatari, this little arc follows Araragi's first encounter with the beautiful and deadly Cursed Cat. Also thematically about not putting things on pedestals, lest the pedestal break and your relationship with that thing become poisoned.

Slayers- The first season of the best fantasy anime of all time, Slayers follows the exploits of boisterous magician Lina Inverse and her idiot swordsman bodyguard Gourry as they adventure across the land, mostly on a quest to acquire more money and better food.

Dragon Ball Z (Until Buu and then f the show)- I am not going to explain DBZ to you, son.

Final Fantasy Unlimited- Not exactly like Final Fantasy, but it has a fair number of FF series standards in it to keep one happy. Unlimited follows the journey of a pair of twins to another world to find their lost parents. Along the way they meet the alleged cop and even more dubious martial artist Lisa, the hair-crazy chocobo Chobi, the dark and mysterious gunman, Kaze, a demon swordsman, a werewolf, and a moogles who aid in their journey. They're stopped by the horrible Earl Tyrant and his Four Generals time and again from finding the truth.

Kiddy Grade- While I'm not a huge fan of wideface, Kiddy Grade is an endearing show about two women in a post-Earth spacefaring society who work as sort of cops. The show explores a lot of themes I hadn't expected, such as the burden of immortality, and the dangers of the concentration of wealth, to a degree one might not expect from it. EVERY BODY HAS A TWEEEEEEEEEEENKLE.

Dark Stalkers OVA- NOT ENOUGH MORRIGAN

Bagi: The Monster of Mighty Nature- It's a movie about a boy who falls in love with a cat girl. It's dumb and crazy but surprisingly endearing at the same time.

Goku: The Midnight Eye- The only good Cyberpunk Dystopian Police Drama on The List, it's about a man with a super computer in his eye out to solve a couple cases and maybe score a few dames. The animation's not half bad.

## **Neutral**

Project A-Ko- The first OVA is an enjoyable romp about two girls fighting each other in silly ways over a third girl. The second continues this trend and the third introduces a boy for comedy's sake, but by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup>, the series' flaws are accentuated and C-Ko's horrible character becomes unbearable.

Smile Precure 35- Yayoi is super adorable.

Rebirth of Buddha- A Happy Science film about the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus, I mean, Buddha. It's an improvement over its predecessor, and personally I think it's a less terrible version of Arjuna, but yeah, if you have 2 hours to lose, go for it.

The Laws of Eternity- A Happy Science film which rips off Dante's Divine Comedy. Seeing Hitler command a demon army is worth it, but mostly you'll just be wondering what Roberto is up to the whole time, because even if he's a lame character, he's still the best part of the movie.

Coppelion- The show begins as a good exploration story in a post-apocalyptic Tokyo, following classmates Naruse, Aoi and Taeko. As they struggle (alongside their friend Haruto) to rescue people left behind in the city, they are confronted by the enigmatic First Division. Once the show introduces the Ozu Sisters, though, the focused, character driven stories are pushed to the back and the show devolves into a crummy Dragon Ball wannabe.

## **Bad**

Madoka Magica 3- The first two movies are just a recap and the third movie is a horrible, unnecessary plot that derails characters for the sake of allowing further sequels to come into existence.

The Golden Laws- A sloppier Happy Science film which is almost the Kids' Bop Greatest Hits Album of great historical spiritual events. The plot wanders aimlessly from religious event to religious event with little grasp on its own message, and less still on the development of its cast.

Angel Cop- A six episode OVA full of violence, gore, boobs and explosions, this 10 minute step into the future is a poorly told story about cops trying to undo a terrorist cell which devolves into

a mess of conspiracies, psychics and cyborgs which nevertheless is about as fun as going to school and listening to your teacher jerk off Steve Jobs' ghost.

AD Police- Apparently connected to a series known as Bubblegum Crisis, AD Police is about objectifying and then murdering busty women in as little clothing as possible. This show is eerily similar to Angel Cop, save it be that there are no psychics, and there isn't much of an overarching conspiracy. Still lots of blood, gore, naked women and cyborg muscle cops who are somehow still banging giant shouldered ladies. Character design for both series may as well have been done by the Arkham Asylum team.

Baoh- In which some people's skulls are crushed and a bald man rants about science while his crappy Sonic the Hedgehog of the week runs amok. Ship tease between a 9 year old and a 17 year old happens, and aids cures a girl of death. None of this is as fun as it sounds.

Cyber City Oedo 808- Yet another gritty 80s futuristic cop OVA. Like the others, it blows, and basically for the same exact reason.

