

Silent Hill Survival & Secret Guide

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SILENT HILL SURVIVAL AND SECRET GUIDE, v. 1.0

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1.1: WHAT THE FAQ?

"Okay," you're thinking, "There are a dozen other FAQ/WALKTHROUGH guides for this game out on the net. Why the hell should I read yours?" Good question. This is basically dedicated to the strategy of surviving the game. It is not a comprehensive walkthrough or puzzle-solving guide, since there are plenty of those out there that would be better than mine. Nor are there any gameshark codes here. If you need walkthroughs or codes, go to:

<http://www.gamefaqs.com/console/psx/game/20324.html>

This faq is designed to help people who are struggling with the actual fighting portion of the game. Expert players shouldn't need such advice, but if you're a beginner, or an intermediate player (like myself), these tips might come in useful.

Also, I've included a trivial section of "discoveries" that other players and I have made - little things found in the game. Some are amusing, others creepy.

And lastly, I've included an essay about why this game stands out from the usual survival-horror fare (including the Resident Evil series). Not an exploration of the plot itself, as in President Evil's FAQ (which is excellent, by the way: [http://members.xoom.com/prezevil/silent hill](http://members.xoom.com/prezevil/silent%20hill)), but rather just an observation of the game's use of lighting, atmosphere, sound, and visuals to create what is probably the most amazing horror experience ever. I also decided to add a quick list of what I'd like to see in SH 2.

Okay, enough of that. Let's get down to business.

1.2: STAYING ALIVE ON THE STREETS OF SILENT HILL

These are some rules I've formulated after playing the game thorough a half-dozen times or so that should greatly increase your chances of survival.

Rule #1) Walk, don't run.

Okay, I know Silent Hill is a big town for one guy to cover on foot. Consequently, we tend to run through most of it (my average running stats at the end of each game are something like 15 kilometers - no wonder Harry's always out of breath.). Most of the

advice I've seen for surviving out in the open is "Run like hell". This is probably not bad advice, but that seems to take all the fun out of the game for me. I'm one of those guys who hates the "speed run-through" approach to gaming. I like to take my time, explore the environment, and most importantly, KILL EVERY MONSTER THAT DARES TO CROSS MY PATH!

Running saves time getting across town, but often you end up running into a pack of monsters in the process. When you hear that radio start to hum, slow down and ease forward. Often you can spot the monster or pack of monsters before they spot you, and then decide whether to go around or fight through them. This is least effective with air screamers (winged monsters) who tend to appear out of nowhere, but sometimes you can sneak up on them when they're perched and take them out without too much trouble.

Rule#2) Flashlight = Monster magnet - observe blackout conditions whenever possible.

One of the coolest things about this game is the flashlight, and the lighting effects the game uses in darkened areas. Most players, including myself, run through all the dark parts of the game with the light always on the first few tries. While this helps you see better, it also draws every monster in the vicinity to you like bugs to the porch light. Knowing when and how to use the light makes a BIG difference in the game strategy, and can greatly increase your chances of survival.

Turning off the light makes it more difficult to navigate outdoors in the dark, but you should be able to see enough detail to make your way along. You can always stop and turn it on long enough to look at the map (so long as your radio's quiet). Use your radio to locate enemies in the dark, as the sound will change in pitch and volume the closer you get. You can see better in the dark than most of the monsters (if you can't, adjust your screen brightness in the options menu to a level you're comfortable with), and if you can see them first, you can get the drop on them. Get close enough to be sure your shot will hit, then turn on the light and open fire. Once they're dropped, turn it off and move away from that spot before an air screamer can lock onto you.

In buildings like the school or hospital, it's best to turn the light off every time, just before you open the door to a new room. This is most helpful in a room full of demon kids. They usually won't spot you unless you're close to them. Sometimes they'll come very close to you, even right towards you, but don't panic! Unless they make that little moaning noise first, they haven't spotted you yet. They tend to move around the rooms in patterns, so wait until they're spread out and then pounce on the closest one. The others might hear you and come looking for you, but half the time they'll wander past you in the dark. It also helps to get one of the desks between you and them, so you can smack them over the head with a pipe or katana without them lunging at you.

Giant Cockroaches are more of a nuisance than anything. They don't do too much damage, and they don't move around, so they're easy to sneak up on and smash in the dark. The hardest part is spotting them. I usually use the first person view (which you get after playing the game through once, in the secret options screen - press L1,L2,R1,andR2 at once while in the normal options screen for the secret screen). As you walk down a dark hall in first person view, Harry will look straight ahead until he gets close to a roach.

Then the view will shift downward toward the floor, enabling you to spot the roaches.

