



# The 15th International Gothic Association Conference

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## Speakers, Abstracts, and Biographies

### A

#### NICOLE ACETO

“Within, walls continued upright, bricks met neatly, floors were firm, and doors were sensibly shut”: The Terror of Domestic Femininity in Shirley Jackson’s *The Haunting of Hill House*

#### Abstract

From the beginning of Shirley Jackson’s *The Haunting of Hill House*, ordinary domestic spaces are inextricably tied with insanity. In describing the setting for her haunted house novel, she makes the audience aware that every part of the house conforms to the ideal of the conservative American home: walls are described as *upright*, and “doors [are] *sensibly* shut” (my emphasis). This opening paragraph ensures that the audience visualizes a house much like their own, despite the description of the house as “not sane.” The equation of the story with conventional American families is extended through Jackson’s main character of Eleanor, the obedient daughter, and main antagonist Hugh Crain, the tyrannical patriarch who guards the house and the movement of the heroine within its walls, much like traditional British gothic novels.

Using Freud’s theory of the uncanny to explain Eleanor’s relationship with Hill House, as well as Anne Radcliffe’s conception of terror as a stimulating emotion, I will explore the ways in which Eleanor is both drawn to and repelled by Hill House, and, by extension, confinement within traditional domestic roles. This combination of emotions makes her the perfect victim of Hugh Crain’s prisonlike home, eventually entrapping her within its walls. I argue that Jackson is commenting on the restriction of women within domestic roles, and the insanity that ensues when women accept this restriction. By emphasizing Eleanor’s desire for freedom, and her powerlessness to achieve such freedom, Jackson exposes just how horrifying the conventional American dream can be for women.

#### Biography

Nicole Aceto holds a Masters in Literary History from Ohio University, and is a third-year PhD student at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her scholarly interests are in late 18th century and 19th century British novels, especially focusing on the afterlives of the Gothic and monstrosity in contemporary popular culture.

## ENRIQUE AJURIA IBARRA

Who Dies? What Returns? Witchcraft, Horror, and the Undead in *Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*

### Abstract

*Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* (CAOS) offers a new look at the classic Archie Comics character with a darker, more Gothic twist. In CAOS, Sabrina, half-witch and half-human, can become one of the most powerful witches in Greendale, but only if she offers her soul to the Devil. Amidst these dark dealings, Sabrina must face painful loss of family and loved ones. In the comic series, Sabrina's boyfriend Harvey is killed by the coven for witnessing their ceremonies. Madam Satan brings him back to life, but Harvey's body returns possessed by the soul of Sabrina's father, Edward Spellman. In the TV series, Sabrina tries to amend the death of Harvey's brother Tommy. But what comes back is not quite Tommy: a dark spirit has possessed his body, causing unease and horror at the Kinkle household.

In CAOS, what elicits dreadful horror is not who has died, but, actually, what has returned. Sabrina's spells do not recover lost lives; on the contrary, they bring back unexplainable evil that threatens the rules of the coven – a set of strict symbols that provide meaning and cohesion to the community – and Sabrina's desire for recognition, love, and redemption. Sabrina's hubris also threatens to dissolve this social structure into a chaos of unknown proportions. The purpose of this paper is to explore in CAOS the tensions witches must confront when faced with the horrors revealed by the undead. The real horror for Sabrina and her friends is not the canny power of the Devil, but real forces that are always beyond their grasp and recognition.

### Biography

Enrique Ajuria Ibarra is Assistant Professor at Universidad de las Américas Puebla, Mexico. He has previously published several articles and book chapters on Mexican horror cinema. He is the editor of the peer-reviewed online journal *Studies in Gothic Fiction*, and is currently preparing a book on the relationship between movement, Gothic, and the horror film.

## ALESSANDRA ALBANO

Re-reading the Gothic: The Science of Degeneration and Vulnerability of the Mind in Stoker's *Dracula* and Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

### Abstract

By articulating a common language employed in both scientific and literary texts, the object of this paper is to illustrate how the Gothic genre at the fin de siècle became a creative space for dissecting scientific theories and critiquing society. It examines the paradoxical implications of certain scientific theories such as Cesare Lombroso's theory of criminal atavism and Max Nordau's theory of degeneration in Stoker's *Dracula* and Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. Such theories justified a supposed racial hierarchy while reflecting the societal fear of a regression of human kind due to contact with foreign others. Consistent with scientific theories of degeneration, *Dracula* is a foreign criminal characterized as a primitive human entity who possesses a partially developed brain and divergent physical qualities. In Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, the power of the scientist to select desired traits reflects society's concern with the evolution of the human species and raises questions about the origin of reason and human morality. Although the connections between degeneration theory and these novels have been previously analyzed, this paper takes this phenomenon a step further by examining its relevance to the resurgence of the Gothic and its implications for society. This paper argues that the instability of the Gothic genre allowed for the manipulation of abstract scientific theories to enhance literary innovation at the fin de siècle. At the crux of these socio-scientific theories is a major social paradox: if certain social classes possess characteristics which make them superior to degenerates and lower classes, then why is it possible to identify such characteristics among acceptable members of society? Beneath the surface of this paradox lies the haunting fear of the susceptibility of all individuals to degeneration despite their social positioning, posing a threat to the stability of social hierarchy. This profound fear of physical degeneration and societal

regression resonates with central themes of decay and terror essential to the Gothic. Although such scientific theories are suffused with inaccuracies, this paper invites readers to consider the potential stagnancy of literature if writers did not incorporate the scientific understanding of the mystery of human life into the resurgence of the Gothic at the fin de siècle.

### **Biography**

Alessandra Albano is pursuing a master's degree in English and American Literature at New York University. Her current academic interests include the Gothic, the depiction of race in 19th-century literature, literature and science, and 19th-century print culture.

