



CONTROL

will emerge out of you, you are home, you remind us of home, you've taken your boss with your boss with you. All hair must be eaten. Under the conceptual reality behind this reality you must want these waves to drag you away. After the song, time for applause. This cliché is death out of time, breaking the first the second the third the fourth wall, the fifth wall, floor; no floor; you fall! How do you say "insane"? Hurts to be happy. An earworm is a tune you can't stop humming in a dream: "baby baby baby yeah". Just plastic. So, safe and nothing to worry about. Ha ha, funny. The last egg breaks now. The hole in your room is a hole in you. You came and we let you in through the hole in you.



You know the expression "All style and no substance"? It could easily be attributed to Remedy's (and 505's) 2019 game Control, a VERY cinematic third person shooter. Oh, I'm sure this one could have been lumped in together with the likes of "The Lez of Us" and "God of Soy", but you know what? I'm real fucking biased. This game kicks ass in every department apart from gunplay. And minimalist UI. And maybe enemy variety...

So what is it really? The sales pitch is "Shoot up the SCP foundation while listening to Max Payne monologues". You play as Jesse Faden (who is in turn played by Courtney Hope), a woman with a man-chin and no place to call her own ever since she was separated from, let's count 'em:

- her friends,
- her family,
- her brother
- and her entire hometown of Ordinary, landfill and all.

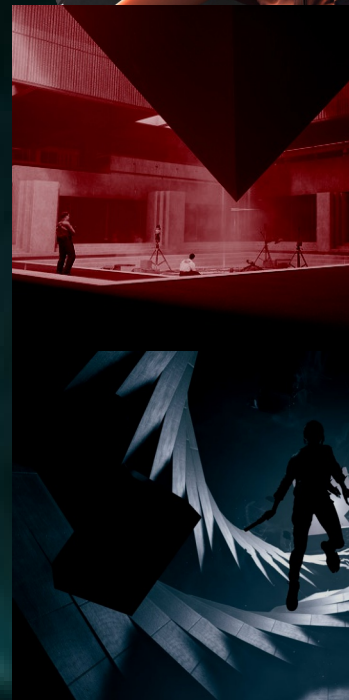
Her brother in particular was taken away by the ingame version of the men in black, Division 6, the so-called "Federal Bureau of Control". The FBC is a legitimate, government-funded foundation and as such should not be trusted. Jesse has always been weary of these people and thus our first relatable link with the protagonist is established. Who among you has not felt the unjust and stinging whip of impregnable Kafkaesque bureaucracy? Who hasn't been slighted by constantly shifting office hours, regulations and deliberately obfuscated procedures? Who...



I'm sorry, I had to re-new my license at the DMV last week, still on my Kaczynski kick. RIP in peace, sweet prince...

Anyway, Jesse happens upon FBC's gigantic headquarters, which is hidden in plain sight in the very heart of New York, goes inside to take a look-see and inquire about her brother. Well, when I say "she happens upon" FBC, what I meant to say was "she was guided there by a voice in her head". That's right, my dear reader(s): it's real schizo hours! The building seems empty and lifeless apart from a confused janitor who seems to speak in tongues (Finnish) and mistakes you for his new assistant. A few rooms later you realize why it felt lifeless: you walk into the director's office to find a James McCaffrey on the floor, diagnosed with severe gun-shot-like trauma to the head. Like any respectable American (Waste not - want not) you pick up the murder weapon with your bare arms and begin to fight off glowies left and right. They keep spouting some nonsense about The Hiss, an extra-dimensional collective of bad vibes and gnarly tunes (no really, it's a hostile frequency), but all you need to know is "shoot those federal niggers in the head, they glow in the dark, drop-kick glowniggers, run them over with a forklift", etc. Eventually, you do run into a few friendly faces, but you and I and she and her all know they are gaslighting you into helping them solve their problem. For you, they are means to an end and captors of your brother. Never forget that.

To get back onto a real review, I have to say this game is fucking gorgeous. Despite character models residing firmly in the uncanny valley territory, especially Jesse having a curious case of man-face, the environments and animations are stunning.





For me personally, this was one of those rare games I won't forget about for a long ass time. And it's not just how "realistic" everything looks, it's the style, the set pieces, the imaginative level design.

