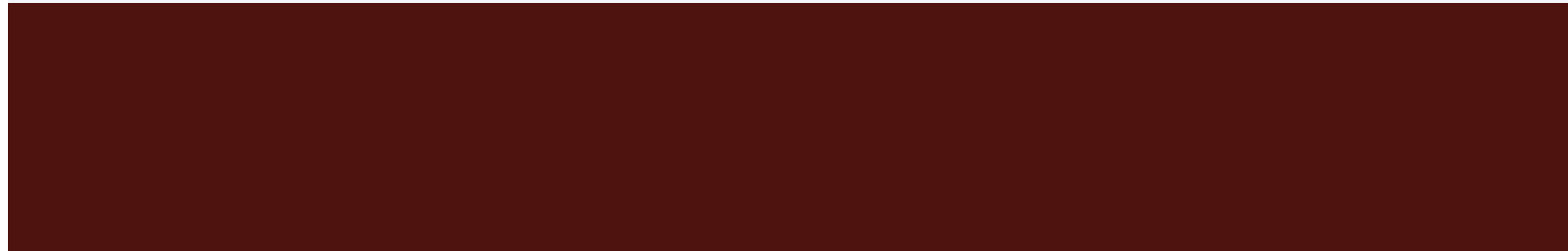
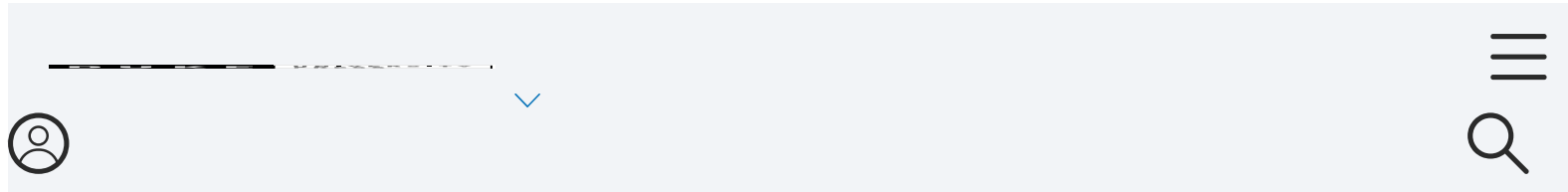


# Masculinity in video games: The gendered gameplay of *Silent Hill*.

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## Masculinity in Video Games. The Gendered Gameplay of *Silent Hill*

2009

[Ewan Kirkland](#)

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This article explores construction and representation of masculinity in the “survival horror” video-game series *Silent Hill*. Noting the dominance of traditional male characters and masculine themes within the video-game medium, the *Silent Hill* franchise is seen as deviating from this assured, aggressive, and unexamined machismo. The series' protagonists are instead nondescript, flawed, domesticated men—unstable, angst-ridden, and unreliable in a manner that interrogates the dominant mode of masculine gameplay. The problematic nature of video-game interactivity and identity, the extent to which gameplay can exist independent of playable protagonists, and the gendering of video-game goals and objectives are considered. Despite conforming to certain masculine activities—fighting, collecting weaponry, exploring and dominating space—*Silent Hill* complicates such aspects through the game avatars' unremarkable abilities, limiting supplies, frantic combat styles, frustrating spatial progress, experiences of entrapment, and a pervading sense of helplessness, exemplified by the games' often deterministic linear structures. Overall, this article argues that the games encourage critical distance from the male game characters, the rescue missions they attempt and often fail, the monstrous images of femininity they imagine, and the voyeuristic practices in which they engage.

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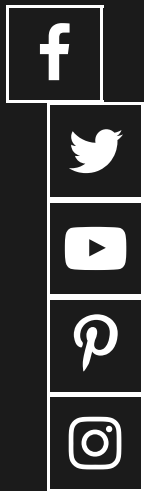
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