

y Dan Bass

acintosh game players: oil your .38 special and get ready to do battle with ghosts, zombies, and all sorts of supernatural phenomenon. MacPlay is releasing all three of the adventures of Edward Carnby in one set: The Alone in the Dark Trilogy. The Alone in the Dark series was inspired by the famous horror writer H.P. Lovecraft and set in the roaring 1920's. As Edward Carnby, the "Supernatural Private Eye", you will be called on to match wits against a cursed house, bootlegging pirates, and undead cowboys of the Wild West.

The play in these games will be very familiar to experienced computer gamers. Alone in the Dark has the feel of a Zork type of a game where you collect various items and try to discover what their intended use is. The most glaring example of the Zork influence is the infamous lamp you need to light up darkened rooms, the only difference is that it won't be a Grue that eats you this time, something else will do the honors.

[The Nuts And Bolts](#)

The game is set in a 3-D virtual world that you must guide your character through. The motion is very fluid but does have its awkward parts. Aiming shooting weapons is nothing short of a nightmare at times. Also, one thing which REALLY annoyed me was a particular puzzle. Carnby is required to push a stone block out of the way of a path he must walk into. I pushed the block out of the way, but could not get through the walkway which was created. After about twenty minutes of frustration, I realized that to get through the walkway, you

had to make the character stand in a certain spot and face a certain direction (etc., etc., etc.) just to walk past something. The games are FULL of these types of puzzles that you have to waste your time just trying to figure out where to position the character in order to do something obvious.

The game controls are remarkably similar throughout all three AID installments, and though there are some noticeable differences, they are kept to a minimum. The familiar Macintosh interface suffers some in the later two games. The Menu bar is not available as readily as it was in the original, but all games manage to keep a pretty good Mac feel to them. I had a few conflicts with extensions and control panels when I started playing games 2 and 3. These problems were fairly easy to fix, and the instruction manual gives detailed instructions on dealing with these little troubles.

The characters in the game do appear as boxy, 3D creations, but I didn't end up minding all that much after I got involved with the game.

The sound effects in the games are quite good, creaking floorboards, and squeaking door hinges really added a nice touch to the adventuring. Once you get playing, you really get pulled into the game. It is a good idea to save at various points throughout the game, to avoid having to start over due to a mistake.

Carnby starts the game off with a certain level of hit points. Once you lose them, they are hard to get back. Therefore, it is a good idea to save the game before you get into a fight with one of the many nasties you encounter.

Overall

Overall, the three games are well put together. The puzzles are neat to figure out, and often very rewarding once you get them to work. The Sound effects and music add much to the

neat, eerie feel to the games. The few glitches in game play can be rather annoying though and should not have made it into the finished product. The three games are fun to play, and you are essentially paying for the third, newest game. The other two are a bonus at no extra cost it would seem. I would recommend these games to someone who likes a good Zork-like puzzle to solve.

Pros

- Good music and sound effects
- Well written, colorful stories
- Runs very smoothly, with few problems

Cons

- Having to stand in the exact spot to solve puzzles makes you want to pull hair
- Fighting or shooting is difficult to coordinate

Publisher Info

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(900) 370-PLAY \$1.25 first minute .75 each additional.

Online help:

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Or, use Keyword : INTERPLAY, to get to the MacPlay board.

CompuServe:
Look for MacPlay in the Game Publishers B forum, section 5.

GEnie: MacPlay is located in the Games Roundtable by Scorpia. Type M805;1 at any "?" prompt, then select category 13.

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