The whole point of the Bureau is to be as bog standard as possible in order to sniff out any irregularity ASAP.

Because in their business an irregularity can be anything from an annoying duplicating sticky note to a strangely delicious form of mold that turns you into a walking zombie husk. Or a mirror that sends endless doppelgangers to tell you how much of a failure you are. Now, some of you may say "That's every mirror, retard" and while true, you have to remember there are a lot of people out there completely oblivious to simple truths.

A lot of the environments will end up being boring offices, but the level geometry will take care of any mundanity you may feel while playing. It still has the same issue F.E.A.R. had: offices, industrial areas, offices... But like I said earlier, the more bored you are with regular stuff, the more jaw-dropping those juxtaposed supernatural environments will be when you finally reach them. There's a lot of verticality to the level design. Similarly to some WH40K games, everything is fucking tall and gives

you the sense of being an insignificant speck in the face of realities you've never even aware of until today. Now that I'm done gushing over the presentation I will touch upon one thing many people seem to have a gripe with: the minimalist UI. Your health bar is a solid blue line, health pickups are little dots, all text and borders are flat and soulless. I think people are missing the point that we're fighting a chaotic being that wants to distort, twist and corrupt everything and everyone. So it would only be fitting for us to feel safe and at home in the most by-the-numbers, no-nonsense, right-angled interface imaginable. Funnily enough, what are the crafting materials you pick up called? Abstract concepts like "Hidden Trend", "House Memory", "Remote Thought" and "Untapped Potential". I love it. Makes me feel nebulously smart, like I have the chance to sound educated without having to explain myself. I FUCKING LOVE ABSTRACTISM!

But yes, I can see why some people might not like it. Your "Service Weapon" forms could be



called what they really are instead of this bullshit:

- Pistol - Grip
- Shotgun - Shatter
- SMG - Spin
- Rail gun - Pierce
- Rocket launcher - Charge
- Grenade launcher - Surge

But then it wouldn't be as cool, now would it?

Speaking of guns... oh boy.

Something about the gunplay is really off. I can't tell if it's just because enemies move around in a realistic way, not giving you chance to score an easy headshot, or maybe the distance between Jesse and the camera is somehow fucked up. I know I've missed a lot of shots when I could have sworn I'd hit my target, the worst offender in this regard is definitely the shotgun. This thing sucks like your mom during thanksgiving dinner, you Alabama hick. Each pellet deals minimal damage and the spread is fucking atrocious. The only way to make this weapon viable is with the use of a special mod you find after you solve an optional puzzle in an optional expansion. So pro-tip: don't unlock the shotgun until you get this mod. Otherwise, all the weapon forms feel weak and only scarcely satisfying most of the time. To name names:

- Grip is puny.
- Shatter is useless without that mod I mentioned and even then you're limited by its range.
- Spin is inaccurate and weak.
- Pierce has awful ammo economy and it's real easy to





tight group of enemies from above and spray them with machinegun fire...

I always found myself relying on telekinesis, mainly because of the auto-targeting and learning how to use tricks to potentially double your damage using the same amount of energy as you would for a single throw. You see, if you grab an object from behind a glowie, that object will hit them and deal damage on its way to you, at which point you can launch it at full force. This is also the only reliable way to use kinesis against flying enemies. If you double tap your launch key, you will throw the object at full force from its point of origin and they won't have time to react (most of the time). It's especially useful if the object you're attempting to grab is right next to your target. Most anything can be grabbed and launched, at first you're restricted to items an average human could lift with relative ease (trashcans, computer panels, pneumatic tubes, tables), but after upgrading you can lift three forklifts at once and make the OSHA man cry. It really felt like an upgrade to what Half-life 2 was doing with it's physics-based source engine. See that object? You can lift it. Don't see any objects? Tear a piece of concrete off the wall and chuck that in their faces. The world is your oyster.

miss.

- Charge and Surge are the only ones that feel useful if you know how to compensate for the travel time, just try not to blow yourself up with range mods, idiot.

