

In this installment (which combines two series into one Voltron-esque article of awesomeness!) I'm hopping in the TARDIS and travelling back to the 1980s, to revisit some cartoons based on some of your favorite classic videogames!

So hit the jump and prepare yourself, it's going to be awesome (*or awesomely bad, I'm not quite sure which...*)

So ever since the early 80s, companies have tried to capitalize on the success of videogames, by attempting to turn them into saturday morning cartoon shows. In this article I'll try to cover as many as I can remember:

Saturday Supercade

Intro

The first show I'm gonna talk about is Saturday Supercade. Originally airing on CBS in 1983, this featured several shows based on popular videogame releases at the time: (*Each link leads to the show's individual intro*)

- [Frogger](#) - So apparently Frogger has a job as a news reporter in this show, and has a few friends, like the female Fanny Frog. Hijinks ensue, usually leaving frogger flattened for whatever reason (*at least they carried that over from the arcade games*)
- [Donkey Kong](#) - Featuring roughly the same plot as the arcade game, Mario and his lady

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friend Pauline have crazy adventures while trying to keep that pesky ape Donkey Kong in line! One thing I liked about this one is that the art seems to be directly inspired by the drawings that appeared on the sideart of the original arcade cabinet. Neat bit of trivia the role of Kong himself was voiced by the late,great Soupy Sales!

- [Donkey Kong Jr.](#) - DKJR IS VOICED BY FRANK WELKER! (Starscream on Transformers G1, and Cobra Commander on GIJOE) so DK jr. is trying to find his dad, DK SR. who's on the run from Mario. He makes friends with a guy who calls himself 'Bones' and they have misadventures together.

- [Q*Bert](#) - Seems almost like Happy Days with the 1950s-inspired universe, except its Q*Bert and all his friends as they try to avoid run-ins with Coily, Ugg and Wrong-Way (*all voiced by Frank Welker!*

)

- [Pitfall!](#) - For some reason they *actually* call him 'Pitfall!' and not 'Harry' like you might expect! Harry, his niece Rhonda and their pet lion Quick Claw (*who's quite literally a cowardly lion*

) all have adventures while searching for treasure. Interestingly, Rhonda and Quick Claw actually appeared in the game's sequel, Pitfall II: Lost Caverns

- [Space Ace](#) - Basically mirrors the plot of the original arcade game (since it was also animated) Space Ace sometimes reverts to the nerdy Dexter thanks to Borf's 'Infanto-Ray' (Also, while it wasn't technically part of Saturday Supercade -- the arcade classic Dragon's Lair also had its own cartoon series, check out that intro [here](#) !)

- [Kangaroo](#) - Joey Kangaroo, his mom Katy, and Sidney Squirrel have to stop the Monkeybiz Gang (Bingo, Bango, Bongo, and ... Fred) from wreaking havoc at the zoo

Pac-Man

Pac-Man, his wife Ms. Pac-Man (nicknamed 'Pepper' for no particular reason') Baby Pac-Man, and their pets all try to stay out of the way of Inky, Blinky, Pinky, Clyde *and* Sue (who all work for Mezmaron) Interestingly the cartoon seems to have inspired both the later sequel Pac-Land, as well as the SNES/Genesis game Pac-Man 2: The New Adventures.

Pole Position

Let's be real, this show seriously should've not bothered with the Pole Position license, and just been called Knight Rider: The New Generation or something. Because the show definitely bears little resemblance to the Namco/Atari classic coin-op, and certainly seems inspired by Knight Rider.

Brother and sister team Dan and Tess both drive hot rod race cars featuring a built-in computer AI ('Wheels', driven by Tess vaguely resembles a classic Ford Mustang, and 'Roadie', Dan's car seems to be a specially designed race car.)

Captain N: THE GAME MASTER

I know this show had its critics, but I enjoyed it (I mean I was a little kid at the time, what do you want?!) Gamer geek Kevin Keene is your typical 80s teenager who *loves* Nintendo games. Then one day....BAM! he gets zapped inside his Nintendo Entertainment System (*Yeah like you didn't wish that happened to you!*) and meets Princess Lana, Megaman, Kid Icarus, a very uncharacteristic representation of Simon Belmont (seriously he's a colossal douchebag in this show!)

