

# THE WORLD'S END (Wright, 2013):

Audiences

## Arrival activity

UK monthly cinema admissions figures for 2013 from [www.launchingfilms.com](http://www.launchingfilms.com)

January	17,081,700
February	13,960,141
March	10,885,645
April	11,887,940
May	15,607,698
June	13,029,685
July ( <i>The World's End</i> released)	<u>14,321,221</u>
August	17,639,654
September	9,885,140
October	11,865,573
November	13,669,359
December	15,706,221
Total	165,539,976

Looking at these figures, do you think that *The World's End* could have been released earlier or later in 2013 and done better business?

### Task 1

Look closely at [this extract](#) from a message board on imdb.com about *The World's End*.

- What are the benefits to audiences of discussing the film online?

### Task 2

Read through this negative online review of *The World's End* and discuss the following questions:

- What doesn't the reviewer like about the film?
- What do you think that he means when he says that he is 'not in the demographic' for the film?
- Based on what you have seen so far, who is the main and secondary audience for this film?
- What points does he make about the stars of the film? Do you agree with him?
- Does he make any relevant points about the genre or narrative of the film?
- To what extent are reviews – especially online reviews – useful (or not) for audiences?
- Do you think that he highlights any issues about why the film failed at the box office?

#### Film Review: 'World's End' unfunny, tedious end to Cornetto trilogy

By Julien Fielding

Fielding on Film | Posted 8 months ago

I'm not in the demographic for "The World's End," and I knew that when I went to see it.

I tried keeping an open mind, too, but alas, I found the newest sci-fi/comedy by actor-writer Simon Pegg and writer-director Edgar Wright to be unfunny and tedious. (I checked my watch many, many times throughout its 109-minute running time.)

The last film in the Cornetto trilogy – the others are "Shaun of the Dead" (2004), and "Hot Fuzz" (2007) – "The World's End" is about five friends who reunite after 20 years to complete an epic pub crawl.

Gary King (Pegg), a Sisters of Mercy ultra-fan who is a bit of a loser, is the one responsible for "getting the band back together."

Despite the fact that his friends (Paddy Considine, Martin Freeman, Nick Frost and Eddie Marsan) are all fairly successful and infinitely more mature, Gary somehow convinces them to return home for the 12-pint-in-one-night binge-fest. (He lifts his philosophy of life from the Soup Dragon's song "I'm Free," which proclaims "I'm free to do what I want any old time.")

When they get there, something has clearly changed. The pubs have become Starbuck-afied and the townspeople are, well, robotic. As the night goes on, the friends realize that the fate of humanity may very well rest in their hands.

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Though I like most of the actors in “The World’s End,” I didn’t like this movie. (That said, I don’t like the other films in the Cornetto trilogy.) One of my main gripes is the fact that it essentially glorifies binge drinking, which is incredibly dangerous.

Within a short span, these men are going to consume, at the very least, 12 pints of lager. (They also do shots.) Hilarious to some, but the reality is people die from binge drinking. In fact, a man in Spain recently died after winning a beer drinking competition. (He drank 12.5 liters in 20 minutes.) I know I’m a killjoy, but I find the premise of “The World’s End” irresponsible, and can’t find a lot of hilarity in alcohol poisoning.

I can already see fans of this film, getting together for their own “epic” pub crawls. Get the morgues on stand-by.

Pegg makes a wonderful Scotty in the “Star Trek” rebooted films, but I can’t say that I’ve liked him in anything else. His character in “The World’s End” isn’t likable in the least, so I wondered how he managed to convince his friends to join him on his quest.

I’m equally perplexed why actors of such high calibre would say yes to such a weak script. (Since they have appeared in the previous films, it’s probably more a friendship bond than anything else.) Marsan is one of the most versatile actors working today. He is wickedly good as a villain – see him in “Heartless” (2009) – but he’s equally good on the other side of the spectrum – he delivers a very powerful monologue in “Masterpiece Theatre’s God On Trial” (2008). Showtime subscribers will recognize him from “Ray Donovan.”

“In The World’s End,” he plays the son of a car salesman who was bullied in his youth. He has a few standout moments – he gets revenge on a bully – but overall, the “friends” seem to be an after-thought.

Sadly, King, a larger-than-life, obnoxious character gets most of the lines. (And he has extensive narration at the beginning, which really annoyed me.)

There’s a long tradition of having a heavy-set actor start out as henpecked and/or mild-mannered and then, as the film progresses, become increasingly violent and out of control. If you haven’t already tired of this convention, then you will love Andy Knightley (Frost). It’s a generic kind of role that John Candy, Chris Farley, John Belushi ... you name it, could have played with ease.

Freeman, who is probably the film’s “biggest star,” thanks to his being cast as Bilbo Baggins in “The Hobbit,” plays Oliver Chamberlain, the uptight, by-the-book British guy. Gee, where have we seen this character before? Um, in just about every British everything. (I better not find out that production on “Sherlock” was delayed because of “The World’s End.” There will be consequences.)

Considine, another very versatile actor – see him in “Dead Man’s Shoes” (2004) – is slumming it as Steven Prince, a character that exists so that the film can have a love triangle between King, Prince and Sam Chamberlain (Rosamund Pike), Oliver’s sister. Be ready for lots of jokes about a fling that happened in a disabled toilet. Yes, it’s that highbrow.

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The Cornetto trilogy exists to ape and reinvent genre films: “Shaun of the Dead” took on zombies; “Hot Fuzz,” the buddy cop genre; and “The World’s End” tackles alien invasion sci-fi, more specifically it cobbles together elements from “Invasion of the Body Snatchers” (1978), and “The Stepford Wives” (1975).

The biggest insult to me was the end of “The World’s End,” specifically the monologue delivered by King. For nearly two hours we watch five idiots running around, getting totally blottoed and somehow we are supposed to agree that humanity has some inherent worth; that it shouldn’t be replaced. If these characters represent humanity at its best, we really do need alien invaders.

Of course, this is coming from someone who agrees wholeheartedly with Agent Smith (Hugo Weaving) about humanity being a “virus,” and who is always disappointed when Neo and the gang succeed in The Matrix trilogy. Just call me a misanthrope.

I’m certainly in the minority when it comes to disliking “The World’s End,” so you will probably want to take my review with a grain of salt. I know of at least five people who saw it on opening weekend and thought it was “hilarious.”

For me, the only highlight of the film was rediscovering the Sisters of Mercy’s song “This Corrosion,” which plays over the end titles. So, I guess, it wasn’t a total bust, right?

## Follow-up work

1. Go online and find the Twitter account for *The World’s End*.

### Twitter

Look at this and write down the benefits of such social network sites for both audiences and producers.

2. The rising age of people who attend the cinema in the UK.

Age	2009	2010	2011	2012
15-24	39%	38%	31%	25%
25-34	20%	22%	21%	19%
35-44	18%	19%	20%	20%
45+	23%	22%	28%	36%

The statistics above come from the BFI Statistical Yearbook 2013.

Looking at these statistics, do you think that they have any bearing on the final box office figures for *The World’s End*?