

Silent Hill influences and trivia

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The games comprising Konami's critically acclaimed **Silent Hill** series draw inspiration from a variety of sources, and also feature many in-game references to books, movies, and music.

See also : *Themes and Motifs of Silent Hill*

Spoiler warning: *Plot and/or ending details follow.*

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Influences

Jacob's Ladder

Many reviewers have compared aspects of the Silent Hill games to *Jacob's Ladder*, some of the games' developers have acknowledged that they are fans of the film. Aesthetically, the two share an uncertain shifting between layers of the "normal" world and one of stylized filth and slow decay, especially within institutional structures (particularly hospitals and subways); the environments of both feature out-of-place industrial elements such as valves, pipes, and chain-link fencing. Also common between the two are their "monsters", which rely less on typically "monstrous" conventions and more on mutilated humanity, fear of the uncertain, and psychological symbolism. Thematically, both deal with a parallel world inhabited by these monsters, and the relation of this world to the protagonist. In Silent Hill 2, this world serves as a kind of personal purgatory, as in *Jacob's Ladder*. In Silent Hill 3, Heather encounters a subway platform labeled "Bergen Street", which is a real location featured in *Jacob's Ladder*, and the two environs look very similar.

David Lynch

The films of David Lynch also influenced Silent Hill, as stated in Konami's promotional book *Lost Memories*. Both Silent Hill and Lynch's *Twin Peaks* TV series take place in resort towns, and both feature a number of random, menacingly surreal events. Though the town of Silent Hill is not officially located in California, there is a body of water in the town named "Toluca Lake", named after the real Toluca Lake in Southern California. This serves as a roundabout homage; Lynch is legendary for having eaten lunch at the Bob's Big Boy restaurant located in Toluca Lake on Riverside Drive (just down the road from Warner Bros. Studios and Universal Studios) every day for approximately seven years straight. [1] *Silent Hill 2* also uses elements from David Lynch's movies *Lost Highway* and *Blue Velvet*. For example: James both meets a woman that looks like his wife and discovers a video tape on which he kills his wife. These events also take place in *Lost Highway*. Similarly, James' first encounter with the iconic Pyramid Head mirrors a scene in *Blue Velvet* where the main villain of the film is raping a woman while James hides in the closet.

Visual Artists

According to the bonus DVD "The Making of Silent Hill 2", the dirty, hellish locations encountered throughout the Silent Hill series were inspired by the works of artist Francis Bacon. Some of the enemies also bear a striking resemblance to the dolls crafted by Hans Bellmer (see below).

General Trivia

- Throughout the series, it becomes clearer that there may be three levels of reality in Silent Hill. The 'top level' is where people live out their lives as normal, bearing hardly any difference to any other town of its kind. The next level could be called 'Foggy' Silent Hill (or the 'Alternate' Silent Hill), where an all-pervading fog obscures visibility to a matter of feet, similar to Stephen King's *The Mist* (a favorite story of one of the series' developers). Some monsters are apparent at this point, but the town environments are practically unchanged. The third layer down, where the real corruption of the reality lies, can be called 'Otherworld'. This darkness is not just a physical darkness, which is used to put the player on edge, but also corresponds to the kinds of monsters found here. This 'Otherworld' is the rotten core of the town. However, the recent comic book adaptations only have two layers, with Silent Hill being in fact an abandoned and monster-infested ghost town. *Paint It Black* points out that cable, power, and phones all work within the city limits, and the stores are refreshed with food. In Silent Hill 1, the existence of a fourth level may be discussed, it being the monstrous Nowhere, a place even worse than the Otherworld, and infinitely more dangerous. It is there where Alessa Gillespie tries to seal herself with the sigils of the Olympic Spirits before Harry catches up with her.
- It is possible that people that haven't been "called" to the city, ending within its trappings by mistake, are not subjected to any kind of torture by the dark powers of Silent Hill. However, after given a chance to leave, Silent Hill seems to start attacking these people regardless of their purpose. It also becomes apparent the city has no effect upon

innocents-as it draws power from the corruption of souls and uses it as a basis for the nightmares that plague the city.

- Many elements of the series, including out-of-season snowfall (or ashes, as it appears in the film), air raid sirens, power failure, and diseased and disfigured creatures are imagery commonly associated with nuclear apocalypse/winter, especially in genre fiction.
- The 'dark' versions of Silent Hill are a personification of the analytic concept of the abject, a key element in horror genres, as blood, monsters, entrails and rusted metal permeate the scenery.
- In the movie adaptation, the web article about Silent Hill that Christopher DaSilva reads is written by *Andy Milburn*. Andy Milburn is a member of the musical duo Tomandandy, whom composed the score for *The Mothman Prophecies*, a psychological horror movie which shares some similarities with Silent Hill.

Game-specific trivia

Silent Hill 1

- The names K. Gordon, T. Moore, and L. Renaldo appear on a faculty list at the elementary school; they happen to be the names of three members of the band Sonic Youth. (link)
- References to the musical group Psychic TV occur in the game; the Order is responsible for the manufacturing and distribution of a drug called PTV. Also there are boxes in the last level that say "Psychick TV" on them.
- The diner in the beginning of the game has posters for the band Portishead on the windows (see image to right). The Portishead song "Sour Times" is strikingly similar to the main Silent Hill 1 theme.
- *The Little Shop of Horrors* is referenced in the form of a plant shop called "Mushnik's Florist" (the name of the shop from *The Little Shop of Horrors*). (link)
- The elementary school in Silent Hill is called Midwich Elementary, which is also the name of the village in *Village of the Damned* and the story it was based on, John Wyndham's *The Midwich Cuckoos*.
- The boss fight with Cybil on the merry-go-round in the Silent Hill Amusement Park could be a reference to one of the final scenes of the Alfred Hitchcock film *Strangers on a Train*, where characters Guy and Bruno engage in a fist fight on an out of control merry-go-round.
- When using the Channeling Stone in certain areas a UFO appears in the sky at a distance. These UFOs look astonishingly like the ships from the classic video game *Space Invaders*. The newspaper vending machines on the street have the headline "Bill Skins Fifth" referring to serial killer "Buffalo



Portishead posters in the diner



Newspapers with "Bill Skins Fifth" as headline.