Kevin also has to deal with some notorious Nintendo enemies; Metroid's Mother Brain, the Eggplant Wizard from Kid Icarus, and the fattest ass this side of Videoland, Punch-Out!! star King Hippo! (*Who for whatever reason is a different color than he usually is*) who are all out to destroy Kevin and his Videoland cohorts before he can return home to the real world!

Megaman

Okay so there isn't much to the theme song. The show itself was decent, featuring all the usual characters (Megaman, Dr. Light, Rush, Roll, Protoman) and Megaman has to save the day against the evil Dr. Wily. I heard there were better versions of a Megaman cartoon that were released in Japan, but instead Ruby-Spears gave us this. Go figure...

Street Fighter

Sticking with Capcom, one of their other games that got the TV show treatment (although technically this one came out in the mid 90s right after the SF Movie was released) was Street Fighter. Since it was released shortly after the live action movie, the plotline from this show takes many of its cues from that such as the extremely not-canon 'Carlos Blanka' thing where Guile's friend Charlie and Blanka were turned into the same person. of course the dialog was epically terrible....

Super Mario Bros. Super Show!

DO THE MARIO! Who *didn't* remember this show from the mid-80s? featuring both an animated segment which seemed like an interesting mix of SMB1 and SMB2(US version, obviously) that starred Mario, Luigi, the Princess and Toad, as they went on adventures trying to outwit the evil

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King Koopa! The other half of the show was a live action show featuring the late Lou Albano (who was previously known for his wrestling career) as Mario, and Danny Wells as his brother Luigi. Interestingly enough the live-action bits had its fair share of celebrity guests!

One such example is a cameo by 80s pop star Cyndi Lauper, who as you may or may not know Lou Albano appeared in several of her videos as her old man! Incidentally, completely unrelated to any of the US shows there was actually a Mario Bros. [anime](#) that was released in Japan. Unfortunately its not subtitled that I know of, you're on your own.

The Legend of Zelda

Hey, excuuuuuuuuuse me princess! Okay so Link was kind of a jerk in this one... this show pretty much follows the plot of the games, except the Triforce of Wisdom is MIA in this show. Link and Zelda have adventures while defeating Ganon's evil minions and saving the day. All the while Link's trying his hardest to get a little somethin'-somethin' from the princess... but can never seem to catch a break.

Double Dragon

I'm not sure if this came before or after the SNES/Genesis/Jaguar game Double Dragon V, but this show was definitely inspired by that release... the Lee brothers wore this ridiculous looking mask and armor, and fought several comic-book inspired bad guys.

Mortal Kombat

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So also released in the 90s, was a cartoon based on the Mortal Kombat franchise of games. Unfortunately much like the Street Fighter cartoon, it was just terrible. The biggest problem being since it's a kid-friendly version of an M-rated game, alot of the gore and violence obviously had to go. What was left was pretty much the rest of the plot. Shao Kahn is trying to take over Earthrealm, so it's up to the 'Defenders of the Realm' (Liu Kang, Raiden, Sonya, Jax, and so on) to stop him from succeeding!

Sonic The Hedgehog (*aka 'SatAM'*)

I don't know about you, but every time I watch 'Sonic X' (recent anime based on some of the later Sonic games), I find myself missing this version that much more. In this version Sonic was voiced by Jaleel 'Urkel' White (*yes, that guy*) as him and Tails outwitted Dr. Robotnik and his mechanical minions... while occasionally taking a break for chili dogs! (*Ironically enough, one of the ads for Mario and Sonic at the 2012 Olympics actually makes a reference to this, which I thought was kinda neat.*)

There was a another darker Sonic the Hedgehog show, but I don't know of any episodes of that currently online. Anyway that's the end of my retrospective on some great (and not so great) classic videogame cartoons! For a lot of those youtube is the only way to find them... at least for now in this pre-SOPA internet era.... if that passes we're all fucked so enjoy them while you can!