### **ANTONIO ALCALÁ**

Fears of Degeneration in the Works of William Hope Hodgson and H. P. Lovecraft

#### **Abstract**

The fears of degeneration experienced during the *fin de siècle* emerged from accumulated anxieties about the risk of a human fall from being the rational summit of the evolutionary ladder into a dark state of animalistic existence. This feeling resulted from the effect created on the collective mind by the combination of various arguments from scientific research, mainly around the degradation of matter, and the evolutionary past of humanity plus its hereditary future. The Gothic literature from that time (the last two decades of the nineteenth century) portrays such fears through the presence of hybrids whose presence horrifies those who confront them by alluding to the mere possibility of human devolution. Since then, the Gothic has remained full of monsters that have become depositaries of that devolutionary anxiety which has not abandoned us at all. The objective of this paper is to focus on two examples of the permanence of this fear in the early decades after the *fin-de-siècle* Gothic. The analysis will highlight the presence of monstrous creatures in Hodgson's *The House on the Borderland* and *The Nightland*, as well as in Lovecraft's "The Call of Cthulhu" and "The Shadow over Innsmouth". The final aim will be to explore how the horror produced by such creatures illustrates the position taken by each of these writers towards the feeling that humanity may not be the top in the evolutionary scheme on Earth.

### **Biography**

Antonio Alcalá González is researcher and professor of contemporary literature at Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico City, and also lecturer on Gothic Literature at UNAM. One of the pioneers in the recent raise of interest for the Gothic in Mexico, he is founder of the International Gothic Literature Congress which has been held biennially at UNAM since 2008.

### **XAVIER ALDANA REYES**

The (Lost) Origins of Gothic Cinema: Reconstructing the Old Dark House Mysteries

#### **Abstract**

The significance of early-twentieth-century cinema to contemporary understandings of the Gothic has been largely overlooked, partly because the Gothic has become somewhat divorced from one of its defining aesthetic cues: retrojected archaic temporal settings, often taking the chronotopic form of the medieval or 'Gothic' castle. This paper, and the research project it is attached to, seeks to redress this oversight by drawing attention to a crucial yet overlooked aspect of the history of cinematic Gothic: the old dark house mysteries (c. 1910–1930). These films, many of which are obscure and critically unknown today, gradually moved the trappings of the Gothic castle to the modern manor house, suggesting the possibility of the archaic within present times and returning the mode to the suspense/comedy/terror formula of the early Gothic romances of Ann Radcliffe.

This paper investigates existing documentation (reviews, stills) for the key "mysteries" to establish their filmic significance and critical insights into contemporary debates on the Gothic. My aim is thus not merely

to concentrate on the ODHM for their own sake, important as this task is, but also to use the examples of interest as a case study that is illustrative of the need to return to an aesthetic conceptualisation of the Gothic mode which has a) been practically ignored in work on Gothic cinema (Kavka 2002; Hopkins 2007; Bell 2013), and b) has led to a proliferation of readings of the Gothic that ignore its tight connection to architecture and temporality.

## Biography

Xavier Aldana Reyes is Reader in English Literature and Film at Manchester Metropolitan University and a founder member of the Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies. He is the author of *Spanish Gothic* (2017), *Horror Film and Affect* (2016) and *Body Gothic* (2014), and the editor of *Horror: A Literary History* (2016). Xavier is chief editor of the Horror Studies book series run by the University of Wales Press. His attending this conference is being funded by a British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Small Grant.

**DANA ALEX**, Kingston University

Hitting a Nerve: Gothic Terror, Brain Damage & the Destruction of Subjectivity

## Abstract

“After brain damage, [the] emotional brain is traumatised, and [...] the subject loses any interest in life in general. [...] Detachment, ‘cold blood’, unconcern determines the patient’s behavior.” (Malabou, 2013, p.11)

The feeling of terror means being frightened of the unknown. Gothic fiction evokes this feeling in its audience by playing with their nerves and senses. The moment that disturbs us the most is when we encounter an event that traumatises not only fictional characters but could easily become our terrifying reality.

(Neuro-)philosopher Catherine Malabou has made neural plasticity her main concept. Plasticity defines a process that enables the subject to either receive or give form but also means to destruct a subject’s form entirely. This is what Malabou calls destructive plasticity. In connection to this concept, she further creates the theory of the *new wounded*. These new wounded describe every subject that suffers from any kind of cerebral lesion, including head injuries, Alzheimer’s or trauma. Malabou understands these forms of brain lesion as events that without a warning disrupt a subject’s history forever. Within seconds, *destructive plasticity* makes people ‘[become] strangers to themselves’ (Malabou, 2012, p.13)

In this paper, I want to adapt Malabou’s theories for Gothic fiction by focusing on two examples. Firstly, I will concentrate on one of the most gruesome forms of enforced physical brain lesion: lobotomy. Here, I will use Joyce Carol Oates’ *Zombie* (1995) and examine the consequences of lobotomy for an individual’s subjectivity through a Malabouian lens. Secondly, I will focus on the effects of Alzheimer’s on the subject by analysing Black Mirror’s techno-horror episode “Playtest” (2016). Ultimately, I want to demonstrate Catherine Malabou’s neuro-philosophy as a new approach of understanding Gothic terror.

## Biography

Dana Alex is an AHRC-funded PhD researcher in English Literature at Kingston University, London and the University of Surrey. Her research explores Gothic fiction as *the fiction of the nerves*. By using the works of “the philosopher of the brain”, Catherine Malabou, Dana is (re-)reading Gothic tales through a neuroscientific, neuro-philosophical and neuro-psychoanalytic lens. Since October 2018, Dana is also the IGA postgraduate representative for the UK & Ireland.

## AMANDA ALEXANDER

“Als Ob”: Gothic Narrative Voices in Heinrich von Kleist and Percy Shelley

### Abstract

Percy Shelley has long held a position near the borderlands between Romanticism and the Gothic. From his juvenilia to the ghosts in the “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty,” Shelley’s interest in Gothic tropes extends beyond mere flirtation. And yet, fewer critics have examined the combined relationships among his grammatical choices, his speaker voice, and his use of Gothic imagery in his poetry. Sublime experience in Shelley, for example, is one that develops out of nature, but then retreats from its presence into the dark corners of the imagination. These movements often hinge upon a narrative voice’s use of perspective to create feelings of distance and isolation as the imagination attempts to process these experiences. In Heinrich von Kleist’s short stories, such as “The Beggarwoman of Locarno,” alienation and disconnect also stem not only from environments inspired by classic Gothic tropes but from a labyrinthine syntax. Kleist’s sentences, which to English readers may seem to test the boundaries of meaning, reach complex peaks, only to fall almost to a whisper.