Bill" from the film *The Silence of the Lambs*. (see image to left)

A large logo for Jack Daniel's Whiskey can be found painted on a shutter in the Old Silent Hill district.

The gas station is called "Hell" instead of Shell, (link) (the 'S' in the title seems to be rubbed out) and its logo is a nautilus shell instead of the scallop shell usually associated with the real gas company. (link)

The convenience store is called "8", clearly parodying the 7/11 name and logo in color and design. (link)

The fast food restaurant called "Queen Burger", a spoof of Burger King/Dairy Queen. (link)

Another restaurant named "Poston Market" decorated with the same red and white striped awning as the real restaurant "Boston Market" (link)

The store where you find the chainsaw after beating the game once through is "Cut Rite Chainsaws"- the same name of the chainsaw store where Dennis Hopper buys his saw in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre Part 2*. (link) (link)

- A logo reading "Vestal Gigastore" can be found painted on a building in the mall where the worm/larva is fought, believed to be a spoof of "Virgin Megastore".
- In K. Gordon's house there is a painting of an owl, a common image used in David Lynch's television series *Twin Peaks*. (link)
- In the Library Reserve room in Midwitch Elementary there is a movie poster on the wall that seems to read "A Woman Came Down From Planet Vulcan!!!!!!!" This poster is obviously alluding to *Star Trek*. (link)
- In Central Silent Hill there is an eatery named 'Konami Burger', referring to the publisher of the game. (link)
- In Old Silent Hill there is a store on the edge of a ravine that is called the 'Mark Twain Book & Gift Shop'. (link)
- As an in-joke for horror fans, most of the town's streets in the first game are named after popular science fiction, horror and suspense novelists, such as Ray Bradbury, Ira Levin, Robert Bloch, Dean Koontz, Richard Matheson, James Ellroy, Jack Finney, Michael Crichton, Dan Simmons, Carl Sagan and Richard Bachman (aka Stephen King). (link) (link) Some of these authors may have been inspiration for the game, alluded to by the following points;
 - As previously mentioned, *Silent Hill* resembles the plot of the short story by Stephen King, *The Mist*. The fog shrouding the town, as well as the presence of unexplained monsters in the fog are two major plot points that the story and game share. In addition to the presence of a thick mist in the town, a scene in the diner is reminiscent of a similar scene from the story where a bird-like creature makes its way into a supermarket where numerous people are hiding;
 - The word *redrum* can be seen written on a door in a street, referring directly to Stephen King's *The Shining* (link);
 - There are a few movie posters for the film *Carrie* (link) and one for the film *Pet Sematary* (link) (both based on Stephen King novels) strewn about the shop windows in the game;

- On either side of the pinball machine in the diner there are posters that beckon the viewer to "Study Dammit!" (link) The poster is a reproduction of a newspaper layout that Stephen King made while a student at the University of Maine [2] Photo of King's Layout
- Numerous aspects of the game strongly resemble the happenings from the book *Phantoms* by Dean Koontz, most notably the distortion coming from the radio, the deep fissures that appear throughout the town, cutting it off from the rest of society and the encountering of a gigantic moth-like creature. Also an air raid siren goes off. Each are very prominent features in *Silent Hill*, some in the series as a whole;
- Ira Levin, suggested by Levin St., is well known for writing *Rosemary's Baby* whose theme of demon possession/impregnation is shared with Dahlia's description of her daughter's genesis.
- The name of Finney Street in Old Silent Hill may be referring to Jack Finney, a science-fiction writer who was well known for writing *The Body Snatchers*, a reference being suggested by the 'possession' that takes place with the nurses and doctors of the Alchemilla Hospital;
- The presence of a street named Ellroy and a character named Dahlia Gillepsie might be a reference to James Ellroy and his novel *The Black Dahlia*;
- In one of the final scenes of the 'Nowhere' area of the game, Harry enters a hallway with a staircase that is supposed to be from Dahlia's house, but it strongly resembles the house from the film *Psycho*, by Alfred Hitchcock and its source novel which was written by Robert Bloch, a name that shows up as one of the street names in the town. Similarly the motel where you run into Dr. Kaufman is called the Norman Motel, which is reminiscent of the Bates Motel from *Psycho*, run by one Norman Bates;
- Some feel there are numerous references to Michael Crichton in the Pterodactyl (*Jurassic Park*) and ape-like creatures wandering the streets (*Congo*), also due to the presence of a Crichton St.

Silent Hill 2

- The German opera *Die tote Stadt* very similarly contains a main character who laments after his dead wife, Marie, and encounters someone who looks exactly like her, and with only a slightly different name, Marietta. The plot may also be an adaptation of the tale of Orpheus' journey to the netherworld to retrieve his wife Eurydice, or perhaps the similar Japanese tale of Izanagi and Izanami.
- In *Silent Hill 2*, a sign mentioning Historic Route 26 is shown. In the United States, Route 26 is located in the western mountain area of Maine on the New Hampshire border. The scenic byway is unique in that it connects with a New Hampshire Scenic Byway and passes through Grafton Notch State Park.
- One of the end songs in *Silent Hill 2*, "Angel's Thanatos," is a reference to the Freudian idea of Thanatos. It is the desire to give up life and return to non-existence.
- The appearance of Mary/Maria strongly reflects Freud's notion of The Uncanny, notably demonstrated also by movies such as David Lynch's *Lost Highway* and Hitchcock's *Vertigo*).
- At one point in the game when the character enters the historic society he head down a long hallway and eventually enters a long circular well. This is a possible reference to the

John Carpenter movie *Big Trouble in Little China* where the main character falls down a strikingly similar hallway in a wheel and almost falls in a well

- One of the recurrent enemies, a mannequin with two sets of legs, is apparently inspired on Hans Bellmer's *La Poupée*. Taylor, Sue. Hans Bellmer in The Art Institute of Chicago: The Wandering Libido and the Hysterical Body. Retrieved on 2006-08-30.
- When you enter in one apartment you find a dead body watching a TV that is showing static. Using a debug mode, some fans discovered that this body in fact is the same model used for James (image). It has been confirmed that the man in the chair is still in a state of near death when James discovers it, and that a brutal assault by Pyramid Head is the cause of his death (the assault may have even been of a sexual nature, as Pyramid Head is seen raping two other creatures), and that James fails to help the dying man because his mental state impairs his ability to perceive the world around him. ^[1] Later in the game, after James watches the videotape in room 312 of the hotel, he sits dumbstruck while the TV screen shows static, reflecting back on this earlier scene.