Dog Soldier- It's like a really bad anime Rambo where the Pentagon wants to weaponize the Cure for AIDS.

The Mystical Laws- A Happy Science take on action movies. It's about Lizard men controlling Chinese Nazis to convince Obama that he needs to man the Hell up or else Japanese doctors will have to bail his ass out.

Mars of Destruction- *What*

### **Very Bad**

Blood-C: The Last Dark- A sequel movie to the hit show, this movie fails to live up to its predecessor, instead being laden with awful CG, barely any fight scenes, an anticlimactic climax, forced romance subplots and characters you have no real need for. You might feel tempted to watch it to get some closure after the show's finale, but you probably won't get the closure you wanted out of this film.

Glass Fleet- This show is shit, and it's ending is hella predictable. Even Luci Christian couldn't save this show. Don't watch it.

Wixoss- Meguka w/cards and some grade-a bitchiness.

### **Horrible**

Persona 4: The Golden- Imagine if all the content of Persona 4 Golden were horribly butchered to make Marie the star of Persona 4 in general and you're halfway to understanding how awful this series was.

Clannad- a cloyingly predictable show Hell-bent on wrenching emotional responses (aside from bitter hatred and sheer boredom) via cheap tricks rather than building investment in the cast, viewers should expect humor that is as low brow and exaggerated as it isn't funny, a harem set up with unattractive, fish-faced damsels whose problems are as contrived as their hair-does, and personalities so basic and generic the anime could have been produced by machines in a factory, if not for the fact that one expects factory made products to be well put together. There is no need to ever cast one's eyes upon this series, and the claims that "After Story" justify this dreck border upon chicanery.

Attack on Titan- Somewhere deep inside there is a good shonen show here. The first 7 ish episodes and the last 4 are really not bad at all. The problem is that the show is weighed down by THE WORST pacing I have ever seen, frequent animation flaws, TERRIBLE CG, and some truly terrible writing in the middle. If you're willing to look past that, AoT is a mixture of mecha and zombie show with Spider-Man thrown in. Really though, skip the Defense of Trost Arc. You owe yourself that.

Sword Art Online- The worst thing on the internet since child porn, with child porn thrown in for measure. If you watch this show, watch episode 14, then skip to episode 25. Don't watch the second half, because it introduces the worst character in anime and also praises mass murderers, and features unironic tentacle rape. And incest. So much incest.

Melody of Oblivion- I watched 16 episodes of this show. That figures out to about 8 hours of my life. And I cannot tell you a single thing about it.

Yami to something or another- I would describe this to you, but words really fail me. Essentially the show is about a girl who is in love with her biological sister going on a quest through numerous storybook worlds to reunite with her. Hideous, freakish, awful faces, bad animation, incoherent and incomprehensible execution combine with a trite, vile, pandering and pathetic plot to create a show that is truly, honestly, and actually awful in every sense of the word.

Clannad After Story- If anyone ever watches this show and says it is good, we're probably not friends anymore. Because this is the most awful piece of shit ever made.

## **Beyond Description**

Musashi GunDoh- Probably the greatest anime ever made.

Garzey's Wing- From the genius who brought us Mobile Suit Gundam comes a show which is about

School Days- The first harem anime I ever watched, School Days is about, and I quote the show's title card itself: "In the school, the three guys met. Their relation had been changed in the season, and turned into three love stories." If that doesn't tell you what you need to know, know that it is also great for fans of Greek Tragedies and contains the single most depressing moment in the history of anime.

The Crystal Triangle- The worst Indiana Jones/ Uncharted fanfic ever made into an anime.

Dark Cat- A heart warming story about a teenage pothead and his love for a demonic penis monster. Also cats with swords.

Earth Maiden Arjuna- What begins as animated series about a magical girl fighting to save the environment ends raping babies, slaughtering polio victims and asking you to literally suck it's Jesus-stand-in's dick. That's what you learn from The Mountain.

Golden Boy- A raunchy comedy about Kentaro Oe, a college drop out genius who is dedicated to studying life. He takes on a series of odd jobs in order to accomplish this task, and gets into misadventures along the way. Must be seen to be believed.

Samurai Flamenco- At the outset Samurai Flamenco is an unusual story about a guy who wants to be a super hero. After a certain point things go rather crazy and the show becomes an alluring entanglement of unexpectedly good character development, ever increasing escalation of the scenario, and swiftly deteriorating presentation. Samurai Flamenco is the savior anime deserved and needed.