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3 PARTY GAMES THAT TURN YOUR LIVING ROOM INTO A SPACESHIP

By Chris Barylick

JULY 16, 2015

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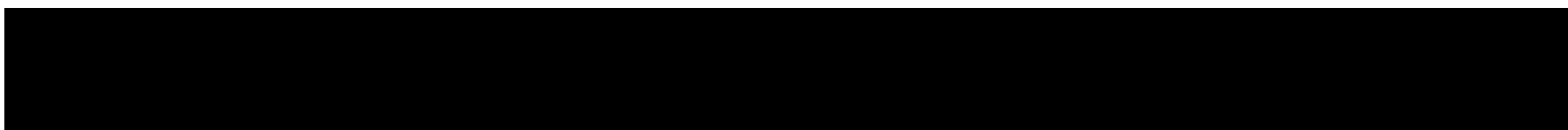




There are “parties” and there are *parties*. Pretending to be on the bridge of a virtual spaceship piloted by you and your friends is definitely the latter, as far as I’m concerned.

These parties inevitably wind up with snacks scarfed, drinks spilled, and your virtual bridge crew desperately trying to hold the ship together and complete the mission. No one has a cohesive idea of what you’re doing, and you try to function as a team, but inevitably blame each other for each brush with destruction, praying you don’t get too close to an alien armada or get sucked into yet another black hole due to your pilot’s incompetence—trust me, it’s amazing.

With that in mind, these three games are the best spaceship simulation party games on the market today. These games are affordable and easy to set up, and they’ll test your ability to function under extreme pressure—not to mention the strength of your friendships—in equal measure.





'ARTEMIS: SPACESHIP BRIDGE SIMULATOR'

Developer: Thom Robertson

[Artemis: Spaceship Bridge Simulator](#) is essentially a *Star Trek* spaceship bridge come to life, wherein three to six players command the ship of their choice and work to carry out missions, defend space stations, fight aliens, dodge minefields, and navigate around black holes (as necessary). It's sort of the big daddy of spaceship simulators, the most detailed by far but also incredibly fun in the right setting and with the right people.

Each player takes on a certain role and controls certain ship systems from their computer or mobile device, and it's the teamwork that makes *Artemis* sing. Granted, some crew slots are more glamorous than others; everyone will want to be the captain, of course, and who doesn't want to control the weapons systems? But it's the subtle roles like science and communications and engineering that make the difference. Take on the communications role and you can transmit the perfect insult about an alien's mother to lure that final spaceship you need to destroy into a black hole, while the engineer will have to figure out where to get power and coolant from to keep the ship from melting down. And only the science officer can scan an entire fleet for weaknesses to exploit and convey them to the crew, making the game that much more fun.

Add a good speaker system, a digital projector, and a screen to the mix, turn down the lights, and you have a party game that just became epic. *Artemis* is available for Windows, Android and iOS, with cross-platform play between versions so you can play with your friends no matter what device they're on.



'QUINTET'

Developer: Carmine T. Guida

Quintet is a leaner, tighter version of what *Artemis* does so well, and an excellent party game in its own right. In *Quintet*, you and up to four friends take control of a spaceship, dividing roles between the captain, helm, tactical, engineering, and science positions.

Where *Artemis* takes on the formality and regimentation of *Star Trek*, *Quintet* feels like more like a speed run in the vein of *Star Wars* (if you don't know the difference, then these games might not be for you—see entry three on the list!). Guida obviously focused on making a multiplayer game that will let you get you online, tear through the galaxy and take on missions at breakneck speed. Teamwork is still crucial here, but you also have the option of setting up your *Quintet* ship with a skeleton crew of just one to two people. And there are tons of different types of missions and modes available.

Quintet is available for just about every platform you can name (OS X, Windows, Linux, iOS and Android) and is easy enough to set up in a party environment. Have everyone grab a laptop or an iOS or Android phone or tablet, make sure they're on the same Wi-Fi network, create a game in the lobby, join the game, and you're good to go—easy!



'SPACETEAM'

Developer: Henry Smith/Sleeping Beast Games

Spaceteam is perhaps best described as an insanely fun, barely organized disaster of the highest order. It's the reason you brought your iOS or Android phone or tablet to the party in the first place. It has two advantages over *Artemis* and *Quintet*: one, that it's the easiest to set up (just make sure everyone's on the same Wi-Fi network and has the game downloaded). And two, that it's total chaos.

