Joanna Kłos, "Entry on: Extra History (Series, S01E01-04): Rome: The Punic Wars – I: The First Punic War / Rome: The Punic Wars – II: The Second Punic War Begins / Rome: The Punic Wars – III: The Second Punic War Rages On / Rome: The Punic Wars – IV: The Conclusion of Second Puni by Extra Credits , Carrie Floyd, Daniel Floyd, James Portnow, Allison Theus", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/232. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Extra Credits , Carrie Floyd , Daniel Floyd , James Portnow , Allison Theus

Extra History (Series, S01E01-04): Rome: The Punic Wars – I: The First Punic War / Rome: The Punic Wars – II: The Second Punic War Begins / Rome: The Punic Wars – III: The Second Punic War Rages On / Rome: The Punic Wars – IV: The Conclusion of Second Puni

Online (2013)

TAGS: Carthage Hamilcar Barca Hannibal Hasdrubal Masinissa Punic Wars Scipio Africanus



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General information	
Title of the work	Extra History (Series, S01E01-04): Rome: The Punic Wars – I: The First Punic War / Rome: The Punic Wars – II: The Second Punic War Begins / Rome: The Punic Wars – III: The Second Punic War Rages On / Rome: The Punic Wars – IV: The Conclusion of Second Puni
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First Edition Details	*Rome: The Punic Wars – I: The First Punic War*, James Portnow, Writer, Daniel Floyd, Narrator, Producer, Carrie Floyd, Editor, Allison Theus, Artist. Extra History, Season 1, Episode 1, September 6, 2013, 9 min 12 sec. *Rome: The Punic Wars – II: The Second Punic War Begins*, James Portnow, Writer, Daniel Floyd, Narrator, Producer, Carrie Floyd, Editor, Allison Theus, Artist. Extra History, Season 1, Episode 2, September 13, 2013, 11 min 5 sec. *Rome: The Punic Wars – III: The Second Punic War Rages On,* James Portnow, Writer, Daniel Floyd, Narrator, Producer, Carrie Floyd, Editor, Allison Theus, Artist. Extra History, Season 1, Episode 3, September 20, 2013, 12 min 37 sec. *Rome: The Punic Wars – IV: The Conclusion of Second Punic War*, James Portnow, Writer, Daniel Floyd, Narrator, Producer, Carrie Floyd, Editor, Allison Theus, Artist. Extra History, Season 1, Episode 4, September 27, 2013, 11 min 39 sec.
Running time	9 min 12 sec / 11 min 5 sec / 12 min 37 sec / 11 min 39 sec
Official Website	*Extra Credits* channel (accessed: August 28, 2018)
Available Onllne	*Rome: The Punic Wars – I: The First Punic War* (accessed: August 20, 2018); *Rome: The Punic Wars – II: The Second Punic War Begins* (accessed: August 20, 2018); *Rome: The Punic Wars – III: The Second Punic War Rages On* (accessed: August 20, 2018); *Rome: The Punic Wars – IV: The Conclusion of Second Punic War* (accessed: August 20, 2018).
Genre	Animated films, Instructional and educational works, Internet videos, Short films
Author of the Entry	Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@al.uw.edu.pl
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Creators



Extra Credits

Extra Credits is a series of educational videos concerning mostly games. Created by animator Daniel Floyd in 2008, later, since 2010 with collaboration of games producer James Portnow and other artists; in a few years it became a highly popular online show with lessons about games as a medium, their topics, improvement, design, and other issues particular for gaming culture. At first connected to the online magazine The Escapist and then to Penny Arcade, in 2013 *Extra Credits* began to appear on their independent YouTube channel. So far, by the end of September 2017 *Extra Credits* acquired above 1.1 million subscribers.

In 2013 another cycle joined the channel: ***Extra History*** – videos on significant events and processes of world's history; usually these consist of animated shorts, and, occasionally, non-animated lectures, always enriched with some references to online editions of the sources or important Wikipedia entries in the description. A new episode of the series is published on YouTube every Saturday.

The episodes of both *Extra Credits* and *Extra History* are not animations in motion, but sequences of illustrations flipped quickly one after another with the narrator's voice sped up by 10 percent. All of this gives the show a very fast pace, making it easily accessible for modern viewers who tend to be easily bored by long speeches or texts and slowly moving audiovisuals – one must remain all the time focused in order to catch all of the information; moreover, the illustrations are prepared in a way that can be viewed as amusing and stimulating imagination, sometimes with the use of material such as photographs or Internet memes in order to represent past events and concepts in an unexpected manner.