Silent Hill 3

- Later in the game, a view of a solitary wheelchair is a direct reference to the same reoccurring shot from Session 9.
- A puzzle in the game, in the crematorium of the "Nightmare" Brookhaven Hospital, in the hard difficulty setting, refers to "Who Killed Cock Robin," a nursery rhyme.
- The Borley Haunted Mansion in the Lakeside Amusement Park is quite possibly reference to Borley Rectory, at one time "the most haunted house in England" until its destruction by fire in 1939.
- At the construction site, there is a wall that can be knocked through. Behind the wall there is a corpse, a nod to the short story "The Black Cat" or possibly "The Cask of Amontillado" by Edgar Allan Poe, and a gun silencer. Heather also says "It looks like something out of The Black Cat. I shouldn't have watched that movie" if you examine the legs again after grabbing the silencer.
- The pendant around Heather's neck is quite similar to one found in the book/film *Rosemary's Baby*.
- A song in *Silent Hill 3* is titled "Sickness Unto Foolish Death." This might be a reference to the existential philosopher Søren Kierkegaard's theory on despair, which he detailed in his *The Sickness Unto Death*, an existential concept to describe the state human beings find themselves in when they have to make choices in a world of uncertainty. This state is described as a "loss of self." Looking at the third installment of the series with this theme in context, it could be seen as Heather's difficult choice of vengeance vs. submission to the Otherworld of *Silent Hill*, and how she loses her self-awareness in the pursuit of vengeance. [3]
- Both the PS2 and PC version of *Silent Hill 3* contain four joke references to *Silent Hill 2*, the main one being a funny cut scene where Heather gets grossed out and refuses to get something out of a clogged toilet like the one James "experienced" in *Silent Hill 2*. [4] These scenes are unlockable to those that have a *Silent Hill 2* savegame present on their PS2 memory card or in their Savedata folder for the PC version. With the PS2 version one only need have a *Silent Hill 2* savegame on their memory card, however, the PC version requires some tinkering with the registry.
- On the way to Silent Hill, Douglas mentions he had been there once before on a missing

persons case, but he "never did find the guy." It is possible he is referring to James Sunderland from *Silent Hill 2*.

Silent Hill 4

- It is the first *Silent Hill* game where players have a limited inventory and only one save point.
- *Silent Hill 4* is arguably the first game in the series since the original in which the monsters are based not on the hero's own fears, guilts, etc., but on another character's. The creatures of the original *Silent Hill* were based on Alessa's imagination (rather than Harry's), and here the monsters seem to be created by Walter's Sullivan's mind.
- *Silent Hill 4* makes a possible reference to the fate of *Silent Hill 2*'s protagonist James Sunderland. A man named Frank Sunderland is the superintendent of the apartments in the game, and at a certain point in the game Henry comments that Frank's son went missing. This could be an indication as to what happened to James at the end of *Silent Hill 2*.
- The novel *House of Leaves* and its use of impossible physical spaces may have been an influence on the series (especially in *Silent Hill 4*), with its almost interminable corridors. During one part of the game, Henry walks down an infinite staircase relating to the one within the novel. Henry also puts together a scrapbook of letters of a journalist he learns about, just like Johnny Truant in *House of Leaves*.
- In the liner notes of the *Silent Hill 4* soundtrack, an address is listed for the strip club "Heaven's Night." That address is: 2121 Carroll St., South Vale, ME. James Sunderland briefly visits Heaven's Night in *Silent Hill 2* and Heather visits it in *Silent Hill 3*.
- The apartment setting in this game strongly resembles and is clearly influenced by the film *Rear Window* by Alfred Hitchcock. Just as Jefferies from *Rear Window* observes his neighbors through his apartment window, Henry from *Silent Hill 4: The Room* observes his surroundings in a first person view and is able to spy on what his neighbors are doing. Henry is similarly confined to his apartment, just as Jefferies is in the film, although not by a physical condition, but rather by a physical obstacle.
- The name of the main character, Townshend, is also a name of the New England town prominently mentioned in the story *The Whisperer in the Darkness* by H. P. Lovecraft. Townshend is located in Vermont, that is, not very far from Ashfield.
- Henry's relationship with Cynthia has much in common with James' relationship with Maria in *Silent Hill 2*. In both cases, the troubled and somewhat passive male hero encounters an extremely assertive, seductive young woman who promises him sexual favors if he will save her from the monsters. In both cases, the men are clearly interested, but are intimidated and somewhat baffled by this display of predatory sexuality in the middle of such a terrifying environment. In both games, the man and woman are repeatedly separated, and the woman is ultimately killed only to make a surprising return later. (Cynthia returns as a ghost, but Maria returns, seemingly, as herself.) Finally, both women eventually appear as floating, spectral monsters, with deadly tendrils that lash out at the hero (although in Maria's case, this is only in certain game endings.)
- The name of the character Jasper Gein is a probably a reference to infamous serial killer Ed Gein. An "Eric Gein" is mentioned in the radio quiz show James is subjected to in the hospital in *Silent Hill 2*, and it possible that Eric Gein is related to Jasper. Also, Andrew DeSalvo's name may be a reference to Albert DeSalvo, known as the Boston Strangler.