Unlike *Artemis* or *Quintet*, there is no real formal function in *Spaceteam*. There are buttons to push and phones and tablets to shake and flip around, and each player sees different controls, different instructions and different commands to follow on their screen. The end result is two to four players sitting in a room laughing and screaming commands such as "Set U-Wheel to Maximum!!!", "Set Megavent to 2!!!", "Feed the livestock!!!" and "Disable Hexiron!!!" to each other, each person hoping the person next to them has the button that needs to be pushed on their screen.

As you play, controls will spark, partially melt, have smoke and slime ooze from them, come loose out of their mountings and begin to swing wildly across the rest of the control panel and need to be manually dragged back into place. This only gets harder as you complete each level, the time allowed to complete each task becoming that much shorter and the game sending you through wormholes that melt and distort your controls.

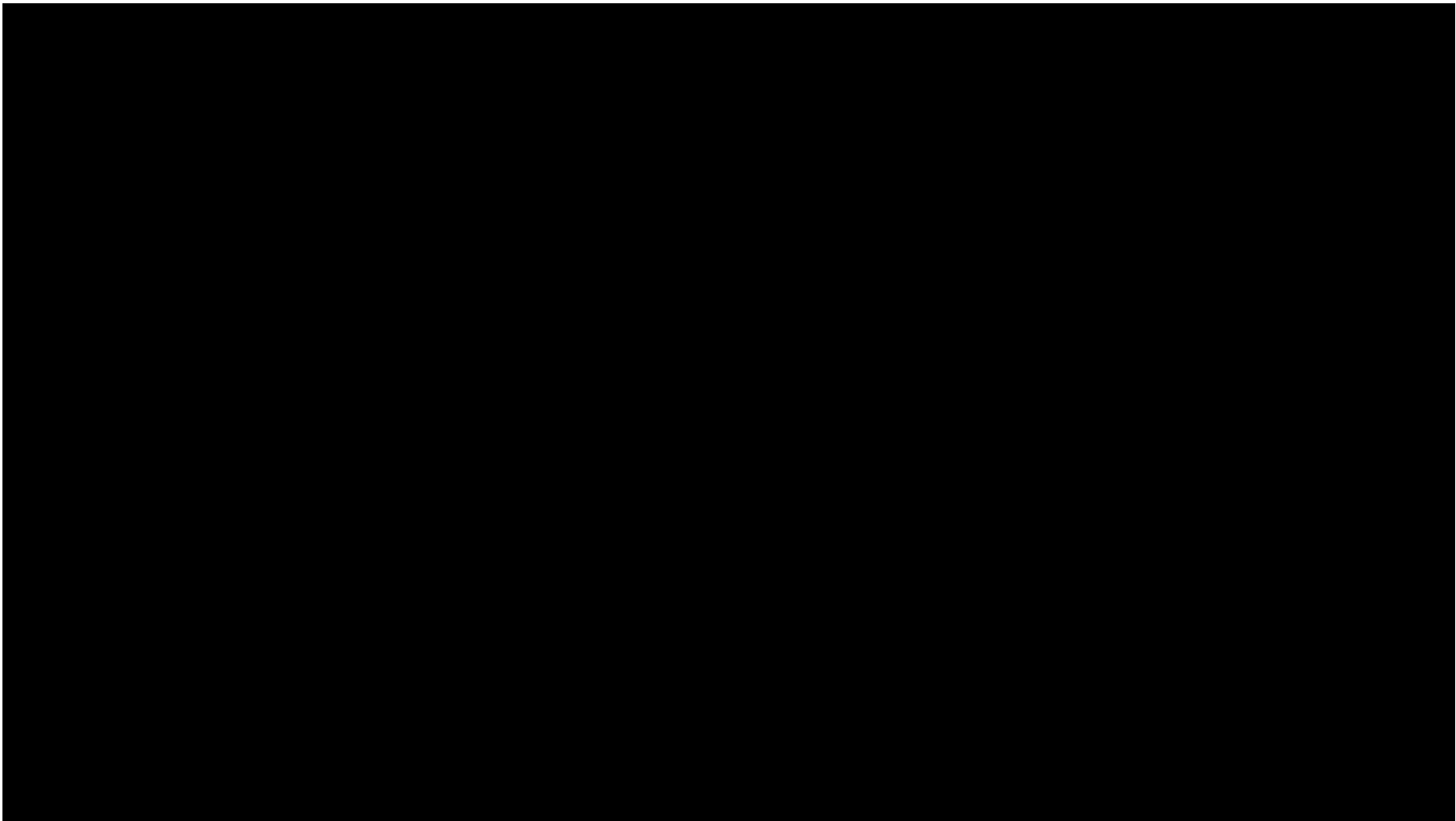
Spaceteam is everything a party game should be, even if the end result has you screaming only semi-logical commands, cursing your friends, laughing and both dreading and looking forward to the next level, wondering what demented madness the creators have thought up for you to endure next. It's available for iOS and Android.