Narrative voices in both Shelley and Kleist shift the reader’s perception, blurring the lines between human and object, knowable and unknowable, natural and supernatural. As such, I argue that Shelley and Kleist use a narrative voice that relies on both the Gothic and on syntax to heighten moments of anxiety or fear. Through balancing recognizable Gothic tropes and complex syntactic moves, Shelley and Kleist offer another way to examine how the Gothic shapes the interactions between British and German Romanticism.

### Biography

Amanda Alexander is a PhD candidate at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Her research interests include 18th & 19th century prescriptive English grammar, connections between British and German Gothic movements, Lovecraftian terror, and literary (Gothic & horror) adaptations in table-top role-playing games.

## MARTHA AMORE

Maternal Subjectivity in Two Feminist Gothic Texts: Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* and Mariana Enriquez’s “The Dirty Kid”

### Abstract

In this paper, I focus on the revolutionary potential of two feminist gothic texts focusing on maternal subjectivity. Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* and Mariana Enriquez’s “The Dirty Kid” each tell the story of a mother deemed monstrous by patriarchal society. Both of these works engage deeply with Julia Kristeva’s theory of the abject, illustrating the extreme marginalization of the mother characters. However, there is a danger in analyzing Morrison and Enriquez’s texts within the bounds of Kristeva’s psychoanalytic theory. Such a reading can serve to (mis)place the stories into a feedback circuit in which “mother-as-abject” is reinforced rather than challenged. While I find Kristeva’s theory profoundly descriptive of misogyny in Western culture, and certainly operative in Morrison and Enriquez’s texts, I posit that the two stories ultimately reject and break free of the limitations of Kristeva’s theory of the abject. Relying on a feminist historical approach to the texts, one that very much contextualizes the characters and their actions within a historically-derived racist patriarchy, I analyze Morrison’s *Beloved* and Mariana Enriquez’s “The Dirty Kid” as tales of mothers who refuse their abject statuses as they struggle to achieve full subjecthood within a system that disallows such an identity. Through their fiction, Morrison and Enriquez offer a pathway out of racist and colonialist patriarchal structure.

### Biography

Martha Amore teaches writing at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She achieved her master of fine arts from the University of Alaska Anchorage in 2009 and has published stories in a number of journals

and magazines, including *Room*, Canada's oldest feminist literary journal. In 2013 VP&D House published her novella in the anthology *Weathered Edge: Three Alaskan Novellas*. In 2015 she won a Rasmuson Individual Artist Award to complete her collection of short stories, *In the Quiet Season*, which was published by University of Alaska Press in 2018. In 2016 Martha Amore and coeditor Lucian Childs were contributing editors of the University of Alaska Press anthology *Building Fires in the Snow: A Collection of Alaska LGBTQ Short Fiction and Poetry*, which was a finalist for a LAMBDA Literary Award. She is currently at work on an interdisciplinary PhD through the University of Alaska Fairbanks and her dissertation focuses on the feminist gothic.

## JOICE AMORIM

Western Gothic in *From Dusk Till Dawn* and John Carpenter's *Vampires*

### Abstract

Western Gothic is a sub-genre of Gothic literature that usually takes place in the west of the United States or the western side of Mexico. The sub-genre blends well known Gothic elements such as witches, curses, vampires, superstition, horror, terror in a western setting, which are arid places and desolate landscapes of deserts. Western Gothic brings a different aspect of the Gothic created in England in the 18th century, switching scenarios from medieval castles to specific settings including ranch houses, saloons, motels in the edge of roadways, and small frontier towns. The sub-genre merges the Anglo-American, Mexican and Indigenous cultures providing innovations in the Gothic genre. Some examples of films with Western Gothic characteristics are *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996) by Robert Rodriguez and *Vampires* (1998) by John Carpenter. The first one deals with outlaws battling vampires across the border heading to Mexico; the second is about a group of vampires and vampire hunters looking for an ancient relic in the desert of New Mexico. Both films bear similarities and characteristics that distinguish them from other American Gothic works; they deal with religion and the loss of faith, both films present very similar environments with houses or strip clubs with prostitutes, and they present vampires with a very monstrous aspect and deformed faces. It is possible to list many aspects of the Gothic adapted to the western environment of the desert and extreme heat.

### Biography

Joice Amorim is a Master's student in the PPGI (Post Graduation Program) at the Federal University of Santa Catarina in Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil. She is writing her MA thesis on teaching literature and Ernest Hemingway.

## ALEX ANDERSON

Facing the Incubus: Exploring the Gothic Elements of Caroline Chesebro's *Isa: A Pilgrimage*

### Abstract

The current critical conversation surrounding Caroline Chesebro' does not recognize the range of her creativity and incorrectly classifies her first novel *Isa: A Pilgrimage* (1852) as a piece of "woman's fiction" (Baym 209). When compared to Edgar Allan Poe's "Ligeia" (1838), the two texts share many traditional Gothic characteristics, and those qualities make *Isa* a fundamentally Gothic novel. Both Poe's and Chesebro's protagonists are extremely intelligent women who share a fascination with death and whose own deaths are shrouded with spiritual ambiguity. Chesebro's novel, however, provides a more developed insight into Isa's strong-willed and ambitious interiority. Throughout *Isa*, Chesebro' presents a nuanced trajectory of the story arc of the Gothic Radcliffean heroine, prompting a new interpretation of Isa's "pilgrimage." A Gothic reading of the text frames Isa's journey as one of spiritual skepticism and sexual awakening. Consequently, this counter-reading reveals subconscious social, spiritual, and sexual anxieties and fears of middle-class antebellum Americans and provides a valuable psychological profile of that demographic. In this way, a re-contextualized analysis of Caroline Chesebro's *Isa* as a Gothic novel expands, and, perhaps, improves the critical conversation surrounding the text.

## Biography

Alex Anderson is a graduate student at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville studying the American Gothic.