- If the player continues to look out of Henry's windows for a long time, various strange things are seen. For instance, at a certain points of the game, a severed head sometimes slowly falls past the window.
- After an increased use of rock music (including the first use of vocals for the series) in *Silent Hill 3*, *Silent Hill 4* uses much less music than previous entries in the series, with the most notable tune being the theme.
- The Water Prison is based off of the Panopticon system. A style of prison which is intended to allow a watcher to observe all prisoners without them knowing when they were being watched. It was a design that promoted paranoia and is considered to have driven prisoners insane.
- The machine at the last level (and only other boss fight) at the end of the game bears a shocking resemblance to the intergalactic-dimensional machine used in the Paul WS Anderson movie *Event Horizon*, between its circular, rotating design and surrounding of liquid that is eventually inundated in blood.
- The use of the possessed wheel chairs in the game bear a slight resemblance to a scene in the movie *The Changeling* (film) in which the lead female character is briefly chased around by a unmanned wheelchair.
- The method in which the four victims are killed bear a heavy similarity to the famous killing method in the *Nightmare on Elm Street* films as it is suggested that each victim enters Walter's world and die there when they are asleep. Cynthia suggests to Henry that she is dreaming, Henry returns from Walter's world whilst lying on his bed and before entering the fourth (building) world, the player can briefly see Richard napping quietly on his bed in his room.
- The ghost of Cynthia in the game bears a strong resemblance to the ghost seen in the movie *Ju-On*, as her face is covered with long black hair that she can control, and crawls and slithers along the floor in just about the same fashion. The *Ju-On* ghost - an onryou - is a traditional Japanese icon, which may explain the similarity. See also *Sadako* from the *Ringu* movies.
- The game itself seemed to inspire the gameplay in *Fatal Frame 3*. The hole in *Silent Hill 4* leads you to another world or the last place you've been and Henry can go back to his bedroom using the hole found in certain places while in *Fatal Frame 3*, the bed which puts Rei to sleep leads her to the Manor of Sleep and she can go back to her house through the manor's entrance.

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1. ^ General Answers: Silent Hill

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Silent Hill

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Silent Hill is the title of a well-known survival horror video game franchise, produced by Konami and developed by Team Silent.

As of 2006, there are five *Silent Hill* games available (one title, *Silent Hill: Play Novel*, was released only in Japan), all of which were released to strong sales and critical acclaim. Gameplay includes action, puzzles, detailed and disturbing environments (which many feel contribute significantly to the series' success), and complex storylines revealed through numerous cinematic cut scenes. Each game unfolds like a movie with several possible endings; the player's choices during the game determine which ending is shown. In 2006, Sony Pictures released a full-length *Silent Hill* film to mixed reception.

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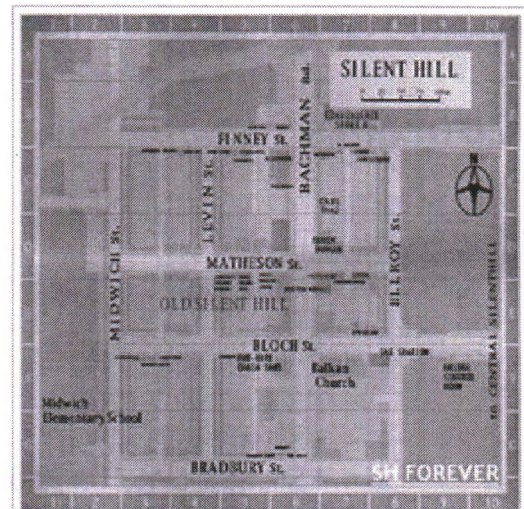
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Setting

Spoiler warning: *Plot and/or ending details follow.*

The titular town of 'Silent Hill' is a gloomy one-time resort town that is currently inhabited by mysterious forces. Demonic and disfigured creatures roam the streets and buildings, and the town continually shifts between everyday reality and a decaying and blood-soaked "Otherworld" (where the grotesque monsters appear). Although in the first game (particularly in its early trailers), it was heavily implied that a once-normal town was being pulled into this Otherworld by the actions of one Alessa Gillespie, there have been hints in later games that the town was always home to a supernatural presence, perhaps even a benign one originally (see Mary Shepherd-Sunderland's assertion in 'Silent Hill 2' that the town "used to be a sacred place"). Maybe this indicates that the bloody history of Silent Hill has converted these energies into something darker.



One of the maps players obtain in the first Silent Hill game.

It could also be argued that the power of Silent Hill has been growing in recent years; in the first two games, the protagonists were drawn to the seemingly abandoned town, but in the third and fourth games, the town seemed capable of reaching out to characters (those with some previous connection to it) and bringing its evil to them.

Considering that it is meant to be a small town, Silent Hill is remarkably self-sufficient. It has its own elementary school (although no form of higher education has been seen so far), a church, a police station, a shopping mall, two separate hospitals (Alchemilla Hospital in Paleville and Brookhaven Hospital in South Vale), as well as bars, restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations, and even a bowling alley. Silent Hill also features plenty of housing, both apartments and homes, as well as three different motels to meet the needs of those "just passing through" and, at one point, the grand Lakeview Hotel. Adding to its credence as a former resort town, Paleville also plays host to the infamous Lakeside Amusement Park.

Although completely fictional, the location of Silent Hill has been hinted at several times throughout the series -- most of which are contradictory. For example, the manual for the original game claimed that it was somewhere in New England, but the body of water it

surrounds on three sides is later revealed in the second game to be Toluca Lake, and the only real Toluca Lake is in California. License plates in the first game would seem to indicate Michigan, but the liner notes of the Japanese version of the *Silent Hill 4: The Room* soundtrack CD gave an address for Heaven's Night, a nightclub visited by the player in *Silent Hill 2*, that would put it in Maine. Then, too, there is the film adaptation *Silent Hill*, released in spring of 2006, which places the little town in "Toluca County", West Virginia.