Chris Barylick is a gaming journalist living in Berkeley, California. He has written for GamePro, PC Gamer and the Washington Post and was once tackled by a heckler who looked exactly like George Lucas.

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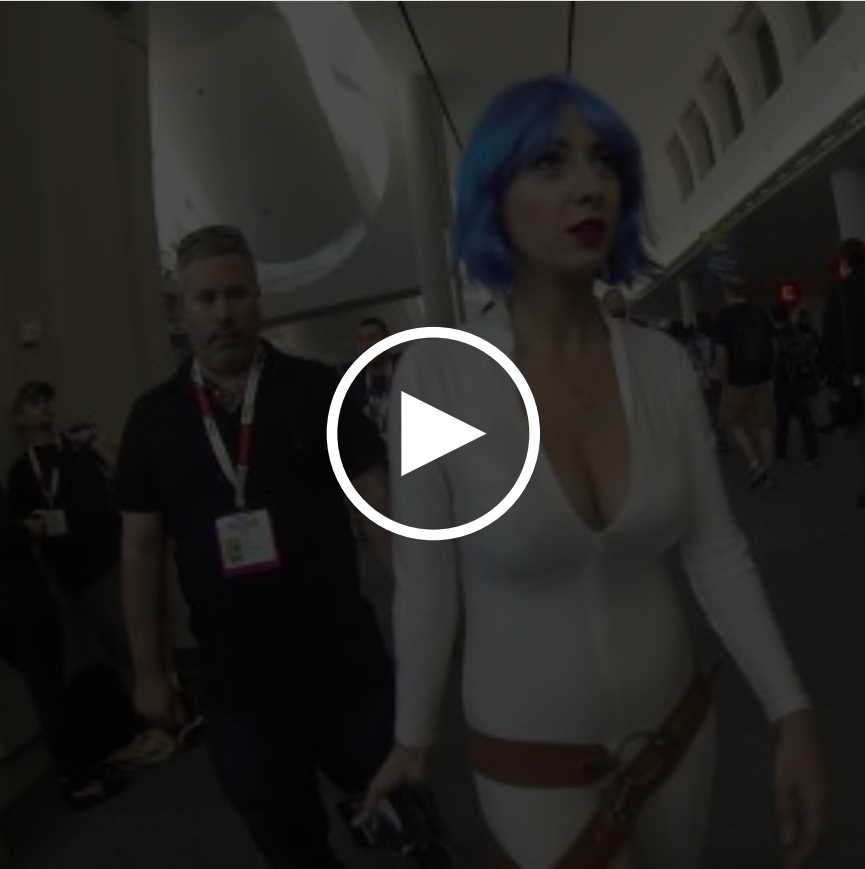