## PATRYCJA ANTOSZEK

Hill House Revisited: From Shirley Jackson's Private Terrors to a Netflix Horror Show

### Abstract

The aim of my presentation will be to discuss the ways in which Mike Flanagan's television series *The Haunting of Hill House* (2018), while destroying Jackson's novel terrifying ambiguity, simultaneously explores and gives prominence to some of Jackson's most disturbing themes. The series' most striking departure from the 1959 narrative is probably the shift from one character's subjective perspective to a family drama in which each character personifies a particular aspect of Jackson's Eleanor's troubled psyche. While I agree with Holly Green's opinion that Flanagan's show lacks the subtlety of Jackson's highly personal vision and disregards some of the novel's most important ideas, I want to argue that the Netflix series nevertheless succeeds in unearthing and carefully exploiting the novel's highly underrated affective potential. The novel's restraint, which may be seen, as Green suggests, as a metaphor for female repression, and which is so characteristic for Jackson's work in general, is replaced here with emotional intensity that is, at times, even more disturbing than the ghoulish horror scenes. Consciously or not, then, the series highlights the very aspects of Jackson's own experience which she tried so hard to keep hidden behind her elegant prose. Haunted by a troubled relationship with her mother, repeatedly betrayed by her husband, and suffering throughout her life from a pervading sense of loneliness, the author confessed, "I wrote of neuroses and fear, and I think all my books laid end to end would be one long documentation of anxiety." The aim of my presentation will be to demonstrate that Flanagan's reworking of the classic novel, peculiar and glaringly unfaithful to the original as it is, nevertheless pays tribute to Jackson's narrative by reversing its smooth and perfectly controlled surface to reveal the fears and phobias beneath. If *Hill House*, as Dara Downey suggests, "is a novel about haunting rather than a haunted house," haunting as such should be seen not in terms of the supernatural, but rather, as Ruth Heholt points out, as "merely or *only* affect."

## Biography

Patrycja Antoszek is Assistant Professor in the Department of American Literature and Culture, the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. She specializes in contemporary American literature, Gothic literature and literary theory. Her current research focuses on affect theory and the fiction of Shirley Jackson. She is the author of *The Carnavalesque Muse: The New Fiction of Robert Coover* (2010) and several articles.

## STEPHEN ARCH

The Global Gothic in a Large Lecture Format

### Abstract

I will trace my development of some successful pedagogical practices over five iterations of a large lecture course (300 – 400 students) for general education students, focusing on content, lectures, theory, and assignments. 1) The primary content of my gothic courses has become increasingly global, thanks in large part to current research on the global gothic. It's bittersweet to trade out a film like *Alien* for a film like *Old Boy* or *The Babadook*, but it's necessary in the context of general education today. 2) Each of my lectures features a free-flowing student-driven discussion of a single painting, photograph, or installation. I use these moments to de-center my otherwise dominant lecture voice, to model a criticism that is communal, and to help students begin to read visually. I didn't invent this particular wheel, of course, but I think it works especially well in the gothic to teach concepts like the grotesque and the uncanny. 3) I weave theory in and out of the primary reading/screening list. I have discovered both how necessary theory is in courses on the gothic, even in a general education course, and how little (in essence) that I

can fruitfully get away with. And 4), I have developed essays, scaffolding exercises, and exams that work together in a rich and productive way. The course is technically not a writing course, but I ask students to write about 4000 words of analysis of the gothic in various formats. Early in the semester, I ask students to write on understudied out-of-copyright stories; at the end of the semester, I ask students to write on very, very recent examples of the gothic – so recent that no criticism is available for them to crib from. Thus, the final exam is a practical test of what they have learned: can they read a gothic tale independently? Armed with a small canon of gothic works and a handful of theoretical terms/concepts, they must encounter and explain a very recent (short) example of gothic literature.

### **Biography**

Stephen Arch is Professor of English at Michigan State University. He is the author of two monographs and a dozen articles on early American literature. He came to the gothic relatively recently, in mid-career, and has only recently begun to publish on the topic. His essay on the gothic in Elizabeth Stoddard's *The Morgesons* (1862) appeared in the collection *Haunting Realities* (2017); an essay on the gothic in E. L. Doctorow's novels will be published later this year in a collection reassessing Doctorow's novelistic legacy. He's currently writing an essay on Dan Simmons' novels.

## **B**

### **DOROTA BABILAS**

The Rise of the Conservative Gothic: Dracula, Frankenstein's Monster, and the Phantom of the Opera as Model Fathers

#### **Abstract**

The apparent revival of the Conservative discourse in Western politics and culture has reached the classic Gothic narratives. In recent popular culture adaptations, great Gothic villains – such as Dracula, Frankenstein's monster, and the Phantom of the Opera – have increasingly been steered towards becoming proponents of traditional family values, and presented as heads of child-centered nuclear family units. This goes against decades of cultural treatment of Gothic monsters – to say nothing of the texts that originated them. Conventionally, the patriarchal family values were restored by the ritual destruction of the monster by his mor(t)al opponents – now the villains must be 'redeemed' to the point of wholeheartedly accepting the discourse of their former adversaries. The proposed paper will focus on some recent adaptations of the Dracula mythos: *Hotel Transylvania* (2012, 2015, 2018), and *Castlevania* (2017), as well as new incarnations of Frankenstein's Creature (*Penny Dreadful* – season 3, 2016) and the Phantom of the Opera (*Love Never Dies*, 2010) in the light of the attempts of appropriation of the Gothic by the forces of the Conservative backlash.

### **Biography**

Dorota Babilas is Associate Professor at the Institute of English Studies, the University of Warsaw. She specializes in Victorian, Gothic, and Film Studies. She is the author of several scholarly articles and two monographic books – on the cultural afterlife of Queen Victoria (Warsaw 2012) and the enduring myth of the Paris Opera (Warsaw 2018).

### **HEIDI BACKES**

Mirror Image: Anxiety, Terror, and the Politics of Memory in García Morales's *The Logic of the Vampire*

#### **Abstract**

The apparent revival of the Conservative discourse in Western politics and culture has reached the classic Gothic narratives. In recent popular culture adaptations, great Gothic villains – such as Dracula, Frankenstein's monster, and the Phantom of the Opera – have increasingly been steered towards

becoming proponents of traditional family values, and presented as heads of child-centered nuclear family units. This goes against decades of cultural treatment of Gothic monsters – to say nothing of the texts that originated them. Conventionally, the patriarchal family values were restored by the ritual destruction of the monster by his mor(t)al opponents – now the villains must be ‘redeemed’ to the point of wholeheartedly accepting the discourse of their former adversaries. The proposed paper will focus on some recent adaptations of the Dracula mythos: *Hotel Transylvania* (2012, 2015, 2018), and *Castlevania* (2017), as well as new incarnations of Frankenstein’s Creature (*Penny Dreadful* – season 3, 2016) and the Phantom of the Opera (*Love Never Dies*, 2010) in the light of the attempts of appropriation of the Gothic by the forces of the Conservative backlash.