In researching the different elements of *Silent Hill*, screenwriter Roger Avary (*Killing Zoe*, *The Rules of Attraction*) came across the town of ^[1] Centralia, Pennsylvania. In the List of Silent Hill locations, there is a place called Ashfield which is half a day's drive from Silent Hill. Looking at a map of Centralia, one cannot help but notice the similarly-named Ashland about a mile south of Centralia. Also mentioned in the history of Centralia was a fire in a landfill that spread to the coal mine underneath the town. In *Silent Hill*, Alessa Gillespie was severely burned and the coals used to burn her set fire to the rest of the town. It is fair to say that Centralia planted the seed for what developed into the cinematic version of the town of Silent Hill. [1]

Atmosphere

The games' visual design has earned strong praise (and is highly renowned and known for), with its dark, fog-shrouded, dilapidated environments enhanced by chilling (and very sudden) sound effects, and its thoroughly unnatural and disturbing creature designs, some of which seem to have been included simply to frighten and alarm rather than cause actual physical harm. Composer Akira Yamaoka has provided atmospheric and emotional music for the series, which ranges from the first game's post-industrial noise music to more traditional melancholy piano solos to heavy rock pieces.

Gameplay elements that create the unique atmosphere in the game are the dense fog/pitch black settings, limiting visibility to about a ten foot radius about the character, coupled with the use of a radio that emits loud static and strange noises whenever a monster comes close to the main character. This creates a general feeling of anxiety, paranoia and apprehension in the player. At least one reviewer has noted that the radio tends to serve the opposite of its intended purpose, frightening the player even more rather than helping them prepare to face a monster.^[2] Being unable to see them, often until it is too late, the player is forced to either run or hope they are facing in the correct direction for attack. This element is what distinguishes the series from other horror video games, which usually resort to simple surprise tactics, as opposed to suspense. The fact that this signal is solely a sound, rather than a visual indication of the monster's presence is something of a masterstroke in the game, as it denies the player the choice of muting the game, forcing them to hear the deliberately disturbing soundtrack.

Themes and motifs of Silent Hill



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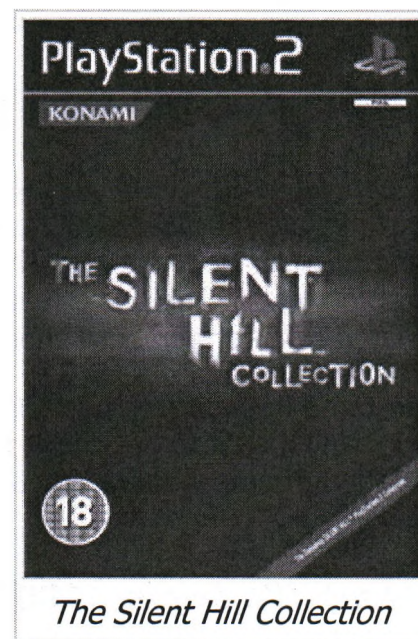
Also see Silent Hill influences and trivia

Anyone who plays through at least one of the games will see that there are recurring themes that appear throughout. Below are just some of the many recurring themes in the series as a whole.

- **Hospitalization** - One of the most common themes of the games. This theme is stressed through the inclusion of levels set in hospitals and institutes and iconic enemies such as the fearsome Nurses. Players also notice that hospital objects, such as beds with bloodied sheets, drips and wheelchairs, are often situated in places where they would not normally be, such as the streets and many buildings.
- **Sexual energy** - Sexual metaphors appear in all the games, strongest in *Silent Hill 2*, as it deals with the relationship between a man and his wife and his crushing sexual frustration which manifests itself into various repugnantly perverse forms. *Silent Hill 2* features what might be interpreted as a rape scene, as Pyramid Head assaults one of the town's more feminine creatures.
- **Institutionalization** - Players will notice that many of the Silent Hill environments are places of authority (Midwich Elementary School, the Hospitals, Toluca Prison, the water prison), representing an institutionalized and oppressive environment.
- **Children** - Like much of Japanese horror, the story often revolves around or includes child characters. Children in Silent Hill usually represent innocence while the adults generally represent loss of innocence and loss of the uncomplicated life of a child. A good example of this is the role of child and adult versions of Walter Sullivan in *Silent Hill 4*. Another is Laura from *Silent Hill 2* who, although she appears terribly spoiled and rude at first, is not tortured by the fiends that attempt to punish the other adults.
- **Bathrooms** - Bathrooms, both public and private, have a large significance in the Silent Hill world. For example, *Silent Hill 2* begins inside a public restroom. The first game portrays one of the more gory moments of the game in a bathroom, similar to the film. In the third and fourth game, the protagonist reaches the "otherworld" by going *through* a bathroom. On the "Making of Silent Hill 3", the creators explain that Japanese children grow up to know a lot of ghost stories and urban legends that surround bathrooms and toilets. When Japan still used the squatting toilet, there were tales of children falling down and vanishing forever. In *Silent Hill 3* there is even some self-referential humour based around this. Also, in *Silent Hill 3* and *Silent Hill 4*, if you knock on the bathroom doors, you hear a knock on the other side as if someone is in the stall.
- **Questionable reality** - All of the *Silent Hill* games deal, to some extent, with reality of some form or another. In every single game the player will often wonder if what the characters are seeing is real or completely imagined (sometimes the characters will wonder that themselves). Many of the games contain possible hints that what is happening to the protagonists is not even happening. The movie's logic is that the fog realm and hellish realm of the town are completely separate from the town's true form, which regular people can see.

Main series

As of 2006, the *Silent Hill* series consists of four games and another rumored to be planned for release on a seventh generation console, though it has not been officially confirmed, and the statement from the chief designer Masashi Tsuboyama was only that it 'would not appear on any of the then current (sixth generation) consoles'. The series plays in chronological order, although *Silent Hill 3* is a direct sequel to *Silent Hill*. Heather, the main character in *Silent Hill 3*, continues the story begun by her father, Harry Mason, in the first game. *Silent Hill 2* and *Silent Hill 4* are self-contained stories, connected to the others only by the town of Silent Hill itself (though the town actually plays only a peripheral role in the fourth game; the fourth instalment's main connection to the other games is the character Walter Sullivan, mentioned briefly in *Silent Hill 2*) and through some references to the overall mythos of the series. These references are largely lost on James Sunderland and Henry Townsend, the heroes of *Silent Hill 2* and 4, although one of *Silent Hill 2*'s possible endings does involve James invoking the town's "old gods" to resurrect his late wife.