(one side note about the secret options screen - There is a "bullet adjust" feature that allows you to increase the ammount of ammo you get with each box. This factor increases with every game you play, but you have to go into the secret options screen to enable it. You should never have to worry about running out of ammo in the game with this feature. Running out of first aid, however, is another story)

Doctors and nurses are easier to kill than the zombie kids, especially in the dark. They

don't move around much, are easier to hit, and there are usually fewer of them per room. Often their backs will be to you, and they won't turn around unless you turn the light on, so give them a nice sledgehammer to the back of the skull.

The one place I usually leave the light on the whole time is in the sewer, because I use the first-person view mode (L2) to look ahead and see where the monsters are hanging from the ceiling so I can shoot 'em. I'm not sure how well they can see in the dark, and since the radio won't work down there, I like to have as much advance warning as I can.

With the light off you CAN:

- still see the enemy
- fight accurately with melee weapons
- open unlocked doors, or tell that doors are locked or jammed.
- Shoot and hit a target if you are very close, or hit a target at medium distances with a shotgun.
- still see the location of power ups

You CAN'T:

- take power-ups or items.
- Unlock doors or use keys on doors.
- Look at the map

1.3: KNOW YOUR ENEMY - The monsters, their strengths, and their weaknesses.

Some monsters are tougher than others, harder to hit, etc. Here's a quick rundown.

1)Winged monsters (air screamers) - the first ones you encounter in the game. They are a huge pain in the ass because they seem to come out of nowhere and one big shortcoming of the game engine is that Harry can't look UP. He can aim up, if his weapon is pointing in the right direction, but he can't look up very high to see what direction they're coming from. They have two attacks, the claw and the beak (beak is the worst), and they can locate you fairly well in the dark by sound. There are a couple of strategies that work against them. If you have a good target lock on them and keep pumping rounds into them, they can't attack you, even if they're right on top of you. If you hear one swooping down on you, run in circles or figure-eights until he shoots past (he almost always misses if you're moving in circles), then you can track him once he's gone past and shoot him when he comes in on his next strafing run. Also, if there are any recessed doorways or awning-covered businesses close by, try to take cover in one of them. That way he can only attack you from one direction. You'll generally run into these things one at a time, but occasionally they will come and attack in packs of 3-6. This usually happens at certain locations, mainly on the way to the drawbridge or amusement park, but also at other locations - usually at the "ends" of the streets, where the chasms are. This is probably a good time to run like hell, but, stubborn me, I like to stand my ground and take them on. The best thing to do is to keep moving and firing, standing still as little as possible. Be prepared to go through a couple of health drinks, though.

Don't even think about trying to use hand weapons against these things.

2)Dogs - Not as tough as the winged monsters, but they tend to roam in packs of 2-3. They are fairly easy to sneak up on in the dark or fog, but once they spot you, you'd better be ready to shoot. The best time to fire is when they're in mid-leap, or when their side profile is exposed. If they're on the ground and facing you, the pistol tends to miss unless you're in very close. You can use hand weapons, but you will take a lot of damage at first until you learn to time their attack. I have killed them with the katana, but it's hard to time the attack just right. Too soon, and you'll miss them, too late and

they'll

already be in your face and biting. Ideally, you want to smack them in mid air. Best stick to firearms unless you're feeling cocky.

3) Demon children - I hate these bastards. They are small, hard to hit, tough, and usually hunt you in packs. Plus they are creepy as hell. I'm always more than a little afraid of these punks, and with good reason. I've already discussed my tactics for fighting them in the dark, and most of the time they work quite well. Sometimes they will spot you and gang up on you anyway. Don't let them. If you can get past them down the hall or to the other side of the classroom, you'll have time to catch your breath and plan your next attack. Plus you might lose them in the dark. The main idea is to not let them gang up on you. One of these guys can do enough damage with the lunge attack where he grabs your legs. If the others start stabbing you as well, you're toast. Try to use the fast-tap attack

with hand weapons and hit them just before they get into lunging range, otherwise they will lunge in under your swing and grab you with that evil little laugh of theirs.

4) The big lizard in the basement - this was the toughest boss for me at first, because he can kill you in one bite. Don't let him back you up against the wall, or you're gone. The best tactic I've found is to stand in the middle of the room, close the little iron fence around the flame. He will come around that and try to charge you. Don't let his head get past your body or he'll bite you as you try to back up. Keep your body positioned in front of his snout. He'll try to back you up to the wall, but stand your ground, even if he nudges you. As soon as his mouth starts to open, start backing up and shooting. Always stay close to the center of the room, so you have plenty of room to back up.

5) Nurses and Doctors - I've never found these guys too much of a challenge. They're slow on the attack and fairly easy to kill. They're usually alone, or far enough apart that

they can't attack you together. Occasionally, they will attack you in pairs, and one will grab you while the other one stabs. That can be bad news, but they're so slow they're fairly easy to get away from. Always use a hand weapon on these guys and save your ammo.

6) Simians - those ape men that jump you on the street. Their attack pattern is similar to dogs, and they can also be hard to hit with a gun. Again, you can try to use a hand weapon, but I wouldn't recommend it if there are more than one of them. The good thing is that once they're on the ground, they take a little time to get up, so you can finish them off quickly.