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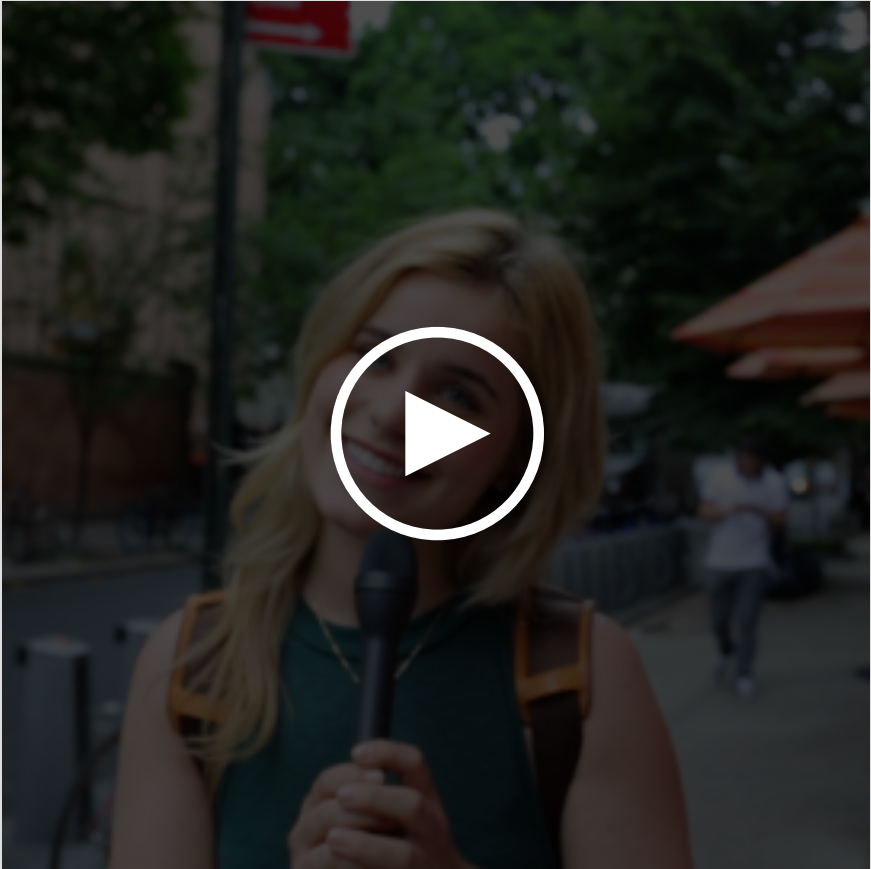
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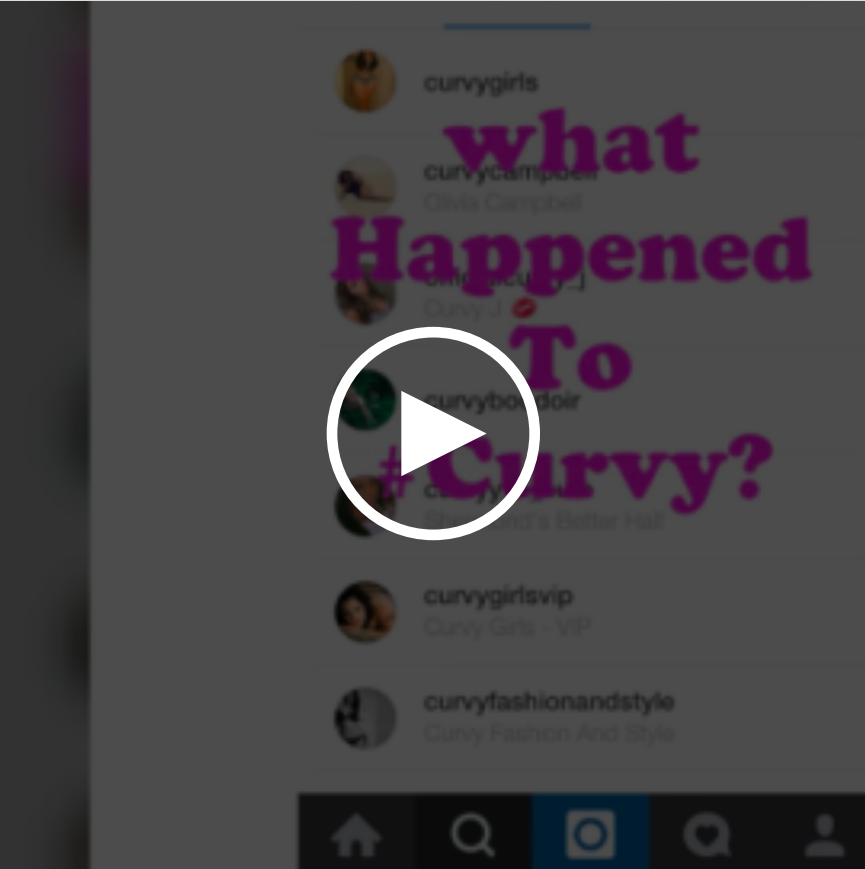