In April 2006, the "Silent Hill Collection" was released for PlayStation 2 to coincide with the release of the *Silent Hill* film adaptation. The set includes the games *Silent Hill 2*, *Silent Hill 3* and *Silent Hill 4: The Room*. The "Silent Hill Collection" is only available in Europe and Australia.

***Silent Hill* (1999)**

The first *Silent Hill* was released in 1999 for the Sony PlayStation. The plot of the game was centered around Harry Mason arriving in Silent Hill and his subsequent attempts at finding his lost daughter, Cheryl.

During the progress of the game, the protagonist Harry finds that his adopted daughter Cheryl has a rather disturbing past as the details of her genesis are revealed.

This game was followed by the release of the side story for Gameboy Advance called *Silent Hill: Play Novel* which is detailed below.

***Silent Hill 2* (2001)**

A fully new sequel, *Silent Hill 2*, was released in 2001 for the Sony PlayStation 2, Microsoft Xbox and PC. The extended versions for XBOX and PC are sometimes known as *Silent Hill 2: Restless Dreams* and feature an extra subplot scenario, as do the "Greatest Hits"/"Platinum" budget re-releases for PS2. The plot centered around James Sunderland, who had received a letter from his deceased wife that led him to Silent Hill.

***Silent Hill 3* (2003)**

2003 saw the release of a second full sequel to the *Silent Hill* series as *Silent Hill 3*, released for the Sony PlayStation 2 as well as for PC. Highly tethered to the events of the first game, the plot surrounds a teenager named Heather as she uncovers the mysteries that surround her past - including her own link to the haunted town.

***Silent Hill 4: The Room* (2004)**

Silent Hill 4: The Room was released in 2004 for the Sony Playstation 2, Microsoft Xbox and PC. Partly related to *Silent Hill 2* and briefly set near Silent Hill, the plot follows Henry Townshend who finds himself mysteriously locked in his own apartment until a hole appears in his bathroom wall. The game features characters that are mentioned in previous titles and possibly related to other personae therein.

As stated in the September 2006 issue of *Game Informer* magazine, the game was not originally meant to be a part of the *Silent Hill* series, but the decision to transform it into a *Silent Hill* game was already taken early in the development of the game, so that it was heavily reworked.

***Silent Hill: Origins* (2007)**

At E3 2006 it was announced that a *Silent Hill* title for the PSP will be named "Silent Hill: Origins" (with 'zero' in the place of 'O'), however the trailer points out that this is still a working title (an earlier teaser was titled "Silent Hill: NEXT"). The game itself will be a prequel, presenting events that took place before the first game in the series, instead of a remake or movie adaptation as it was rumored before. Still, little is known about the game itself as it is currently in the early stages of development. What is known is that the main character will be a truck driver named Travis O'Grady and the game will be presented in third-person perspective. Konami stated that characters such as Dahlia, Alessa and Kaufman will return. Music will be composed by Akira Yamaoka. So far, this is the only *Silent Hill* title that is not being created by Team Silent.

***Silent Hill 5* (TBA)**

Not much is known about Konami's next *Silent Hill* title. While little has been officially confirmed, Chief Designer of *Silent Hill 5* Masashi Tsuboyama stated in a 2004 interview that the game would not appear on any of the then-current consoles^[3]. He also clarified rumors during the same interview that it wouldn't be titled "Shadows of the Past" as reported previously from an online source. According to IGN, it has been speculated that the game is already in development and that it is likely to be released on Sony's Playstation 3 video game console. It was also reported that Konami planned to release it in early November 2006, but this was never officially announced^[4] and as of January 2007 it has yet to be released. It was originally believed that the main plot would be set in a mental asylum (perhaps Brookhaven hospital) and would be told through a series of flashbacks depicting how the main protagonist got up to that point, though this has generally been associated with the *Shadows of the Past* rumor and remains unproven. While interviewed for an episode of Electric Playground, Tommy Tallarico asked a developer about *Silent Hill 5*. The developer responded that "It's a good time to be a *Silent Hill* fan", and the interview ended. There was a segment on the *Silent Hill* series

after, and it was stated that the game would be released on next generation consoles, however it was not stated which specific consoles the projected game would be released on.

Spin-off titles and promotional discs

Silent Hill: Play Novel (2001)

In 2001, *Silent Hill: Play Novel* was released in Japan for the Nintendo Game Boy Advance. The game consists of still images and text and is played in the style of a Choose Your Own Adventure book. Full Motion Video sequences from the first game are also included. It deals with Cybil's adventures through the town as well as the exploits of a boy named Andy. It is considered a gaiden story and it has not been released outside of Japan.

Art of Silent Hill (2002)

First multimedia DVD focusing mostly on material from Silent Hill 2 such as artworks and renders. It contains exclusive up to date music video 'Caramel Mix' as well as 'Ki-no-ko' and 'Fukuro' (both of which appeared on future media discs).

Lost Memories: The Art and Music of Silent Hill (2003)

Released only in Japan, it is a second and most popular multimedia DVD. Most of the content found on "The Art of Silent Hill" is included here in addition to new content cited below. Divided into seven sections, it contains full soundtracks, trailer collections, artworks, renders and creature galleries from all three games as well as additional music videos: Ki-no-ko, Fukuro, Usagimu and video with Heather performing the song 'You're Not Here' from SH3 OST.

Inescapable rain in Yoshiwara (2004)

Audio drama added to Japanese version of Silent Hill 4 OST. It was made by Akira Yamaoka & Teisui Ichiryusa and lasts for 57 minutes, however there was later released additional 16 minute chapter to the story. The story is not linked to the Silent Hill series in any way.

