

## Blu-Ray Review: Great Release For ‘George A. Romero’s Survival of the Dead’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 2, 2010 - 10:49am

- [Alan Van Sprang](#) [2]
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [3]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [4]
- [Dawn of the Dead](#) [5]
- [Day of the Dead](#) [6]
- [Diary of the Dead](#) [7]
- [George A. Romero](#) [8]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [9]
- [Kenneth Walsh](#) [10]
- [Land of the Dead](#) [11]
- [Night of the Living Dead](#) [12]
- [Survival of the Dead](#) [13]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [14]

CHICAGO – It pains me to point out the flaws of “George A. Romero’s Survival of the Dead.” Two of the most influential movies in my entire life are “Night of the Living Dead” and “Dawn of the Dead” and I could write a book on the importance of one of the most essential horror directors of all time. But, despite a fantastic Blu-ray release, “Survival of the Dead” disappoints.



Blu-Ray Rating: **3.5/5.0**

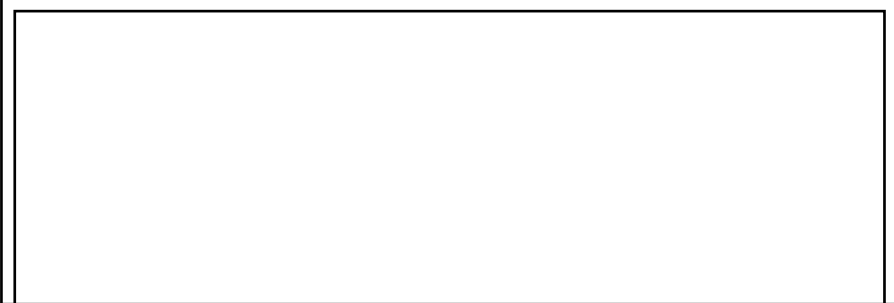
For one of the few times in Romero’s amazing career, it feels like he’s spinning his wheels. “Survival” is half-baked and poorly-constructed, a serious step down from “Diary of the Dead” and “Land of the Dead”. Despite a few well-made action scenes, the sixth “Dead” film feels more like the work of a director inspired by Romero than something made by the master himself. It’s a zombie version of what he does so well — feeding off what came before and not quite all there.



George A. Romero’s Survival of the Dead was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 24th, 2010

Photo credit: Magnolia

Unlike the previous films in the franchise, “Survival of the Dead” directly links back to “Diary of the Dead,” taking place shortly after the action of that film. The zombie nightmare has spread and a few remaining souls have created a community off the coast of Delaware in an attempt to protect their way of life. Of course, as in all “Dead” films, we soon learn that the humans can be scarier than the undead.





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*Photo credit: Magnolia*

Two families run the island – the O’Flynnns and the Muldoons – and they radically disagree with how to deal with the zombie crisis. A two-party community with disagreements about managing a threat? The political subtext might as well be subtitled and underlined. The more violent patriarch (Kenneth Welsh) is exiled to the mainland and hooks up with the soldiers that we met in “Diary of the Dead.” The soldiers and O’Flynn make their way back to the island and find zombies chained up like slaves, continuing to do manual labor that they remember from their days with a pulse. Commentaries on racism, war mentality, and even consumerism blend together but never quite gel into a coherent piece.

“Survival of the Dead” is Romero’s most unfocused film in years. It feels as if it was hastily thrown together and the brief window between “Diary” and this installment could be to blame. There’s a great shoot-out sequence near a dock that works because Romero’s simply great at this kind of material but the elements that required development like the script, characters, and performances all fall flat. Worst of all, it’s boring. How many ways can we possibly use zombies as social and political commentary? Let’s put them all in one movie.

The film is far from a complete disaster and it’s truly notable how kindly Magnolia has treated it with their Blu-ray release. Rarely has the quality of a film and the quality of its home release been so far apart but this is a simply spectacular Blu-ray with excellent video and audio and a ridiculously extensive collection of special features.

Who would have guessed that “George A. Romero’s Survival of the Dead” would have one of the most extensive and detailed collections of behind-the-scenes material of 2010? With a feature-length documentary, storyboards, and a commentary featuring one of the best audio men in the world (if you’ve never heard a Romero commentary, you’re missing out), more Blu-ray studios should follow this model. If only they were all this impressive.

## Special Features:

- o Introduction by George A. Romero
- o Audio Commentary with George A. Romero, Peter Grunwald, Michael Doherty, Kenneth Walsh, & Matt Birman
- o “Walking After Midnight” Documentary
- o “Sarge” Short Film
- o “A Minute Of Your Time” — 13 Behind-the-Scenes Shorts
- o Time With George
- o Storyboard Comparisons: Heads on Stakes
- o How to Create Your Own Zombie Bite
- o Fangoria Interview with George A. Romero
- o HDNet: “A Look at Survival of the Dead”

*“George A. Romero’s Survival of the Dead” stars Alan Van Sprang, Eric Woolfe, Kenneth Welsh, Kathleen Munroe, Richard Fitzpatrick, Athena Karkanis, Stefano di Mattero, Devon Bostick, and Joris Jarsky. It was written and directed by George A. Romero. The film is rated R and was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 24th, 2010.*





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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [16]  
Content Director  
HollywoodChicago.com  
[brian@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com) [15]

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  - [15] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
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