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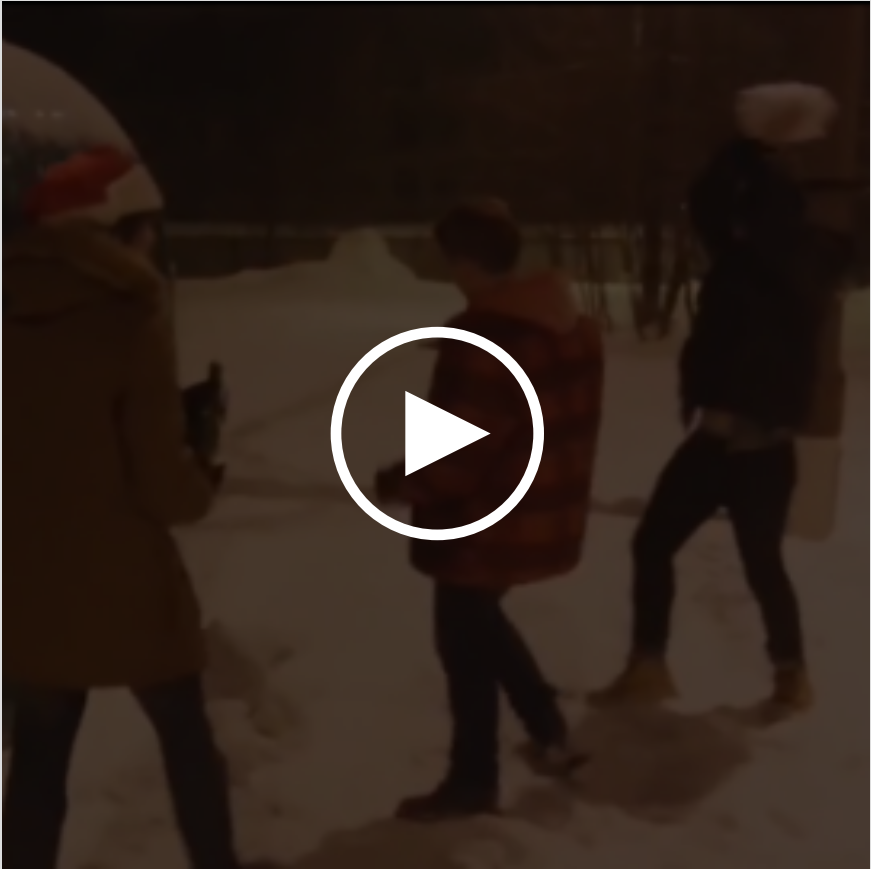
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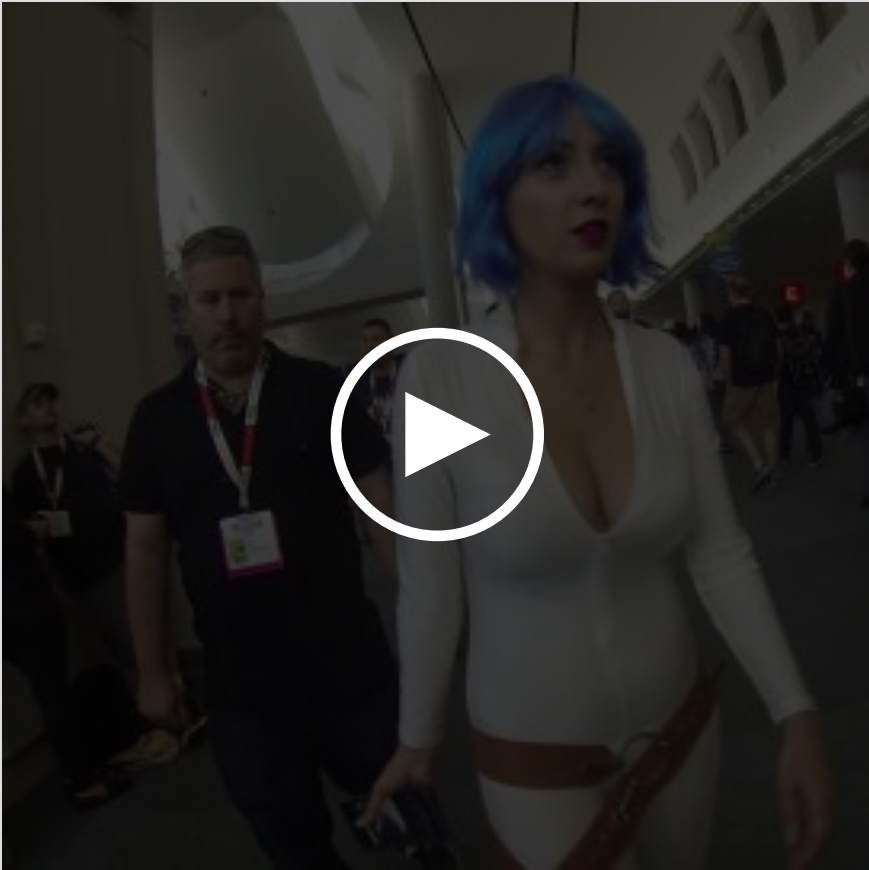