7) Sewer dwellers - these are the ceiling hangers, and the teddy bears with Freddy Krueger claws. If they're on the ground, the hand weapons are fairly effective. The Teddy bears will lunge like the demon children do, and they have a longer reach and do more damage. They can be killed fairly easily one at a time, but if two of them gang up on you it's a real pain in the ass to get them off of you. Remember, "Use a gun, if more than one" (preferably a shotgun).

8) Specters - near-invisible demon children. I HATE these guys. You can beat them with a katana or hammer, but it's hard to judge the distance since you can barely see them, and be ready to down at least a few health drinks to keep from dying. Best bet is the shotgun. It can hit things, even in the dark, and hopefully hit more than one of them at once. Thankfully, you only run into them in a few rooms toward the end of the game. Good thing the school isn't full of them!

9) Giant worm/moth. - In the worm stage, it's easy to avoid taking damage. Just stand in place, don't run around trying to dodge it. It'll usually come up behind you, so as soon as you hear it, dart forward so its poison spit misses you. Then turn around and blast away at

it as it burrows into the ground.

The moth is a little tougher. He takes a lot more hits, and will both shoot poison at you and hit you with his stinger. The best bet is to run up to the part of the roof where the water tower is, then walk backward around the tower as you fire at him. This is kinda hard to do, but the main thing is to not stand still or too close, so he can't sting you too

often. Use the shotgun on this guy (or hyperblaster if you've got it, since you can't use the rifle and walk backward at the same time.

10)Alessa/Samael - Hmmm. This final boss isn't too tough to kill, but the lightning attack does a lot of damage. The most common tactic I've heard is to run around in a circle to dodge the lightning. This hasn't worked very well for me, so I just keep healing after each hit and shooting. If you've played well, you should have at least half a dozen first aid kits left by the end of the game, which should be more than enough to finish it off. You can't get too close to Alessa since there's a barrier there, but she's easier to hit

since she's on the ground. Samael has no barrier, so you can get right under him. Supposedly, if you do, his lightning can't hit you, but I haven't tried that yet. Best advice

is make sure you have plenty of ammo for the big guns and at least those five or six medkits by the time you reach the final battle.

Supposedly if you're out of ammo, the game will automatically let you win in the final showdown. I don't know if this works on hard mode, though, or if you have a hyperblaster.

Note that with most of the monster types, some seem to be tougher than others. Sometimes the average flying monster or zombie kid will go down with 1-2 hits, and other times, the bastard will take 6-7 hits or more and keep coming. I think part of it depends on how solid of a hit you get with your weapon, but other times they are definitely tougher than their counterparts.

1.4: THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE RIGHT JOB -What weapons to use and how to get them.

The game gives you plenty of weapons, but knowing when to use which ones makes a big difference between living and dying. Here's a quick breakdown.

FIREARMS:

1)Pistol - most commonly used, but also the least accurate. Sometimes it misses even at close range with a non-moving target! This generally gives you shitty shooting statistics at the end of the game (I think my highest so far has been 40% accuracy). The good thing is you can move while you shoot. It can hit targets in the dark at point-blank range as well. Most effective against: flying monsters, dogs, simians, doctors/nurses. Least effective against zombie kids and sewer dwellers. Given to you by Cybil in the diner.

2)Shotgun - decent weapon that's effective against all monsters, although some take more hits than others. It's about the only weapon that can hit anything in the dark at medium range, and it also lets you move while you shoot. It's found in the girl's downstairs bathroom in the alternate school.

3)Rifle - It won't let you move and shoot at the same time, but it packs a decent punch. This weapon is best used for picking off the ceiling-hangers in the sewer levels, or for the final bosses. This is found in the pit where you face the big worm.

4)Hyperblaster - The best firearm in the game. The shots are not as powerful as a rifle or

shotgun blast, but it has a higher rate of fire and unlimited ammo. The laser sight makes it deadly accurate, and it rarely misses (unless in the dark). The only bummer is, none of your hyperblaster shots count towards your final shooting stats, so if you use it the whole game, you'll get 0.0 across the board. I guess that's a small price to pay for unlimited firepower, though.

This weapon is tricky to get. You can find out how to get it in any walkthrough, but I'll give a quick rundown of the steps here.

You'll have to finish the game once to get the channeling stone (or use a gameshark to put the channeling stone into your inventory). I suggest you get the bad+ ending on purpose so that you can hopefully get the katana too. On your second run through, you'll find a "channeling stone" in the convenience store. If you use this at the following locations, you'll get the UFO ending, where Harry is abducted by aliens (as if this friggin' town isn't weird enough). You will get a next fear game with the hyperblaster already in your inventory. Use the channeling stone here:

- 1) On the rooftop of the alternate school
- 2) In the courtyard where the hospital front door is, just before you fight the giant moth in alternate Silent Hill.
- 3) In the parking lot of Norman's motel, in the resort area.
- 4) In the control room of the boat, on the way to the lighthouse
- 5) on top of the lighthouse, after Alessa vanishes.