Sources:

Wikipedia profile (accessed: June 18, 2019)

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List of *Extra Credits* episodes (accessed: June 18, 2019)

"The Show" & "Our Current Team" at the website of *Extra Credits* (accessed: June 18, 2019)

Prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@al.uw.edu.pl



Carrie Floyd

Carrie Floyd is a video editor of *Extra Credits* and wife of Daniel Floyd. The only information about her available to date can be found on *Extra Credits*' website – a list of her favourite games: *Undertale*, *Minecraft*, *The Sims*.

Bio prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl



Daniel Floyd (Animator)

Daniel Floyd is an animator who received professional education at Savannah College of Art and Design and at online animation school Animation Mentor. It was during his graduate studies that he prepared the very first videos for *Extra Credits*; he continued with the project later because he felt the need to present information about game design in a more accessible way than written texts. He still remains the animator of the series, and being also its narrator, he calls himself "the high-pitched talky guy." In 2010–2013 he was hired

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by Pixar in Canada: he worked on *Toy Story* and animated series *Cars*; since 2013 he works for Undead Labs games studio.

In his private life, Floyd is the husband of Carrie Floyd, video editor of *Extra Credits*.

Source:

LinkedIn profile (accessed: July 3, 2018).

JS*Media YouTube Channel, *Extra Credits: The Complete Testimonials* (accessed: June 18, 2019)

Bio prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl



Retrieved from the profile of Vancouver Film School at flickr.com, licensed under CC BY 2.0 (accessed: December 30, 2021).

James Portnow (Director)

James Portnow has a BA in Classics from St. John's College in New Mexico and an MA in Entertainment Technology from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Largely inspired in his childhood by *Final Fantasy 1*, he became a designer, writer and consultant of games – now he is CEO of Rainmaker Games, and Interim Design Director for video games publisher Snow Cannon; among his most recognized projects are *Call of Duty* and *Farmville* games. He also teaches at DigiPen Institute of Technology.

Portnow considers games "the world's first interactive media," because games are not merely receivers, but also participants. He claims to be interested in RPG and strategy games, as their purpose is to stimulate the intellect, and considers that games industry should feel responsible for providing children with something more than

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time-consuming entertainment.

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The Many Roles of James Portnow, March 19, 2013 (accessible at news.digipen.edu/, accessed: June 18, 2019)

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Bio prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl



Allison Theus (Artist, Illustrator)

Allison Theus, a graduate in Fine Art and Entertainment Technology, is a concept artist and illustrator; she worked as a designer for companies such as Disney, but her freelancing portfolio is very rich as well, including clients such as DreamWorks, Rainmaker Games, and Blizzard Entertainment. She highlights her work at a Facebook fanpage called *The Beast of Oblivion*.

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Sources:

Facebook fanpage (accessed: May 30, 2018).

LinkedInprofile (accessed: May 30, 2018).

Twitter profile (accessed: May 30, 2018).

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Additional information

Summary

Rome: The Punic Wars – I: The First Punic War

Two male and one female character wearing ancient vests - Dan, James and Alison -appear and explain how Creative Assembly, the producers of *Total War: Rome II* – a strategy game set in ancient times and beginning before the Punic Wars – called and offered a part of their advertising budget to Extra Credits in order to be able to "teach people Roman history." The introduction highlights the significance of Punic Wars: they are called "freaking awesome," because they share many treats with quality fantasy: "blood oaths of revenge, battles, brilliant generals, political intrigue, unbelievable feats of heroism, a clash of two mighty clans," and even monsters. The narrator claims that Punic Wars were to the ancients something like WW2, and that without them the American Senate wouldn't be called Senate, the motto *e pluribus unum* wouldn't appear on the dollars, and Latin language or Roman law wouldn't form the base of European culture.

The word "Punic" is explained as the Latin equivalent of "Phoenician" and a synonym of "treacherous" in modern English; the protagonists are presented – Rome as a republican oligarchy dominating Italy and obsessed with military virtues; Carthage as a state based on trade, dominating northern Africa and parts of the Mediterranean and using mercenary soldiers; the First Punic War's cause is outlined – Mamertines clashed with Carthaginians in Sicily and turned to Romans for help. This caused a war lasting more than 20 years, in which Carthage was losing its territories and Romans were struggling to defeat their enemies with the help of their new fleet. Finally, Carthage capitulated. Later on, one of Carthaginian generals, Hamilcar Barca, started to grow in power. He hated Romans so much that he made his son, Hannibal, swear never to be friend of Rome. He also expanded Carthaginian power in Spain and dared to tell the Romans that it was necessary to pay the Carthaginian debt to Rome; he founded in Spain the city of Barcino (today's Barcelona). After his death, his successor Hasdrubal signed a treaty with the Romans concerning the borders of his territories in Spain. This treaty, we are told, lead to the Second Punic War.