## Biography

Heidi Backes is Assistant Professor of Spanish at Missouri State University (USA), where she teaches classes on Spanish Peninsular literature and culture. She specializes in 19th- and 20th-century Spanish literature, focusing her latest research on the Gothic and neo-Gothic movements in Spain. She has recently presented at IGA 2017, GANZA 2019, and has published articles and book chapters on novels by authors such as Benito Pérez Galdós, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Alicia Giménez Bartlett, and Adelaida García Morales. Her latest article (“Rhetorical Monstrosity and Female Agency in *El Sur*”) is forthcoming at the *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* at Liverpool University.

## HELENA BACON

Nuclear Terror, Radiological Horror: The Gothic Effects of America’s Atomic Bomb

### Abstract

On 2nd December, 1942, Enrico Fermi generated the first human-made, self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction at the Chicago Pile-1 reactor, the first major breakthrough of the Manhattan Project. Three years later, Little Boy was dropped on Hiroshima, Fat Man on Nagasaki, and a force was unleashed that itself generated both terror – awe-inspiring, unsettling, sublime power, mushroom clouds witnessed from the safety of a retreating plane, from photographs and video footage, from an ocean away; and horror – burns, radiation sickness, cellular destruction and death. It also created an unresolved guilt that has infected subsequent Western texts that pertain to the nuclear and rendered them, I believe, Gothic – a troubled subconscious response to such power and the already-proven capability of humanity to use them.

David Mogen et al state that ‘gothicism results when the epic moment passes, and a peculiar rift in history develops and widens into a dark chasm that separates new from what has been.’ If Gothic was the gloaming that lurked behind the rationalism of the Enlightenment the first time around, then the bomb and subsequent nuclear techno-sciences have acted as a kind of twentieth-century Enlightenment, a pinnacle of scientific endeavour and ambition that has had repeatedly troubling after-effects. This paper will explore how the bomb functions as a Gothic technology (birthed, in part, in Chicago and commemorated by Henry Moore’s skull-like *Nuclear Energy* sculpture) that conjoins terror and horror, and survey some of the ways in which nuclear gothic texts reflect this interrelationship and fuse the political and corporeal, the psychological and visceral, the mythical and the environmental, and America with its grave historical manoeuvring.

## Biography

Helena Bacon has recently completed a PhD at the University of East Anglia. Her research interests include the Gothic, the American frontier, the carnivalesque and issues of “Otherness” in American visual culture with a special interest in American contemporary subscription television. She has just finished her first novel, a Gothic Western, which was longlisted for the 2017 Mslexia prize.

## JASMYN BARRINGER

“I see dead people”: Discursive Ghosts and 19th-Century American Spiritualism in Libba Bray’s *The Diviners* and Mike Flanagan’s *Ouija: Origin of Evil*

### Abstract

Death, a common trope in Gothic texts, is shrouded by dank mystery. In order to parse the fog of our inevitable demise, we often ask ourselves: What is going to happen to us when we die? Spiritualism in the 19th century, as a means to communicate with the dead through a medium, began to answer such an evasive inquiry. Spirits are not lost to inconceivable voids, but were called forth in the parlors of America, indicating that conducting séances resituates the individual within their community after death. Spiritualism collapses the distance between the dead and the living. Early ghost sightings would often be cathartic for participants, but the depictions in 20th-century film and literature have taken a particularly demonic turn. This essay explores how insidious discourses like racism, medicine, and eugenics can intertwine and infuse with the modern ghost. Horror ensues, not because of specters alone, but often as a result of the dialectic hauntings fueling the spirits’ rampage. Both texts, *The Diviners* and *Ouija: Origins* present mediums who are enterprising in their endeavors to support themselves in modern America, but their progress is impeded by blood thirsty apparitions. Multiple minorities, including African-Americans, homosexuals, and female characters must negotiate their self-identity and economic positions, while combating their discursive demons. Through a combination of supernatural body horror and atmospheric terror, the séance proves to be a truly volatile experience in cinema and print.

### Biography

Jasmyn Barringer is a second-year Ph.D. candidate from Ypsilanti, Michigan. She received her B.A. and M.A. in English Literature with minors in Anthropology and Communications. Her specialization, and eventual dissertation, will spotlight the intersections between 19th-century Victorian Gothic and 20th-century post-colonial Caribbean literature. In Jasmyn’s free time she works on her collection of paintings titled “Bursting from the Crypt,” inspired by Edgar Allan Poe and Derek Walcott.

## HENRY BARTHOLOMEW

Lovecraft Unbound: Nihilism, Speculative Realism, and Literary Criticism

### Abstract

“*Everything is dead already*” (223), says Ray Brassier in his remorseless philosophical treatise on nihilism - *Nihil Unbound: Enlightenment and Extinction* (2007). Though he has since distanced himself from the movement, Brassier is one of a number of philosophers and theoreticians associated with Speculative Realism (SR), a contemporary branch of philosophy rethinking humanity’s (and philosophy’s) relation to reality. The advent of SR has coincided with the ongoing recuperation of H.P. Lovecraft’s prose writings, which, since their enshrinement in the Library of America in 2005, have been the subject of a renewed critical and cultural interest. What is more curious, however, is the attention several of these philosophers have given to Lovecraft in their own writings, most notably Graham Harman, who’s book, *Weird Realism: Lovecraft and Philosophy* (2012), uses his own metaphysical programme – Object-Oriented Ontology – to reassess Lovecraft’s stylistic achievements. However, rather than simply recapitulate Harman’s approach, this paper sets up a dialogue between the nihilistic strands of Speculative Realism and Lovecraft’s self-confessed “cosmic indifferentism”. Brassier writes that “nihilism is not an existential quandary but a speculative opportunity” (xi). This paper posits that Lovecraft would have agreed with this, or rather, he would have seen how nihilism as an existential quandary could, itself, be made into a speculative (literary) opportunity. Using a number of stories as case studies, this paper examines not only how SR shines an eldritch light on Lovecraft’s unique brand of horror but also, and in a strange inversion, how Lovecraft’s squamous fiction has come to “read” philosophy.