There are cheat codes to get a ten star ending, which will give you a souped-up hyperblaster with a green beam (as opposed to the usual red). This weapon is extremely powerful and almost makes the game too easy. The codes are at: <http://community-2.webtv.net/BatStrat/GSCODES/>

HAND WEAPONS:

When using hand weapons, it's important to remember that there are two attack modes. A fast double tap of the X button makes the weapon swing from side to side with two strokes. Holding down the X button makes Harry swing the weapon in an overhand attack. This is more powerful than the fast attack, but also takes more time. However, this is the only move that will work on a creature who is on the ground injured, or who is lunging to grab your legs. Learn to time your attack with the monster's approach and choose the appropriate attack mode. Also, you can hit more than one monster with one blow, if they are close together.

- 1) Knife - Don't even bother. You're better off just running like hell.
- 2) Hand Axe - see #1, ha ha. This is more powerful than the knife, but still pretty useless. I hit a demon kid with this thing several times in hard mode and he wouldn't even fall down, much less die. The only good thing about these weapons is that you can walk while using them, but they still suck. Don't even bother, but if you want to try it, it's in the antique shop in Central silent hill.
- 3) Steel pipe - A decent, if unglamorous, weapon. It's a little slow, but packs a fair punch. Not my first choice, but it'll do in a pinch. You can't move and use it at the same time, so be ready to stand your ground. Found in the alley when you look for Cheryl.
- 4) Sledge hammer - probably the best of the conventional hand weapons. It packs a good

punch, and best of all, when you knock a monster down with it they tend to twitch and go into some kind of seizure before they die, which is kind of fun to watch. I usually like to

have Harry kick them in the head or between the legs for good measure. Man that looks like it would hurt! This weapon found in the generator room in the hospital basement.

Special Hand Weapons:

1) Chainsaw - found in the cut-rite chainsaw store in old Silent Hill. You need to find gas in the gas station to use it first, and you won't get gasoline until you've played through at least once. Not a bad weapon, but it takes twice as many hits to kill something as with the hammer or katana, and it's a bit too slow, giving the enemy time to stab you between your slashes. If you have dual shock, the controller shakes in your hand for as long as you have it turned on, which is kind of cool except that you can't tell how much damage you're taking from the vibration warnings.

2) Rock drill - found in the storage room beneath the drawbridge control tower. Also needs the gasoline. This weapon is basically good for letting enemies run straight into it as they charge you. I don't think it has a fast attack mode and it's also kind of slow, so I generally wouldn't recommend it, especially against more than one enemy.

3) Katana- Oh, how I love this weapon! I played the game various times trying to get it, and finally broke down and used a game shark. It's the most difficult weapon to get in the game, and several people claim to have gotten it with different endings, difficulty modes, and rankings. However, most people seem to have gotten it with the bad+ ending (where you save Cybil, but do not save Kaufman - If you want a better explanation, look below or read a full walkthrough), and that was the only ending I ever got it on (in hard mode) without using a game shark.

The room where you get it is in the house on Levin street, with the locked door inside. If you see the katana on your prize screen, that door will be unlocked on your next game. I thought it would just be a closet you find it in, but the room it's in is actually kinda cool.

It's small, but it looks like a little dojo with Japanese-looking architecture and art on the walls.

In the far corner is a small bench, and a stand with two swords on it. The katana is

the big one, and the only one you can take. If you get to this room, give yourself a big pat

on the back. This damn weapon was my holy grail in this game for a long time, since I'm a big fan of games like "Tenchu: Stealth Assassins," "Soul of the Samurai" and any other game involving Japanese swordplay.

Using the katana is a bit tricky at first, but it's very fast, graceful-looking, and pretty

deadly. When you hold the aim button, Harry will hold the weapon at his left side. Fast attack mode, he'll double-slash the enemy with a diagonal upward slash, followed by a downward slash. This can be repeated a couple of times until the bastard falls down and is so fast that they usually can't stab you in return. The second attack mode will make Harry raise the sword high over his head and slash downward. This weapon is pretty effective against the demon kids, but you have to be careful and not let them gang up on you. It seems to work best if you can sneak up on them from behind and get them with an overhead blow. That will sometimes kill them with one shot, even on hard mode. If you have two or more coming at you, use the fast slash on the first one. As soon as he falls down, release the target button and then hold it down again. This will lock you onto the

next one in line. If you forget to release the target button, Harry will still attack the one laying unconscious on the ground, giving the other one time to lunge and grab you. Make sure you attack the upright ones only at first, then go back later and finish them off when they're all down.