By October 3, 2017, the video had been viewed 1673354 times, it gained more than 24000 "thumbs up" and 2308 comments on

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YouTube. Some of its attention catching illustrations are: the "demotivator"- meme with a horrific person signed with the word "treacherous"; the photo of an ancient statue making "facepalm" gesture related to qualifying the causes of the First Punic War as "comical"; the shot from Charlie Sheen's music video *Winning* signed with a statement that Hamilcar didn't quite loose the Punic Wars.

Rome: The Punic Wars – II: The Second Punic War Begins

The video starts with Hannibal's first military acts against Romans. Honouring his oath, he marches northward and conquers some territories close to Ebro, along with the city of Saguntum. While the Romans claimed to be the city's protectors, they didn't oppose him as their army was engaged in the war in Illyria. Carthaginians plundered the city. We are told that if Romans had defended their ally, they would have prevented an escalation of the war by "nipping it in the bud." The military conflict began when the Roman embassy presented their ultimatum to the Carthaginians: peace or war, they unanimously accepted war. Preparing for the fight, the Romans sent their armies to Sicily and Iberia, leaving only some troops in Italy.

The narrator digresses on the role of consuls in Roman political system – they were "more or less like a US President", but they had to be present on the battlefield and they could veto each other's commands. We also learn that Hannibal decided to actively oppose the Romans by attacking their territories, convinced that only defending his own would result in a disaster; the Romans did not foresee his plan of approaching Rome from the north; Roman commander Scipio and his family were in a way the Roman equivalent of Hamilcar and Hannibal – Scipio's son later defeated Carthage, and his great grandson destroyed it ultimately. Next, the arguments from the first episode concerning why the Punic wars are "awesome" are repeated. We also hear how Scipio decided to defend Italy; how Hannibal continued his march and how Gallic tribes to whom he offered gifts, let him pass – with the exception of Gauls who faced him at the Rhone River; how harsh the conditions of the march through the Alps were; how Hannibal's army rested after approaching Italy, and fought the Romans at Tincino, wounding Scipio, rescued by his son; how the other consul Sempronius Longus came back from Sicily and how serious his conflict with Scipio was; Sempronius wanted to confront Hannibal in order to win the next election) and Scipio preferred to

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postpone the confrontation; how Hannibal attacked the Romans at Trebia, and defeated their troops who did not expect an assault because of the nearing winter and were shocked by the sight of elephants; how Sempronius escaped, but thousands of his soldiers died and the Romans realized that “this is gonna be no easy war.”

By October 3, 2017, the video had been viewed 976442 times, it gained more than 14000 “thumbs up” and 1219 comments on YouTube. Some interesting illustrations are: a popular meme “SEAL OF APPROVAL” accompanying Carthaginians' unanimous acceptance of the war in their senate; a photo of a basket with Spanish delicacies symbolizing Hannibal's gifts to the Gallic tribes; and an image of Courage the Cowardly Dog from Cartoon Network's show which illustrates Sempronius' opinion that Scipio was a coward.

Rome: The Punic Wars – III: The Second Punic War Rages On

The Romans were weakened after the battle of Trebia, but because of the winter Hannibal decided not to continue fighting. New consuls were elected in Rome – Gaius Flaminius and Gnaeus Servilius Geminus; Flaminius decided to march northward with the newly formed legions against Hannibal. Hannibal in the meantime succeeded to land in Etruria behind the Roman lines. His road to Rome was open, yet – as the narrator informs us – plundering the city wasn't his main aim. Flaminius turned back to Rome, but fell into Hannibal's trap at the Lake Trasimene. The narrator gives a detailed account of the battle, calling it a “slaughter.” As its result, the Romans elected a dictator Quintus Fabius Maximus who preferred to follow Hannibal's army, not to confront it. This seemed a cowardice to the people of Rome, but Hannibal felt threatened by this strategy. He therefore spread a rumor that Fabius was his secret ally. Finally, when both armies met in the valley of Ager Falernus, Hannibal was defeated. His next move was a trick to make Romans think that his army was approaching the city: he ordered to tie torches to the horns of oxen. After that, the Romans – against the custom – chose a co-dictator, Minucius, but he lost the next battle. Another politician in charge, the consul Varro, gathered a huge army and took it to Cannae, where a battle took place that once again proved Hannibal's military genius: his smaller army managed to encircle the larger Roman one. The narrator describes the course of the battle and the movements of both armies in detail, summing up its results: “the flower of Roman youth

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destroyed, their leaders all dead and gone, their armies scattered, and nothing between Hannibal and Rome."

By October 3, 2017, the video had been viewed 872934 times, it gained more than 13000 "thumbs up" and 1461 comments on YouTube. Noteworthy illustrations are: a meme with a laser cat illustrating the account of Hannibal's stratagem at the Lake Trasimene; a photo of a watch with the mention that Hannibal waited for the Roman army before the battle; a picture of a rabbit in a hat accompanying the information that Fabian tactics consisted in surprising the enemy.