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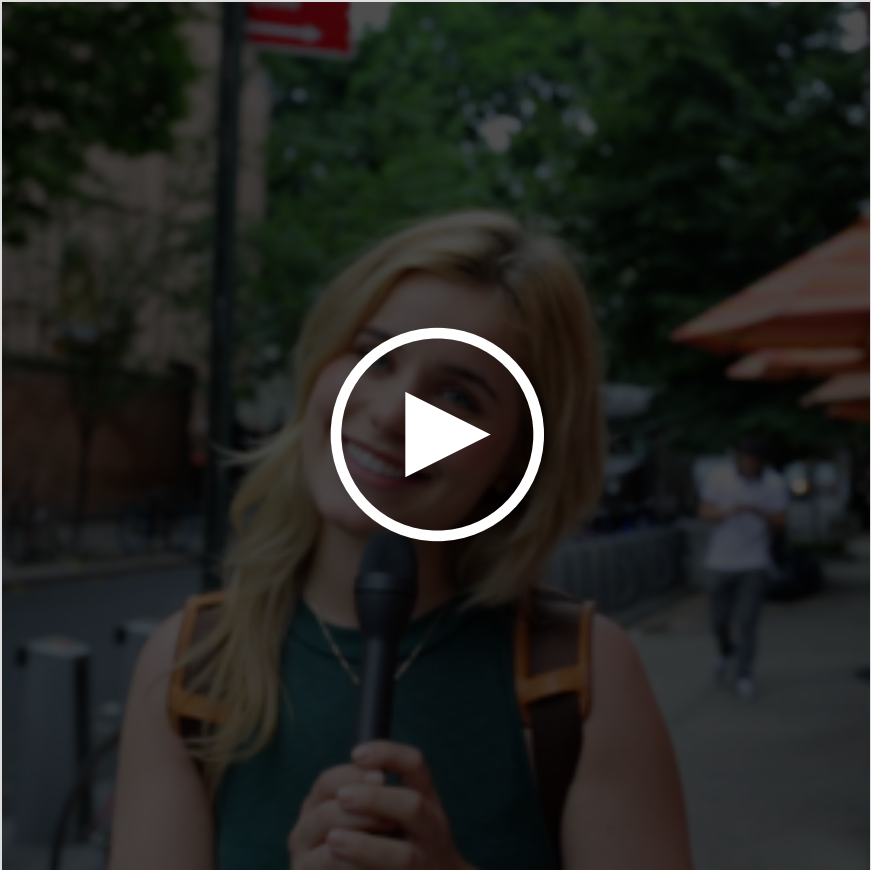