Also keep in mind that this weapon makes you lunge forward a bit when you use it. Remember that, when judging the distance between Harry and the target. If you get solid hits, you can even lunge forward between swings and strike down 2 or 3 monsters in a row. This weapon is best used in one on one situations and on monsters that you encounter indoors. Nurses and doctors are especially easy prey, and after you kill them, they just stand there for a moment before falling over dead, like in those old Kung-fu/Samurai movies. Pretty cool.

The Katana really makes the game a lot more fun and is the best hand weapon in the game hands-down, although the sledge hammer is a close second.

1.5: THIS IS THE END, MY FRIEND . . . or is it?

There are five endings to Silent Hill, each with it's own cinematic sequence and reward given afterward. I won't go into detail on the cinematic sequences, since I don't want to spoil it for the new people. However, I will list the endings and what you need to do to get them. Briefly, they are:

Bad:

-Do not go into Annie's bar in the resort area and save Kaufmann
-Do not save Cybil at the merry go round with the red liquid you found at the hospital
Reward: Not sure, Possibly a channeling stone or a gas can for the chainsaw or rock drill, depending on your stats.

Bad+

-Do not go into the bar and save Kaufman
-Do save Cybil at the merry go round by using the red liquid on her.
Reward: The katana, and possibly any or all of the previously mentioned items as well.

Good

-Save kaufman and find the red liquid hidden in the motorcycle at the motel
-Do not save Cybil at the merry go round with the other red liquid from the hospital
Reward: Probably a channeling stone and gas for the gas-powered weapons

Good+

-Basically, save both Kaufmann and Cybil, and find the red liquid in the motorcycle
Reward: Channeling stone and gasoline for weapons.

UFO: This quirky little ending only lets you get about two-thirds of the way through the game before making you start over. However, once you get to your next game, you will have the hyperblaster, guaranteed. Note that this is the only way to get a working hyperblaster. If you try to use a gameshark cheat to put one into your inventory, There will be a gun in Harry's hand, but he won't be able to aim or fire it. Kinda sucks, huh? Thank the programmers at KCET for that one.

There is also an insidious rumour flying around the net about a sixth ending where, after driving an ambulance and a boat around parts of the game, you get to a different ending where you find Cheryl and live happily ever after. This is most likely a prank, however there are certain things in the game which lend a small amount of believability to this story. As far as I and others have been able to determine, this ending does not exist on the commercial version of the game, but only on an advanced beta copy released in CD-R

form before the final version was released. However, I have spoken to a couple of people who have that version and have still not yet been able to find it. At this point, the jury is still out, but it most likely does not exist. If anyone actually proves otherwise, drop me a line at <mailto:y2mckay@hotmail.com> because I want a copy of it!

1.6 : "HMMM, DIDN'T NOTICE THAT BEFORE . . . Interesting discoveries made about town.

Silent Hill is a game that is extremely rich in atmosphere and pays a lot of attention to detail. From the businesses and street signs, residential streets and alleys full of trash cans, it looks and feels like a real town.

Most people will recognize right away that there are many tributes to horror writers, movies, and stories incorporated throughout the game. For instance, all the streets are named after horror or sci-fi writers. The owner of the motel in the resort area is named "Norman", after Norman Bates of "Psycho" fame. And the school is appropriately named "Midwhich Elementary", Midwhich being the name of the town from the "Village of the Damned" movies (which is based on the book "The Cuckoos of Midwhich", I believe). Also the game seems to borrow heavily from the atmosphere of two Stephen King stories in particular: "The Mist", a short story about a town being enveloped by, you guessed it, a mist that is swarming with weird monsters. Also, the feeling of snowbound isolation found in "The Shining" is re-created extremely well in this game.

However, there are many little "discoveries" that I and other players have made that the casual observer might not notice. Some of these are funny, while others are just puzzling or downright creepy. I decided to include a list of them here. Many of these came from other players on the message board at <http://silenthill.evil-online.com> (Props to you all), which is probably the most active Silent Hill board I've seen by far. So here it is, and if you have any you'd like to add, mail me or post it to the board. Keep in mind that many of these will be impossible to spot unless you use the first-person view (which you have to finish the game at least once to get) and get up close to look at.

OLD SILENT HILL:

1) In the diner, there are posters next to the pinball machine that say "Study Dammit" with some hippie-looking guy pictured on them. I thought the guy on the poster was Charles Manson at first, but it turns out that it's actually Stephen King! Thanks to Jason Mcintosh, who sent me the story behind this poster:

"Thanks for maintaining your Silent Hill FAQ. I always love reading these things when I finish a game and want to see all the little things that I might have missed.