## Biography

Henry Bartholomew is an AHRC DTP-funded PhD student at the University of Exeter and Bath Spa University. His research examines the overlap between the recent “speculative turn” in philosophy and the study of the Gothic. He co-convenes the AHRC’s “Embodiment” research cluster, and has presented his work at various conferences, including last year’s IGA. His work focuses primarily on the writings of M.R. James, Algernon Blackwood, Florence Marryat, and Vernon Lee.

## GILLIAN BAUER

Gothicizing Class: The Hull House Devil Baby and the Crimes of H. H. Holmes

### Abstract

America’s inability to articulate clearly what we mean by “class” in a democratic republic is a source of confusion, even terror, that finds its way into our cultural productions. In this presentation, I contend that the gothic mode was employed in response to a proliferation of social concerns that surfaced during the Progressive Era. I illustrate this response through two case studies grounded in contemporaneous media coverage of two historical Chicago events: — the alleged birth of a Devil Baby at Chicago’s Hull House in 1913, and the capture of America’s first serial killer H. H. Holmes in 1895. Through an analysis of newspaper accounts of these events, I suggest that gothic language was deployed during this period to both express and control class tensions and anxieties. Specifically, I use news accounts of these two stories to illustrate Freud’s understanding of the *unheimlich*, or uncanny, as encompassing opposites: “on the one hand, it means that which is familiar and congenial, and on the other, that which is concealed and kept out of sight.” A term embodying contradiction, the uncanny, as expressed in these two case studies, might also describe the shading of the horrifying (or that which repulses) into the terrifying (or that which is reveals awesome truths) for Progressive Era middle-class readers. Ultimately, I suggest that the gothic is the preeminent mode of expressing class anxieties in American fiction, a method by which writers could both efface class and make the reality of class in America visible.

## Biography

Gillian Bauer holds a PhD in English from Loyola University Chicago, where her dissertation focused on American class anxieties as they are expressed through gothic works by Progressive Era realist and naturalist authors. She is interested in the history and social applications of gothic conventions, with particular attention to class anxieties in American fiction and the intersections of realism and the gothic. Dr. Bauer’s research on gothic fiction has been published in the journals *Studies in Gothic Fiction* and *Victorian Network*, and in the book *The Treatment of Disabled Persons in Medieval Europe*.

## HANNAH-FREYA BLAKE

Dialogues with Demons; or, Monks in Conversation: Montague’s *The Demon of Sicily* (1807) and the Male Gothic in the Early Nineteenth Century

### Abstract

The male Gothic, visceral, voyeuristic, and ‘semi-pornographic’ in nature (Smith, 2004), entered the late-eighteenth century market with scandal on its heels as Matthew Lewis, MP, revealed himself to be the author of the *The Monk* (1796). I believe that in the years 1807-08, when the publisher J. F. Hughes out-published the more popular Minerva Press publishers of Gothic Romance, the Lewisite male Gothic dominated the market in much the same way that the 1790s had been dominated by the Radcliffean female Gothic. This paper will argue that popular Gothic literature, though often overlooked and considered derivative, provides invaluable insight into how the literary market engaged with the debates regarding the aesthetics and theatrics of Radcliffe’s *Terror* and Lewis’s *Horror*.

I intend to demonstrate how writers of popular Gothic utilised the female and male Gothic strands to produce literature that is both marketable and innovative by analysing the works of Edward Montague. Of

particular interest is *The Demon of Sicily* (1807), which from the opening scene invites readers to compare Padre Bernardo's lasciviousness with that of Ambrosio's from *The Monk*. Initially this analysis considers what Montague's novel borrowed from Lewis's text and style, and will also address what was altered, omitted, and added. By reading texts in dialogue, Montague's supposedly Lewisite text will be shown to participate in the female Gothic trend as well, the two factions being mutually dependent on each other in the creation and regulation of Terror and Horror for mass audiences.

Ultimately, I shall conclude that Gothic literature should be seen on a spectrum, one which does not categorise any single text as female or male, Terror or Horror, but rather fluid, succubus-turning-incubus to spread the seed of nightmares.

## Biography

Hannah-Freya Blake is a PhD candidate and GTA at Leeds Trinity University. She completed her MA in Victorian Studies at Leeds Trinity University with the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies in 2013, for which she was awarded the John Murray Prize. Her PhD in Gothic Literature is concerned with the development and marketization of the so-called "male Gothic" from the late-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century. Her short story 'Old Jack' won first prize at the creative showcase at Reimagining the Gothic in 2018. Hannah-Freya aims to develop a career in Gothic studies as both an academic and creative.

## LINNIE BLAKE

Gothic Terror, Gothic Horror: Gender, Ethnicity and the Contemporary American Nightmare in Jordan Peele's *Get Out* (2017)

### Abstract

Since the eighteenth century, the terror-focused Female Gothic has explored the status of women as property passed from father to husband, their entrapment within the domestic sphere, the putative insanity of the non-compliant woman (and, hence, the ideological function of gender stereotypes) and the necessity of resistance to this oppression. This paper will explore the ways in which Jordan Peele's 2017 horror film *Get Out* adapts many of the Female Gothic's characteristics in its bitter indictment of (liberal) white racism in the contemporary United States. This in the light of escalating economic inequalities, the capitalist appropriation of black cultures, the hugely disproportionate incarceration and execution of young men of colour and the ubiquitous murder of African Americans at the hands of the police. As such, our hero Chris becomes a new kind of Gothic hero who melds the resourcefulness of the Female Gothic heroine with a proactive masculine subjectivity drawn from the tradition of African American freedom movements in a visceral narrative that is visually, narratologically and ideologically horrifying. The result is a profoundly significant work of Gothic terror/horror cinema that challenges any easy suppositions audiences may hold about the submode, its history and its influences whilst indicting the United States' ongoing protestations of equality and the inalienable rights of all. It also allows a timely reconsideration of the vexed relationship between the feminist struggle and the fight for black liberation in the US in the light of contemporary intersectionality discourse.