Rome: The Punic Wars – IV: The Conclusion of Second Punic War

At the start, a question is asked: why the Romans suffered so many defeats, "when, because of the languages we speak, because of the legacy they left us, we know that they win this war?" The answer says: "You aren't defeated until you accept defeat," followed by a remark that Hannibal did not understand such philosophy. Instead of marching directly to Rome, he proposed peace terms to the Romans – this decision is considered one of those that shaped the world's history – the Romans rejected his terms.

Despite their reverses in Italy, the Romans were succeeding on other fronts. In the following sequences of the video, we hear how the grandson of the Sicilian king Hiero II allied himself with the Carthaginians; how, as a result, they sent their armies to Sicily; how Archimedes – called by the narrator "the ancient world's mad scientist super genius" – in order to hold the Romans off the coast, used catapults, cranes and (as tradition has it) mirrors producing a heat wave; how the Romans managed to enter the city in spite of that; how they killed Archimedes while he asked them "not to disturb his circles."

Then the situation in Spain is outlined. Former Hannibal's base, now it was a battlefield for Hasdrubal and Publius Cornelius Scipio. After some initial Roman successes Hasdrubal managed to defeat his enemy using ruses. But then again another, younger Scipio (future Africanus) appeared as a successful commander in Spain and unexpectedly seized Carthago Nova. After that, he defeated Hasdrubal in battle. The

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latter left Spain and took his army to Italy.

In the meantime, the Romans in Italy continued with their Fabian strategy, also – to Hannibal and Hasdrubal's surprise – they managed to join together the armies of the two consuls: Gaius Claudius Nero and Marcus Livius Salinator, and destroyed Hasdrubal's forces at the river Metaurus in 208 BC. After that, the senate accepted Scipio's plan of invading Africa. Thanks to a pact made with the Numidian prince Massinissa, Scipio's expedition was successful. Carthaginians recalled Hannibal who, frustrated by the failure of his life's mission, came back from Italy. He insisted on waiting before engaging in another war, but the Carthaginians decided otherwise – Hannibal valiantly resisted Scipio's and Masinissa's forces in the final battle but was defeated and Carthage capitulated. After 50 years, still another Scipio turned it to "nothing but myth, history and some dry stones in the desert sand."

In the end of the video its creators encourage the audience to continue their own research of the topic, and say goodbye: "*Ave atque vale!* – So long!"

By October 3, 2017, the video has been viewed 800966 times, it gained more than 16000 "thumbs up" and 1702 comments on YouTube. Some of its less obvious illustrations that can catch attention are: the acronym "LOL" appears next to Hasdrubal's bust related to the story of how he deceived Romans in Spain; a drawing of a rabbit that is about to hit a grenade with a squash racket, illustrates the fact that the Romans considered younger Scipio's expedition to Spain hazardous; a photo of a small girl drawing a line on the beach alludes to how at Ilipa Scipio "drew up his line incredibly close to the enemy camp."

Analysis

The show has a very fast pace – this makes it truly accessible to viewers who tend to be easily bored by lectures, professional publications or monotonous audiovisuals. One has to stay all the time focused in order to catch all of the facts and names, and probably is constantly shocked by photographs or Internet memes used to present past events and concepts. This method of organizing educational material is amusing and stimulates imagination, but at the same time

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	it treats history lightly. It may seem controversial, especially for someone who thinks of every war as of a tragic and violent event. Yet, we should take into account that "The Punic Wars" is a series produced by the entertainment industry – it serves as a "footnote" or "introduction" to a computer game. As a result, it makes the narrative about Punic Wars, one of the most significant for Roman history, a kind of play for today's children/teenagers. On the other hand, the series' authors say that their task is "to teach Roman history" – and clearly their intention is to invite the audience to look more attentively at the past and consider how it influences the present. They underline the presence of ancient concepts many times (Roman law, the Senate, the phrases: "Punic," "Fabian tactics" and *e pluribus unum*), places (Barcelona) and topics (Hannibal as the archetype of a general) in today's world; they also search for analogies between historical epic narratives and literature that is popular now – so that the viewer can conclude that the latter originates in the former. The final message of the show seems to be: with learning the facts of a topic, you can have more fun playing a computer game, but also become more aware of cultural phenomena from the offline reality.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Carthage Hamilcar Barca Hannibal Hasdrubal Masinissa Punic Wars Scipio Africanus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Character traits Heroism Historical figures History Tricksters Violence War
Further Reading	Desert Bus (Desert Bus for Hope YouTube Channel), „Interview: Daniel Floyd and James Portnow" (accessed: August 20, 2018). Jasper, Tyler, "Interview with James Portnow of Extra Credits", *Siskiyou. The Voice of SOU Students*, June 2, 2013 (accessed: August

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