I laughed when I read the bit about the posters next to the cafe pinball machine; I can't believe I missed them while I was playing! I can tell you exactly what they are, if you haven't already learned: while Stephen King was a student at the University of Maine, he had a local reputation for being a particularly oddball columnist for the school paper, the Maine Campus (of which I was an editor for a while, albeit over 20 years after the fact). During one semester's finals week, the paper published a two-page, pull-out poster of a psychotically grinning King leveling a double-barrelled shotgun at the viewer, with the bold caption, "STUDY, DAMMIT!" I learned of this some years ago when King was speaking at some public function (he lives in

Bangor, Maine, where I used to live, where he performs random philanthropic acts while the local press swarms around him) and at one point held up a copy of this poster and told its story."

2) If you look closely at the newspaper vending machines about town, the headlines say "Bill Skins Fifth". I think this is a reference to Buffalo Bill from "Silence of the Lambs", and that the same headline appears in the film.

3) One of the many quaint little businesses in Silent Hill is named "The Horned Moon Dance". Sounds like some kind of new-age pagan hang out to me. Or maybe one of those "adult" shops.

4) Another business is simply named "Crabs". On the wall next to Crabs are posters for the movie "Pet Semetary".

5) There are a couple of businesses in town that cater to the hispanic population, one of them being "Virginia's Bodas: Servicio Completo de Bodas" (Complete wedding services). I thought this was very cool because it made the town feel that much more real to me, since in most American towns you will see a few businesses with spanish names that represent the Latino population. It's little touches like these that make the town feel like a real place, much more so than in any other game.

6) Just north and west of the gas station, across the street from it, is a business called "JIM BEAM". The logo for the business is the label from the Jim Beam bottle. Too bad Harry can't go inside for a quick snort. Also, the gas station itself is called "Hell" instead of "Shell", and the logo is a snail's shell. Pretty funny.

7) On the garage door just east of Jim Beam, the word REDRUM is written in blood (From "The Shining," MURDER spelled backwards, of course).

8) There are posters for various bands scattered about town, such as PORTISHEAD, THE BIG BEAT, ULTRA, etc. (Portishead is the only one I've heard of).

MIDWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

1) There are some posters about that say "Dog Kill (third word unreadable)"? The picture of the dog below, however, looks more like a teddy bear, possibly the same ones that attack you in the sewer later on. Some people think that it says "Kill It", and that the evil teddy bear picture is there because in the European version of the game, that is what you fight in the school, rather than the faceless, knife-wielding numblers.

2) There is a poster that asks "Who are you?" in some of the classrooms. It's kind of creepy, for some reason.

3) There is a picture of a kid holding something over his head (or maybe hanging from a tree branch). His eyes are blacked out. Also creepy.

4) There are some pictures that are very hard to make out, but they look like someone either carrying a cross, or being raised up on one.

5) In the alternate school, there are several blue posters on the walls that say "NOTICE: HELL IS COMING". (one player on the message board saw one that said something like "NOTICE: . . . AND HELL CAME AFTER", but I haven't spotted it yet.)

6) There are green posters throughout the game with faint writing that looks like "THE

MARTIANS HAVE LANDED". Possibly a tribute to HG Wells' "War of the Worlds"

7) In the Library reserve, there is a poster that says "A WOMAN CAME DOWN FROM THE PLANET VULCAN". Some people have thought it said "Klingons" instead of "A Woman". It is badly pixelized and hard to read. It looks like it says "Woman" to me, though, since there is also a woman's face below the text. Also, there is a last bit of text after "Vulcan" that is hard to make out, but looks like it may be a row of x's, as in XXX. Possibly this is the poster to some old porno movie? What it's doing in a school library is beyond me.

8) This was brought to my attention by Darkmage, CRS and others:

When you go into the stall in the girl's bathroom in the alternate elementary school, the one where you find the body and the shotgun, look at the writing in blood on the wall to the right. It says "Leonard Rhines The Monster Lurks". This triggers an event in the game where when you go to the library reserve later in that level, you will find a book by that title which talks about young girls generating poltergeist activity. This is a reference to

Dean Koontz's "Phantoms", in which the main characters discover a message left behind in an abandoned town that says "Timothy Flyte the Ancient Enemy". This turns out to be the name of an author and book as well. Whether Leonard Rhines is a real person, or yet another literary reference in and of itself, is not yet known.

CENTRAL SILENT HILL:

1) There is a theater marquee that is hard to read because it's high up and there are trees in the way, but it seems to say "SHOOT" on the east side of the marquee (appropriate title for this game). In the center panel of the marquee it seems to say "EZEKIEL", possibly the theater's name?.

2) In the police station, there is a poster that says "DRUGS" and shows a man's face that is half normal and half-skull. Kind of creepy looking, and vaguely reminiscent of the final scene in "Psycho" when a skull is superimposed over Norman Bate's face.

3) Across from the antique shop there are movie posters on the wall for "CARRIE", another Stephen King reference.