The Silent Hill Experience (2006)

This Video UMD was released April 6 for PSP by Sony Entertainment as a promotional item for the now released film. Up to date it is the third and final multimedia disc related to Silent Hill series.

Features:

- View over 2 hours of digital comics based on the *Silent Hill* comic series presented with music.
- Includes the comic series "Silent Hill: Dying Inside" and a brand new story "The Hunger"
- 20 music tracks selected from series' producer and music composer Akira Yamaoka
- Exclusive video interview with the director of the *Silent Hill* movie Christophe Gans and series' music composer Akira Yamaoka

- Rare video content from previous *Silent Hill* games
- Trailers from all four games and the movie
- 3 videos from the DVDs "Art of Silent Hill" and "Lost Memories"

The Silent Hill: Cage of Cradle (2006)

Interactive manga comic book written by Hiroyuki Owaku and illustrated by Masahiro Ito. It is currently only available on cellphones in Japan. A paper-back release is being planned for 2007. Not much is known about the story and images of the comic have been mostly concealed. What *is* known, however, is that the story will focus on Lisa Garland before the events of the first game in the series. Promotional images reveal that Doctor Kauffman will appear, as well as the notorious Pyramid Head and Alessa Gillespie. These images show noticeable influence from the visuals of the Silent Hill Movie.

Silent Hill: The Arcade (2007)

At the 2007 Japan Arcade Operator's Union trade show Konami revealed a forthcoming light gun arcade shooter game based on the *Silent Hill* series.^[5] ^[6] The game deals with two characters, Eric and Tina, who have entered the town of Silent Hill and must battle enemies which include Nurses and Pyramid Head from *Silent Hill 2*.^[7]

Film adaptation (2006)

Spoiler warning: *Plot and/or ending details follow.*

In 2003 a motion picture based on *Silent Hill* was officially announced, with French director Christophe Gans (*Brotherhood of the Wolf*) attached. The main storyline for the film adaptation follows the original 1999 video game, but with a selection of features from the other games in the series as well as a selection of modern revisions.

One of the most obvious revisions is the replacement of Harry Mason with Rose Da Silva (Played by Radha Mitchell), a married mother whose life takes the unexpected turn toward Silent Hill in the hope to discover the source of her adoptive daughter Sharon's (Jodelle Ferland) nightmares culminating in a cry of "Silent Hill".

Against the wishes and knowledge of her husband, Chris Da Silva (Sean Bean), Rose takes off with Sharon on a daughter and mother journey to find the elusive town of Silent Hill, passing through the nearest settlement to their destination, Brahams. In doing so, Rose encounters Brahams Police Department officer Cybil Bennett (Laurie Holden) who is suspicious of the distraught mother and her actions. Cybil explains of a couple of years before, a deranged man abducted a child and threw him down a mine shaft in Silent Hill, which is why she is so wary around Rose.



One of several posters for Silent Hill depicting The Janitor.

The film featured music from series composer Akira Yamaoka. The musical score featured several selections of original game music, such as the opening from the first game "Silent Hill", "Promise - Reprise" from *Silent Hill 2*, and "Theme Of Laura" and "Laura Plays the Piano", also from the second game.

The film was released 21 April 2006 to a mixed response from fans of the game series. The overall plot layout and the town itself had remained intact within the film, however the changes to the story and characters were obvious and a bit disheartening to some fans.

The film did work towards grounding Silent Hill, which until 2006 had remained an 'everytown' that could exist anywhere. The film placed the fictional town in fictional Toluca County, West Virginia. The beloved fog and snow of the series was replaced with smoke and ash, which some could consider even more sensible than the fog and snow of the first game, considering it also included a backstory of a coal mine fire (look in the game instructions to the first Silent Hill to find this information). The town in Silent Hill (the movie) was modelled after the real life town of Centralia, Pennsylvania which also suffered from a devastating coal mine fire. The fires are still burning today and it is estimated that the fire has enough fuel for another 250 years.

Other changes to the story included a reversal of roles for one of the prime antagonists of the first game and a different religion following cult.

The film was released through Tristar in the United States, and Pathe in Europe. The film was considered a success opening at #1 in the US with \$20.1 million dollars on its way to a total of \$47 million domestically.

Sequel

A sequel to the original film has been announced ^[8]. The tentative title is *Silent Hill 2*, and it is slated for a 2008 release. Not much else is known about the production.

Books

All books are officially available only in Japan.

Lost Memories (2002)

Guidebook detailing various aspects of the first three games like symbolism and ideas behind games or development process. Although released only in Japan, an unofficial translation is available at <http://www.translatedmemories.com/>

Drawing Block: Silent Hill 3 Program (2003)

Artbook added to limited editions of Silent Hill 3 together with Lost Memories DVD and two posters.

Silent Hill (2006)

Novelization of the first game of the series by Sadamu Yamashita. It is divided into three chapters: Fog, Darkness and Nightmare. Not to be confused with novelization of the film released the same year and under the same title.

***Silent Hill* comic books**

A series of comic books written by Scott Ciencin with artwork by Ben Templesmith (*Dying Inside* #1 and 2), Aadi Salman (*Dying Inside* #3,4,5), Shaun Thomas (*Paint It Black*, *Among The Damned*) and Nick Stakal (*Grinning Man*, *Dead/Alive* #1 to 5) have been published by IDW Publishing.

***Silent Hill* (Unreleased, 2000)**

An original *Silent Hill* graphic novel was completed in 2000 by British comic company Com.X, but for an undisclosed reason the book was never published. Com.X and Konami have repeatedly officially stated that they still intend to publish the book, but no confirmed date has been set. Interestingly, IDW Publishing was unaware that this project existed when they pursued the license.

***Silent Hill: Dying Inside* (2004)**

This story was released as five issues. The first two dealt with a doctor and patient, while the remaining three issues covered a group of goth kids. It was later released as a trade paperback.

