



At my house in 1990, the Genesis reigned supreme, followed closely by the NES. Ryan and I had owned our Genesis for several months at this point, and even though we didn't own too many games for it, we were always renting games at the local mom-n-pop video store, Video Plus. It was right down the road, and they got new games in every week. They also had a massive NES selection, so we were in hog heaven, figuratively speaking. My new friend Marc was keeping Ryan and I supplied with all sorts of Sega Master System games to try out on our recently acquired Power Base Converter, and let's not forget the ever-present Atari 7800 with our library of games. When it came to gaming, we were covered.

I was an avid reader of *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, *GamePro*, *Game Players Magazine* and *Video Games & Computer Entertainment* around this time too, and in every issue of each mag they would show previews and reviews of games for the Turbografx-16, Sega's major competition in the 16-bit arena at the time. I had been intrigued by the system ever since first reading about it in the fall of '89 in *Game Players*, but I hadn't had the opportunity to try one for myself yet. As I knew my parents weren't going to break down and buy us yet another two hundred dollar videogame system, I decided just to read the previews and reviews, but not give it much thought otherwise.

That all changed when Quincy came to visit us that year. I was out getting my hair cut when he arrived, and I came home to find he and Braunle playing some 16-bit game that looked familiar. I knew I had seen it before, but I also knew it wasn't a Genesis game. That's when I got a look at the system that was sitting there: an odd looking black unit that proudly had the Turbografx-16 logo emblazoned on it.

"You got a Turbografx?" I asked Quincy as I joined them.

"Yeah," he said, reaching into his bag and pulling out the four games he had for it: *Bonk's Adventure*, *Ninja Spirit*, *Victory Run*, and the box for the game they were playing, *Keith Courage in Alpha Zones*. *Ninja Spirit's* cover art alone intrigued me, as after playing *The Revenge of Shinobi* and *Ninja Gaiden*, I'd become a big fan of ninja games. Over the next few hours, we tried out all four games. *Ninja Spirit* was phenomenal, just as I'd hoped; *Bonk* was pretty good;

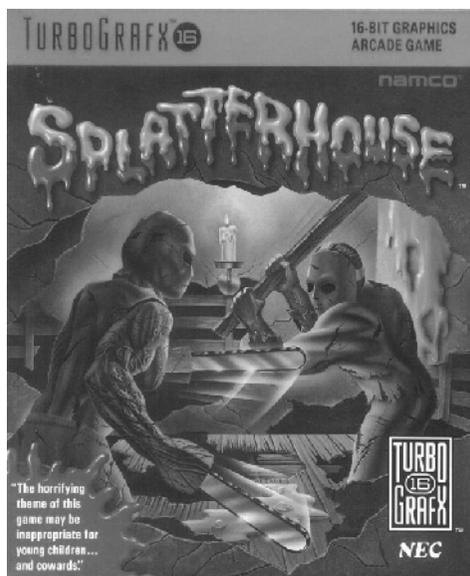
Keith Courage was interesting; and to be honest, *Victory Run* didn't impress me at all.

Quincy stayed with us for the entire summer. One day, he and Ryan had gone out with my parents to the mall and Toys 'R Us, and when they came back they each had a new game. I forget which one Ryan had (it was for the Genesis, that much I do recall), but Quincy had a new TurboGrafx game. He ran into our room, popped it into the system and turned on the power.

“So what did you get?” I asked as I entered the room.

He tossed me the box. On the cover was some kind of hulking humanoid figure, with a bag over his head and chainsaws in place of hands. He appeared to be fighting... Jason Voorhees? It couldn't be, because “Jason” had a wooden 2x4 in his hands, and judging by the way he had it raised to strike, he was about to give Chainsaw Hands the worst beating of its undead life. They appeared to be in some kind of a haunted house or an abandoned building. There was a blood splotch on the lower left hand corner of the cover that advised us that “the horrifying theme of this game may be inappropriate for young children... and cowards.”

The title, which was written in red blood and green slime, oozed its way down the front of the box, combining and congealing to form the game's title: *Splatterhouse*.



Little did I know that my life was about to change forever.

I was now officially interested in this game. Despite not caring for horror films or novels, I had a fascination with horror-themed games like the *Castlevania* trilogy (NES), *Ghouls 'N Ghosts* (Genesis), *Haunted House* and *Ghost Manor* (both for the Atari 2600). Immediately I sat down on the bed and watched the game

unfold before me. “Jason”, as I soon discovered, was actually parapsychology student Rick Taylor. He was trapped in West Mansion, once owned by the mysterious Dr. West, and was searching for his girlfriend Jennifer with the aid of the Terror Mask, an ancient artifact that gave him tremendous power. With each zombie Quincy smashed into the wall and each horrifying surprise he uncovered, the more mesmerized I became.

Then it was my turn.