4) Also across the street from the antique shop is a place called "MUSHNIK'S FLORIST". If you look in the window, there is a strange little sign that says "Look on the PHANTASTIC new plant Audrey Junior". At first, I thought this was some kind of wierd reference to the plant used to make the "White Claudia" drug mentioned in the game. However, Daisy Sunshine from the Silenthill.evil-online message board pointed out that this is a reference to "The Little Shop of Horrors". I believe that "Audrey Junior" is that giant venus flytrap that always says "Feeeeeed me" (this is the only part of the film I am familiar with)

5) This is kind of easy to spot, but I just thought I'd mention it. In the hidden room of the antique shop where you find the altar, the words "NO GOD" are scrawled across the wall.

6) Also easy to spot, but there is a KONAMI BURGER joint just west of the hospital

ALCHEMILIA HOSPITAL:

1) One of the posters seen throughout the hospital looks like a breast cancer self-exam

poster. There seems to be a woman with an exposed left breast, her hand covering her right one.

2)The poster of the nurse has text that is very hard to read. I can't make out the middle word at all, but the first and third words seems to say "Last" and then "Life" or "Live" or maybe "Alive". This may be a cryptic message referring to Lisa, who is a nurse and the last one left alive in the hospital. Or maybe I'm just reading waaaay too much into these things ?. Also, others believe that the posters say "Lust for Life", which is the title of the Iggy Pop song used in the film "Trainspotting". Apparently, the game designers were big fans of the movie.

3)There is a calendar, with a picture of what looks like a little girl with short dark hair.
Possibly a reference to Cheryl/young Alessa

4)Sometimes when you fight with and kill the possessed doctors, they let out a little grunting sound that reminds me of comedian Tim Allen from "Tool Time". You know, that little "Uuuungh?" sound he makes. I just thought that was funny as hell.

5)This was first pointed out by "EtherGhost":

"The (hospital) 4th floor was quite spooky, mostly because I thought: what? I can't enter any of the 3 floors? ok, I'll go down to check out what I am missing and suddenly there was 4th button. I thought: what is THIS doing here? and it scared me a lot because I remembered that THERE IS NO 4TH FLOOR IN JAPAN because 4 sounds like "dead" in Japanese and I thought: oh my God, something really bad is going to happen after pushing this button."

I'd never heard of this Japanese superstition before so I did a little searching on the web.

Sure enough, I found the following:

"The number four: The number is pronounced "shi". The word for death is pronounced the same. One should not give presents that consists of four pieces, etc. In some hotels and hospitals the room or floor number four does not exist."

Interesting that they would mention Hospitals.

RESORT AREA:

1)There is a place called SOUTH PARK on the map - the one town in America that is possibly more bizarre than Silent Hill.

2)In Norman's Motel, there is a poster that looks like the old Farrah Fawcett poster that used to grace every boy's wall back in the late seventies.

3)When you look at the newspaper on the table, take a close look at the magazine beneath it. It looks like a porno mag, and, if I'm not mistaken, one woman seems to be straddling another woman's face, receiving oral pleasure most likely. Or maybe that's just wishful thinking on my part.

4)I originally thought that Kaufman's motel room (#3) was the same one Janet Leigh got stabbed in in the film "Psycho". However, I've since learned that it was actually room number 1 in the film. However, if you do look in the tub in Kaufman's room, it says "Nobody inside". It would have been cool to find a trickle of blood or something. Or maybe find a grey-haired wig on the bathroom floor, like the one Norman wore when he

was pretending to be mother. (If you've never seen Psycho, my apologies. I recommend you rent the original).

NOWHERE:

1) Before you go through Alessa's room and into the final battle, there is a ghostly scene you watch in the room just across the hall, where Dahlia Gillespie, Kaufmann, and two others are standing around Alessa's hospital bed and discussing their evil plans. What I find funny about this scene is that one of the other characters sounds almost EXACTLY like the Doctor Mephisto character from "South Park". (If you don't watch South Park, again my apologies).

2) In Alessa's room, at the foot of her bed, there are two creepy looking dolls that look like either Alien greys (the kind that abduct you on the UFO ending) or the little white hooded demon children from the school.

3) This was pointed out by a very keen "Doctor Fell" on the discussion board:

"Yes, I did pick up on the 'Psycho' reference in the motel room in the resort part of SH. But...did anyone else notice another, perhaps more subtle, reference to the same Hitchcock film, namely the ghostly scene Harry witnesses just after he exits the child's room in Nowhere (just before he battles Samael in the end)? When he closes the door behind him he finds himself in a second floor hallway, a door on the left, another one before him on the right, stairs leading down to Samael. Anyone who has seen 'Psycho' should recognize this hallway's uncanny resemblance to the second story landing in Norman Bates's large house. It's the scene in which the insurance investigator slowly walks up the stairs, only to be slashed by Norman's 'mother'. SH got this hallway eerily spot on, even the downward camera angle."

That's all I've found so far. One of the many things I love about this game is that I seem to spot something new every time I play it. I'm probably going to have to take a hiatus from Silent Hill once I finish my current game, but if I find any more I'll be sure to add them.