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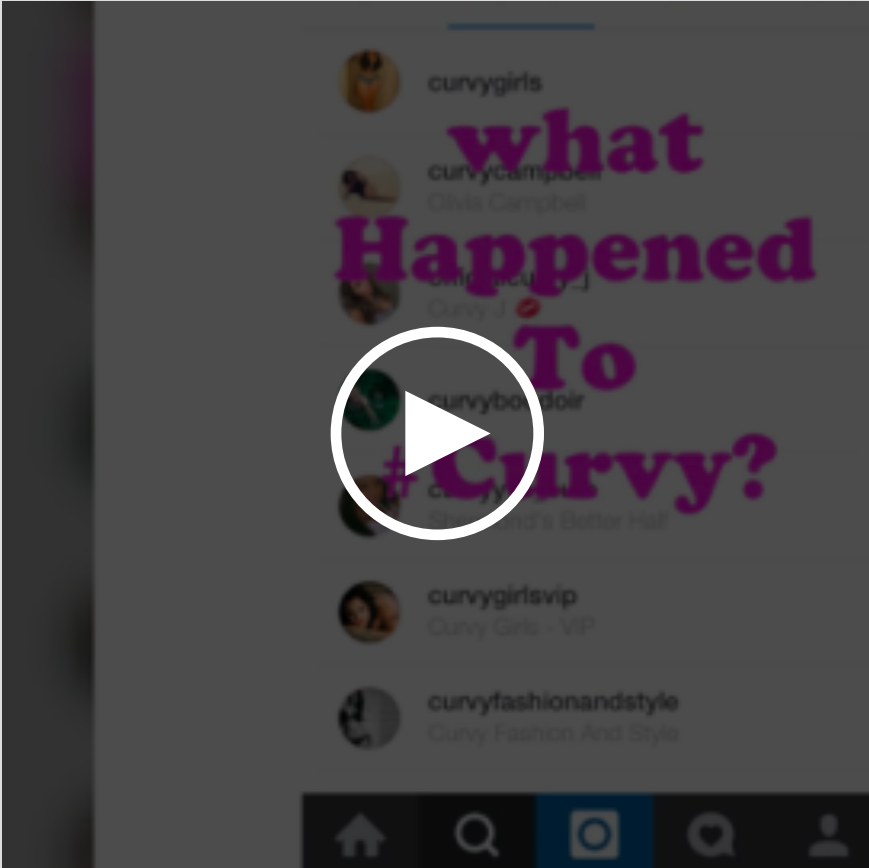
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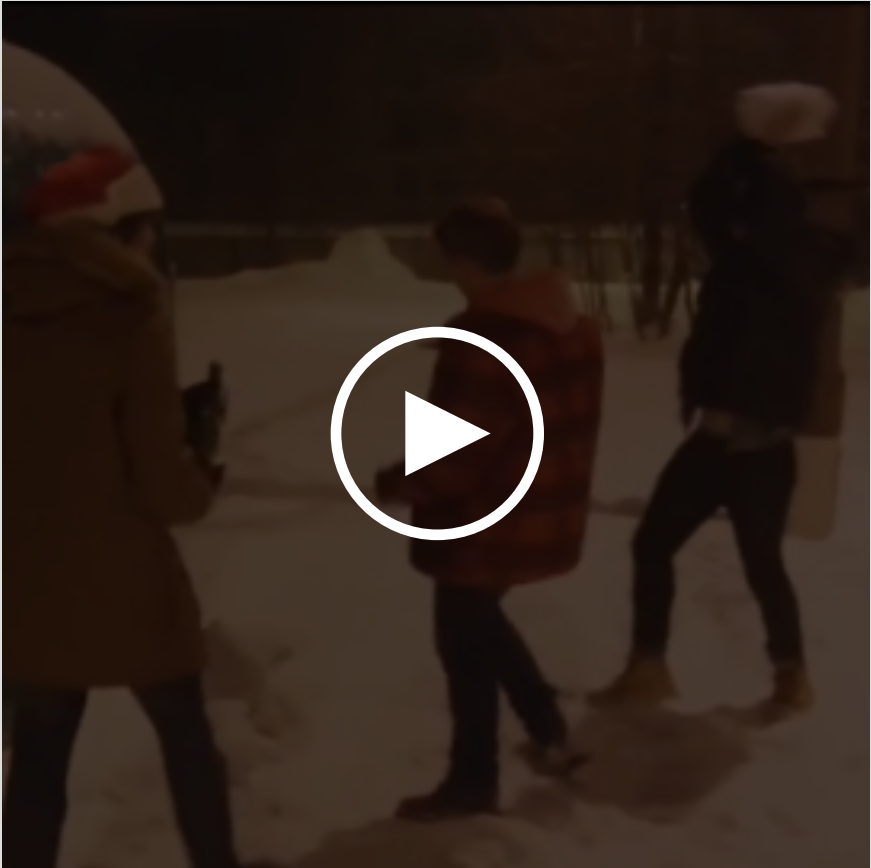