By the time my game was over, I knew I was going to have to get a Turbo at some point just so I could own *Splatterhouse*. I liked the game so much that I even dressed up as Rick for Halloween that year, the last time I would ever dress up in a costume and go trick-or-treating. I got one of Dad's old blue work shirts and cut it up appropriately, then grabbed a pair of old blue jeans. After that, I bought a cheap Jason Voorhees mask—but since the TurboGrafx-16 port was the only version of *Splatterhouse* I was familiar with, I had to paint it red. The only problem was that I had no paint, so I improvised. I borrowed a bottle of red nail polish from Sharon and went to work. In the end, the costume didn't look half bad. It's just too bad that I got so hot wearing the mask that I had to take it off halfway through trick-or-treating.

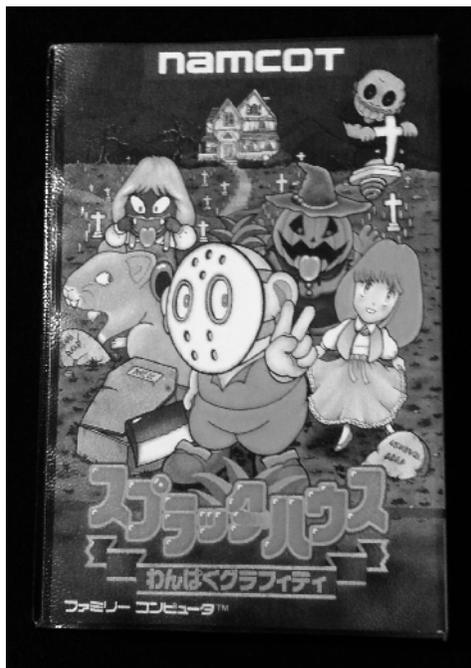
My desire to own the game was increased when, during a trip to Universal Studios Florida in 1991 with Braunle, I stumbled across the original arcade game sitting in the back of one of the arcades. There were no indications at the time that there would ever be a *Splatterhouse* game for the Genesis, so getting a Turbo became a top priority of mine. I wouldn't succeed in getting one of my own until early '93, when I was working full-time and the systems were suddenly being put on clearance everywhere. I was happy to finally have a Turbografx-16 of my own, and the first game I bought for it was *Splatterhouse*. At last I had my own copy of the original. By then, Namco had released *Splatterhouse 2* for the Genesis, which I also had. I was thrilled to have both *Splatterhouse* games at last.

Little did I know what awaited me less than a year later. Namco surprised everyone by releasing the third and last installment in the series, *Splatterhouse 3*, for the Genesis. It was quite a bit different from the first two games as far as gameplay was concerned, but it was a solid title and a welcome addition to my collection. To obtain it, I did something some might consider extremely stupid: I traded my entire Game Gear collection for it. I think I made out in the long run though, as I rarely played my Game Gear, but I play *Splatterhouse 3* quite often.

Several years later I discovered what Namco had released in Japan in 1989: a super-deformed parody game entitled *Splatterhouse: Wanpaku Graffiti* for the Famicom. I finally won a copy on eBay in 2001, and with that I was sure I had a “complete” *Splatterhouse* console collection (I was wrong, of course, but I didn't find this out until later). On top of that, obtaining *Wanpaku Graffiti* would finally inspire me to finally start work on a project I had been trying to get off the ground for a couple of years, a website I had entitled “West Mansion.”

The end result of my hard work, thanks to help from Len, Mike Plasket and countless *Splatterhouse* fans around the world, was the internet's largest *Splatterhouse* fan site—**West Mansion: The Splatterhouse Homepage**.

Ever since I first went online in 1998, I had been searching in vain for a *Splatterhouse* website. I originally wanted to start West Mansion shortly after seeing the myriad of other videogame fansites out there. I tried several times between 1998 and 2001 to collaborate with friends of mine on West Mansion, but those plans always got derailed.



The game that launched West Mansion.

In 2001, after winning *Wanpaku Graffiti*, I decided to start the site on my own. I cobbled together the very first version of West Mansion on Geocities, and on June 25, 2001, the site went live for the first time. After that, I submitted a "hosted sites" request to ClassicGaming.com. They agreed to host it, and on July 24, 2001, the new West Mansion (version 2.0, if you will) went live. On August 8, 2009, West Mansion left its longtime home at Clasicgaming.com, due to the IGN Hosted Sites shutdown, and landed on KonTek.net.



The original main page banner for West Mansion (2001).

I'm quite proud of what I've accomplished with West Mansion. There have been a few other *Splatterhouse* sites out there over the past few years, but they've all come and gone. West Mansion still stands, and is the one place to go for anything you could possibly want to know about the *Splatterhouse* series.

*Written by Rob Strangman. This excerpt from the book *Memoirs of a Virtual Caveman* is © 2008, 2014 SCAR Productions. Please do not distribute without the author's permission. Direct all inquiries to Rob at gradiusone@yahoo.com*

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