1.7: "STOP ME BEFORE I PLAY AGAIN" -- Why this game makes us afraid.

I've always enjoyed horror movies and novels. My only problem is that although I enjoyed them, very few of them really scared me at a gut-level. Some of my favorites were John Carpenter's "the Fog", "The Shining" (both book and film), and "The Changeling" with George C. Scott.

I was also a big fan of the Zombie movies, primarily George Romero's "Night of the Living Dead" and "Dawn of the Dead". I had never even considered buying a playstation until I saw somebody playing "Resident Evil 2". I then went out and bought the PSX and the game and played it for weeks. I've also played the prequel and the sequel, and can safely say that no game has captured the spirit of Romero's films as well as the "Resident Evil" series.

But as much as I loved those films and games, none of them ever really SCARED me. Oh sure, there are a few tense moments in the movies when you cringe, wondering if the zombies are going to grab someone. And in the games, there are a few parts where zombies or boss monsters jump out of nowhere to say "Boo". But none of them have ever made me afraid to watch or play them alone in a dark house, or look over my shoulder for Zombies.

Then I decided to rent Silent Hill one day, knowing nothing about it in advance except what I had read on the box. I was immediately sucked into the game's atmosphere, and impressed by how realistic, and even normal, the town of Silent Hill looked (except for monsters, chasms where streets should be, and complete abandonment of human life, of

course). My one problem with the game my first play through was the plot. It made little-to-no sense to me, and the ambiguous ending (I think I got "bad" on my first try), left me puzzled and frustrated. Although I've played the game a number of times since then, and the story has become more comprehensible to me, it is still fairly ambiguous - but I have grown comfortable with the ambiguity. It is that ambiguity, like the atmosphere itself, that makes the game so intriguing. One is always left wondering is this real or illusion? Is

Harry in a coma and imagining it all? Did he somehow get a dose of White Claudia and is now hallucinating everything?

The only movie in recent memory that had the ability to scare me was "The Blair Witch Project". That film works on several of the same levels as Silent Hill. Like the town of Silent Hill, the woods outside of Burkitsville (formerly Blair) present a dark, eerie setting, and a past full of mysterious legends. There is also an ambiguity about the plot, and its resolution, that still creates controversy today. What happened to the three students? Were they killed? Was it a big prank on their part? Was there really a witch that

got them? Rustin Parr's ghost? Rednecks? WHAT? This isn't the kind of movie that necessarily scares you while you're in the theater. It scares you after you've left the theater and your friends have gone home and you're laying in bed at three in the morning looking up at the ceiling and thinking about those ghostly kids' voices outside the tent, and wondering "What would I do if I heard something like that?" and the next thing you know your imagination is running wild and you're hearing sounds that aren't really there from somewhere in the house.

THAT'S the kind of scared I'm talking about, and the kind of fear that Silent Hill evokes. I can't tell you how many times I've had dreams of walking down dark corridors and seeing faceless, hooded creatures with knives moving toward me out of the darkness. It's an instinctive, pulse-pounding fear, and it's addicting. And it's more visceral than what you get from a movie, because you're in it, and whether the character lives or dies depends on your actions.

The reason the game is so effective at creating that fear is that the creators know how to effectively build tension. Harry wakes up in a town that is virtually abandoned, except for the few other characters he occasionally meets. It's quiet, foggy, and cloaked in mystery. As he moves about the town, he has a radio that hums white noise when a creature is close. This is useful tool in the game, but more importantly, it is a plot device used to heighten the tension, because when you come around a corner in the street, or you step into a dark classroom, and you hear that sound, your adrenaline level and heart rate go up. It's reminiscent of the film "Aliens" , when the marines' motion detectors would go off and the little dots on the screen got closer. Those were the most tense moments of the film, and that kind of tension is recreated here.

The game also uses lighting and darkness masterfully to enhance the tension. Even in the daytime, Silent hill is a mist-enshrouded, creepy-ass place. But when it gets dark, and the

only light is coming from your little pocket flashlight, things start to get really interesting.

Then the surroundings start changing, until all that you see is darkness and blood-flecked,

rusted metal. Just when you think you can't stand this oppressive darkness for much longer, the game throws you back into that misty daylight again. Not that it's really any safer than the dark areas of the game, but it feels a bit safer somehow, and you almost breathe a sigh of relief. Well, enjoy it while you can, because it's going to get darker soon, and by the end of the game there is no light left but your own.

This is a nightmare world, under the thin veneer of an average american resort town. Yet it's one the player will feel drawn to again and again. It is a fear that you learn to face,

but never quite conquer completely. Even though I've played this game half a dozen times, I always feel creeped out every time I step into that elementary school or the sewers. I don't imagine that fear will ever completely go away, nor do I want it to. If it does, I know I'll never want to play the game again afterward.

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