In the first two chapters, Dr. Troy Abernathy wants to cure Lynn DeAngelis from her delusions, which began after she went to do a movie in the town of Silent Hill. Abernathy takes her back to the town... only to discover a world built from *his* inner fears, and ruled by a demonic little girl -- Christabella -- who seeks guilty souls. From Chapter 3 until the conclusion, a goth girl named Lauryn finds Lynn's movie and plans to go to Silent Hill to do the same stunt so her group can earn some cash. There, a final confrontation with Christabella occurs, when Lauryn realizes Christabella is a tad more familiar she would have thought in the first place.

***Silent Hill: Among the Damned* (2004)**

This stand-alone story was published in a single issue and is collected in the *Silent Hill: Three Bloody Tales* trade paperback.

***Silent Hill: Paint It Black* (2005)**

Paint It Black follows the story of Ike, an artist who finds himself homeless after being kicked out of a friend's apartment. Ike remains under the influence of Artist's Block until he meets a stranger who claims to have visited the ghost town of Silent Hill. The stranger informs Ike that he was able to leave the town because his own friend sacrificed himself, this story inspires Ike



Dying Inside

to travel to the town to seek out the truth behind it.

Inspired, Ike is able to paint again; however his portraits now feature the creatures that live in the town, but he has found that he is unable to leave. The story then takes an unusual turn as a team of cheerleaders arrive in Silent Hill looking for some friends who they believe went missing in the town.

As the plot continues to follow a strange set of developments, Ike discovers that he can actually travel through his paintings and he attempts to use them to escape.

His escape attempt fails and he finds that the cheerleaders have turned on him, sacrificing him so they can leave town. This stand-alone story was published in a single issue and is collected in the *Silent Hill: Three Bloody Tales* trade paperback.

Silent Hill: The Grinning Man (2005)

State Trooper Robert Tower is on his last day of work before retirement when his new replacement, Mayberry, arrives. Despite the fact that Tower enters Silent Hill on a regular basis to look for missing people, he's never been exposed to the horrifying creatures that roam its streets. However, to play a prank on Mayberry (a firm believer in not only the lore of Silent Hill, but also several other conspiracy theories and supernatural concepts), he stages a "Monster" attack with two other officers. However, there is a new force in the town of Silent Hill -- a smiling madman with a mastery of both magical spells and firearms who considers the city his own personal hunting ground. The truth about the city is exposed to Tower and the showdown between he and the mysterious Grinning Man ensues. This story is collected in the *Silent Hill: Three Bloody Tales* trade paperback.

Silent Hill: Dead/Alive (2006)

Consisting of five issues written by Scott Ciencin, *Dead/Alive* links to the *Dying Inside* series by returning to Dr. Abernathy, Lauryn and her sister Christabella. Lauryn has a new boyfriend which appears to be Ike, the protagonist of *Paint It Black*. Somehow, Christabella manages to escape Lauryn's powers, but returns as a normal little girl with little power. Then, she meets with a witch called Lenora who makes a deal with her. Lenora wants to bring Hell on earth through the characters of Connie and her ex-boyfriend actor Kenneth Carter.

Silent Hill: Hunger (2006)

Exclusively on UMD disc 'Silent Hill Experience'. Hunger concerns itself with Douglass Payne and his fiancé Rosy, recently transported to the idyllic, serene Silent Hill. Doug's hit on hard times, ousted from a prominent editorial position at a big newspaper where he was on track to deliver some huge stories before his ego got in the way and he was kicked to the curb. Now, settling down in Silent Hill, as his bride-to-be falls in love with the place, Doug is consumed with finding the next big story to get him back on top. When a 911 call is made to an abandoned house and the responding officer is murdered, reporter Douglas must find the answers to the mystery, all the while trying to find his love Rosy and figuring out the secrets that lie within a new stranger in town.

Game/Comic Book Discrepancies

While the comic books are based upon the video game series of Silent Hill, there is noticeable differences not just in the town aesthetically but also in the history and the nature of the forces of Silent Hill. This has led many Silent Hill fans to consider the Silent Hill in the comic books existing in a different fictional universe than the Silent Hill of the video games (as is the Silent Hill in the movie, Silent Hill). Examples of these discrepancies are:

In 'The Grinning Man', the Lakeview Hotel is actually not on Toluca Lake at all, as opposed to the Lakeview Hotel from Silent Hill 2.

The introduction of several characters who are extremely important to the universe of the comic books (Whately, Dr. Abernathy, Christabella, Laura, etc) yet are not mentioned once in any of the games, (the Silent Hill movie has a character named Christabella, but much different from the comics' Christabella). Likewise, none of the characters from the games (Dahlia, Alessa, James, Harry, etc) are mentioned in the comic books.

The Lakeview Hotel, Brookhaven Hospital, and even the Lighthouse are extremely different cosmetically than the same locations in the video games.

While the catalyst for the town's increase in power in the video games was when Alessa was impregnated with 'the God' by her mother, Dahlia, when she was seven, in 'Silent Hill: Hunger' the catalyst for the comic book Silent Hill is a young woman who is forcibly impregnated by Whately and a Doctor who worked at Brookhaven.

Influences and trivia

See: Silent Hill influences and trivia

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2. ^ Perry, Doug. Silent Hill 2. IGN, 2001-9-25. Retrieved on 2007-1-29.
3. ^ *EuroGamer*. Silent Hill 5 coming to next gen 17 August 2004 16:57
4. ^ *IGN* Silent Hill 5
5. ^ *Kotaku* Next Silent Hill Coming To... Arcades? February 16, 2007
6. ^ *Konami Expo 2007* February 16, 2007
7. ^ *Siliconera* More on the Silent Hill Arcade game February 16, 2007
8. ^ *IMdb*. IMdb SH2 Movie Listing

External links

- Official *Silent Hill* series site (Konami Europe)
- Official *Silent Hill 2* site (Konami Europe)
- Official *Silent Hill 3* site (Konami Europe)
- Official *Silent Hill 4* site (Konami Europe)

- Official *The Silent Hill Experience* site (Konami America)
- *Silent Hill* series (Konami Japan)
- Welcome to Silent Hill The official site for the 2006 movie, contains teaser and information.
- Silent Hill the Movie at Rottentomatoes.com

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