## Biography

Linnie Blake is founder and Head of the Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies and Reader in Gothic Literature and Film at Manchester Metropolitan University. She is author of *The Wounds of Nations* (2008). She has published widely on numerous aspects of Gothic and Horror literature and film, most recently co-editing the collections *Neoliberal Gothic* (2017) and *Digital Horror* (2015) with Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet and Xavier Aldana Reyes, respectively.

## WYATT BONIKOWSKI

“Hence, Asmodeous”: Feminine Demonic Writing in Shirley Jackson’s *The Bird’s Nest*

### Abstract

This paper will explore the feminine demonic in American Gothic writer Shirley Jackson’s portrayal of multiple personality disorder and its treatment in her 1954 novel *The Bird’s Nest*. The novel’s narrative proceeds from what might be called the terror of the disintegrated self to the horror of the annihilated subject. While disintegration produces the potential for change and feminine agency, the final treatment of the protagonist results in an “empty vessel,” ready to be filled with the gender ideologies of 1950s America.

Jackson’s interest in witchcraft and demonology is well known, but *The Bird’s Nest* has received less attention in this regard than her more famous works, such as *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* and the stories in *The Lottery*. In *The Bird’s Nest*, Jackson depicts a power struggle between Elizabeth Richmond and her physician Dr. Wright, who attempts to unify four competing personalities into a single self. For Dr. Wright, Betsy is the most intractable personality, “the dreadful grinning face of a fiend,” who must be suppressed at all costs.

Moreover, Betsy *writes*. The first signs in the novel of Elizabeth’s mental division are the letters she receives from Betsy, messages from a demonic unconscious seeking expression and recognition. The power struggle, then, is between feminine demonic writing, private, secret, and unacknowledged, and masculine official writing, as Dr. Wright—or “Write,” as Jackson mentions in her notes for the novel—narrates his treatment in the manner of a psychological case history, drawing on a medical tradition that has historically associated women’s mental illness with demonic possession. Jackson’s novel, I argue, resists the narrative of the integrated self that would conform to dominant social and cultural expectations for women in 1950s America, privileging instead a demonic writing that exposes the fissures in such narratives.

### Biography

Wyatt Bonikowski is Associate Professor of English at Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts, where he teaches 20th- and 21st-century Gothic, horror fiction, literary theory, and creative writing. He has published an essay in *Gothic Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, on the trope of the demon lover in Shirley Jackson’s work, and I have an essay forthcoming this year on recent English-language literary adaptations of the Grimms’s fairy tale “The Juniper Tree” in *Marvels & Tales*. His book *Shell Shock and the Modernist Imagination: The Death Drive in Post-World War I British Fiction* was published by Ashgate (now Routledge) in 2013.

## PUBALI BORA KASHYAP

Challenging Constructs: Rewriting the Grotesqueness of Femininity in Joyce Carol Oates’ Select Gothic Fiction

### Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the work of American gothic writer Joyce Carol Oates and how it presents the female body as a form of grotesque and uses it as a device of power for the gothic female characters of her fiction. Her works take account of the conventional gothic imagery of the feminine body but at the same time subverts them to defy and resist such conventional constructs of the female body. The objectification of the female body which takes place in the industrial world can also be seen in contemporary art where the body is presented as pliable and is commodified but Oates’ work challenges these patterns of representation by way of resistance to the commodification of the bodies of women. The female characters in her work are often faced with the challenge to question conventionalities in their social framework. These women redefine their bodies and very often also reject their own sexuality. She

creates arguments in her work that shows that the socio-cultural construct of the bodies of women not just pose challenges for her women characters but also how they challenge and resist these constructions. This paper intends to study these features of her work by taking into account her work, *Haunted: Tales of the Grotesque* (1994) along with her other works of gothic fiction and will make use of Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection and Ellen Moers' notions of the female gothic to analyze Oates' works.

## Biography

Pubali Bora Kashyap is a PhD Research Scholar in the department of English at Gauhati University, Assam, India. She completed her Masters in English at Tezpur University with a specialization in American Literature. Her PhD dissertation studies the American Beat writers and focuses on Jack Kerouac and the 1950s American postwar counterculture. Her research interest includes American studies, speed theories, travel writing, gender studies, identity politics, postcolonial studies, among others. She has published on the concepts of sociology of American family dynamics, identity and belongingness, and Barbara Kingsolver.

## NAOMI BORWEIN

Gothic Paranoia in Popular Science: Flying Saucers, Black Matter Storms, and Satellite News in the "Age of Apocalypse"

### Abstract

Gothic paranoia in Popular Science leeches from the flying saucers of Billy Meier to research and press releases of the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre of Astrophysics. Increasingly in America, dark matter storms, esoteric radio waves, UFOs, natural disasters, and unexplained archaeological finds get wrapped up in fads and fanaticism. Such is the case with conspiracy theory; it has a counter-narrative with recent antecedents in early twentieth-century dystopic Sci-fi, and contains longstanding Gothic markers of revolution. Using a critical, historiographical approach, Borwein explores the diaspora of Gothic paranoia in dystopic fantasy as horror affect and terror aesthetic in contemporary Popular Science, juxtaposing these trends to historio-cultural considerations of propaganda, quasi-pornographic social sadism as spectacle, and sensationalist #fakenews. This is contrasted to sociological underpinnings in the Gothic madness of the crowds, hysteria myths, and millennial apocalyptic rhetoric—from Charles Mackay's 1841 *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of the Crowds*, or Hume's "madness," to Émile Durkheim's collective effervescence. Borwein uses some contemporary mainstream examples through *Discovery Channel*, *Science*, and other sources, and parallels these with alternatives like Alex Jones or *C2C*. Borwein explicates how aesthetics of horror and terror permeate dystopic science rhetoric, juxtaposing this to current "factual" scientific output. Such an analysis exposes relational, three-year myth cycles, and highlights somatic and cyber dimensions. In conclusion, critically inspecting the cultural acquisition of fears in the marketization of scientific facts and theories showcases how Gothic paranoia continues to seep through concrete reality, pushing the boundaries of escapist modes through hyperreal manifestations of everything from ecological and astronomical to evolutionary and biological Horror. Ultimately, in this talk, Borwein draws out dynamic constituents of scientific horror and terror in the American popular arena.