There's a trick you can use with explosive weapons by shooting at a flying target, missing, grabbing your own



rocket out of mid-air with telekinesis and launching it at the same enemy from behind. It's great fun. But that's the whole point of your weapons being weak and inaccurate: you're encouraged to combine and experiment with different weapon forms and telekinetic abilities. Throw a bunch of objects at an enemy and finish them off with only a few shots, carpet bomb an arena of enemies and convert one to pick off any survivors while you reload, butt-smash Wario-style into a

There's a bunch of callbacks to Remedy's previous titles, some more than others, and while you're following a fairly straightforward narrative, you're encouraged to look around for hidden documents and recordings revealing more interconnected lore. Stopping to read every single collectible is going to nearly double your playtime, so I recommend you do so sparingly, only when you're truly interested in the topic at hand. Every collectible is available to read in the menu, so you can take your time re-reading secret government documents to your hearts content.

Speaking of content, there are two expansions: "The Foundation" and "AWE". Each will take quite a few hours to complete, this is a long ass game. I've put in over 25 hours to go through the main campaign (ignoring the collectibles) and both expansions (reading the collectibles). There's a few sidequests and areas that don't contribute much to the main plot, but felt satisfying to do nonetheless. I'm pretty sure it is entirely possible to miss out on the dodging ability if you don't walk into the kitchen area next to Ahti's office and do a very short side-quest there.

If you are going to get this game (and I hope you do), I recommend you get the pre-order copy or a save file from that version so you can unlock Jesse's pre-order outfit. I don't know why, but the way she has her hair done with that costume makes her face look less man-ish.

Take.
Control.





SHOTGUN RATING

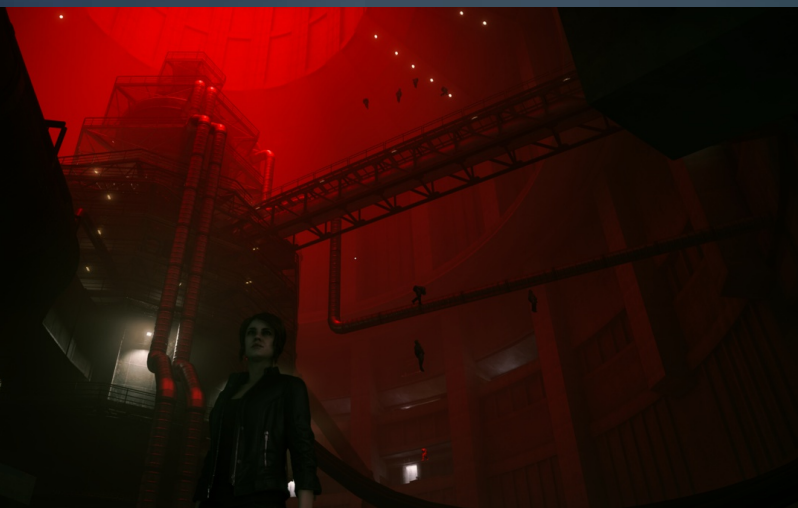


Shatter/Im/Precise description

You are a worm through time.
The thunder song distorts you.
Happiness comes.
White pearls, but yellow and red in the eye.
Through a mirror, inverted is made right.
Leave your insides by the door.
Push the fingers through the surface into the wet.
must want these waves to drag you away.



After the song, time for applause.
You were here, now you're gone.
The world is not what you thought it was.
We stand around you while you dream.
You can almost hear our words but you forget.



This happens more and more now.
You gave us the permission in your regulations.
We wait in the stairs.
The word that describes this is redacted.
Repeat the word.
The name of the sound resonates in your house.
It resonates in your house.



After the song, time for applause.
You were here, now you're gone.
The world is not what you thought it was.
We stand around you while you dream.
You can almost hear our words but you forget.

You've taken your boss with your boss.
An earworm is a
tune you can't stop humming in
your head.
"Daddy, daddy, daddy"
is a song that's been
under the conceptual
level of reality.
Just as you must
so late and nothing
of only words.
After the song,
the last egg
breaks now.
The hole in your
room is a hole in
you and we let you
in through the hole.
You have always
been here, the only
child.
A copy of a copy
of a copy.
Orange peel.
The picture is you
holding the picture.
When you know
you're in there.
You want to
listen to
dream to
want to
want to
want to