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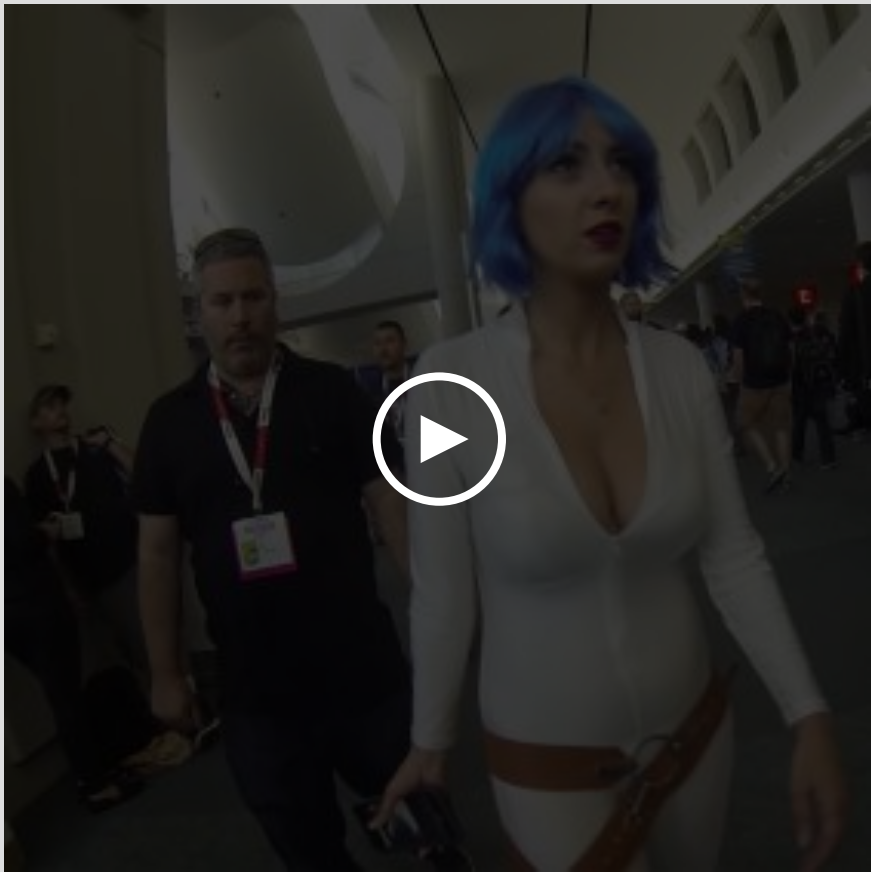
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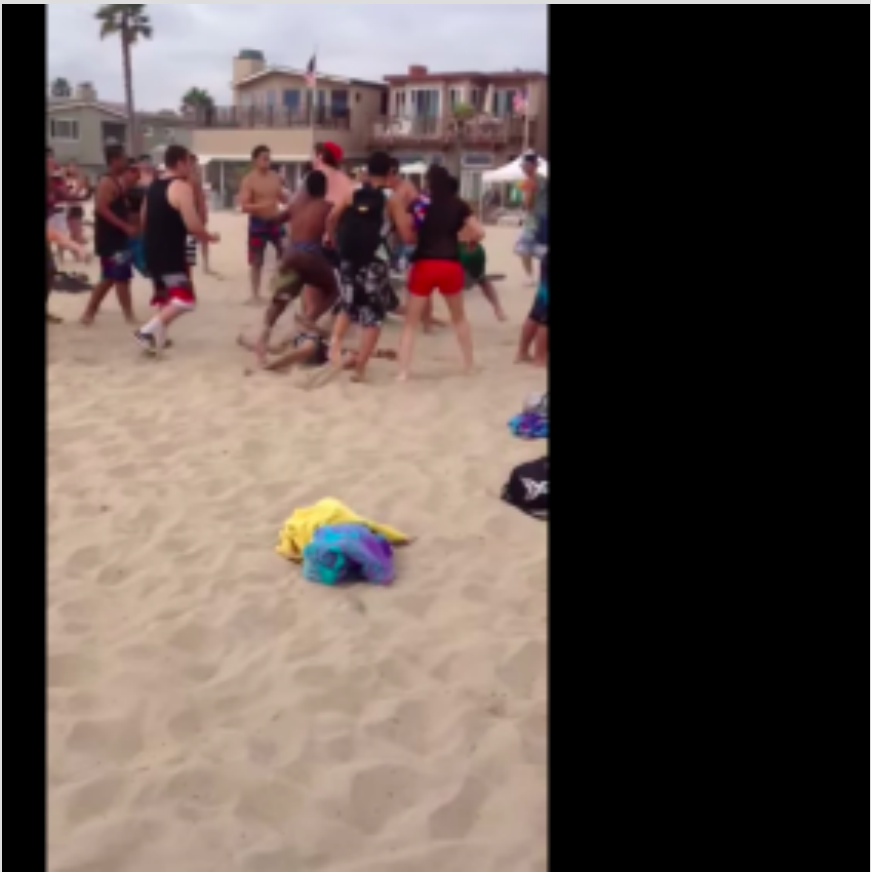
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