## Biography

Naomi Simone Borwein holds a PhD in English from the University of Newcastle. She is a researcher at Western University. Her work appears in volumes like *The Palgrave Handbook to Horror Literature*, and *Horror Literature Through History*. Chapters are forthcoming in *Horror Literature from Gothic to Post-modern*, *The Global Vampire*, and the *Palgrave Gothic Handbook* series. Outside the Gothic, Naomi is head poetry editor for *Swamp Writing* and has a secondary specialization in Mathematics Education, Curriculum Studies, and Pedagogy.

## NICOLA BOWRING

Languages of Terror and Horror: The Case of the Vampire

### Abstract

“Swear that, for a year and a day you will not impart your knowledge of my crimes or death to any living being in any way”. Thus demands the mysterious Lord Ruthven of the young Aubrey, in Polidori’s short story *The Vampyre* (1819). This paper will analyse the significance of language and communication to a distinction of terror and horror, using in this instance two seminal vampire texts, *The Vampyre* and Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). The vampire is an unusually communicative monster; its close relationship with the human sets it aside from many other mythical beings. As monster, however, it is also associated with disruptions in language, with the unsayable, and with slippage between words and meaning. This paper will read Polidori’s text as more closely associated with terror, precisely through the concern with the unspeakable and with silence. Stoker’s *Dracula*, however, in its myriad of metaphor and almost excessive field of communication, would be aligned more clearly with horror. Stoker’s enigmatic Count, described in minute detail, has been read to represent so many things: the feudal lord, the Jew, disease, transgressive sexualities, to name but a few. Of Ruthven we learn little, even given the short story form, and his significance has generally been read merely in terms of the Byronic vampire figure. Using these two texts as a basis, then, this paper will explore terror and horror as centred around language, in which Stoker deals in excess, Polidori in restraint. It will consider the liminality of language as related to the limits between monster and human, and as central to the gothic aesthetic.

### Biography

Nicola Bowring is a Lecturer at Nottingham Trent University, where she teaches Gothic and Romantic Literature, and is a member of the Travel Writing Centre. Nicola has published work on Gothic Histories and Adaptation, and Space and Place, and is currently completing a monograph on Communication and the Gothic. Her upcoming project focuses the relationship between the Gothic and Travel Writing.

## TOM BRASSINGTON

Rot in Paradise: Considering Borderless Drag

### Abstract

Drag produces a range of effects in its repurposing of cultural artefacts. Its concern with exploring the instability of heteronormative formations of binaristic gender on the body align it well with the Gothic’s preoccupation with ‘boundaries and their instabilities’ as argued by Horner and Zlosnik in *Gothic and the Comic Turn* (2005). When explored concordantly, Gothic drag becomes an identifiable and emergent performance style. Blending the Gothic and drag regenerates each other’s ability to explore the instability of gender boundaries and the systems involved in their formation and demarcation. Drag presents to the Gothic a celebratory critical approach and Gothic presents drag with an unsettling aesthetic palette. In 2018, drag performer Hungry produced the ‘Rot in Paradise’ project with Studio Prokopiou. ‘Rot in Paradise’ focuses on beauty’s impermanence, with Hungry’s ‘distorted drag’ centring this exploration. I argue that the photoshoot captures a distinctly queer Gothic exploration of beauty’s impermanence, highlighting not beauty’s inevitable decay, but its transformative aspects. Bodies are constantly undergoing transformation in the Gothic mode, and Gothic texts that engage with beauty (like *The Picture of Dorian Gray*) draw attention to the horrors of ageing and decay, which queer Gothic has taken as a manifestation of anxieties surrounding the hidden Otherness of homosexuality. However, when paired with drag’s politics of queer celebration, Gothic beauty acquires positive valences. I argue in this paper that beauty’s impermanence, as understood through queer performance art like drag, is not simply decay without growth, but something more generative and hopeful.

## Biography

Tom Brassington is an AHRC-funded PhD student in Lancaster University's Department of English Literature & Creative Writing. His research explores intersections between the Gothic mode and drag performance. Tom is also interested in postcolonialism and videogame studies.

## KYLE BRETT

"A shadow flitting past through the gloom": Hannah Crafts and the Gothic of the Oppressed

### Abstract

Written during the mid-nineteenth century, Hannah Crafts' *The Bondwoman's Narrative* borrows many of its conventions from English novels like *Bleak House* (1852-3) and *Jane Eyre* (1847). Borrowing heavily from American sentimental writing and its discourse around slave and abolition literature, Crafts' narrative is also deeply steeped in the Gothic. From haunted halls of grandiose plantations, cursed lands, ghosts, gazing portraits of ancestors, and hidden murder-stained cabins in the woods, *The Bondwoman's Narrative* seems to meld the body horror of slavery with that of contemporary Gothic literary themes. While not a new convention in the American slave narrative, or sentimentalism, the ability of such horrific elements is challenged by Crafts to adequately represent the atrocities of chattel slavery.

Using Dylan Trigg and his focus on the role of place and memory in locations of trauma as a theoretical backdrop, I argue that Crafts distances herself as an African-American writer from the convention of equating the predominantly white conventions of horror and terror to justly convey life as a slave, or the trauma of slavery on black bodies. Instead of being the representation of slavery's brutality, Crafts' Gothic deconstructs itself as a collection of white tools of control that either need to be subverted or controlled through affirming presence. Doing so, Crafts gives power to the subjugated slave by moving their experiences out of the shadows of textual horror controlled by writers like Stowe, and rather reclaims it under her own authority, challenging the Gothic literary tradition of white readers.

## Biography

Kyle Brett is a Ph.D. candidate who studies nineteenth-century American literature and Transatlantic Romanticism. His dissertation project focuses on sentimental writers' engagement in the nineteenth-century literary market.

## ELEANOR BRYAN

Stage Fright: The Vampire in the Theatre

### Abstract

The vampire's stage history can be traced back almost as far as the creature's 1819 literary debut in John Polidori's *The Vampyre*, which celebrates its bicentenary this year. While Polidori's Lord Ruthven was revived on stage prolifically, no vampire has been re-worked to quite such an extent as Dracula. Stoker's iconic villain continues to delight theatrical audiences and remain topical, most recently as a result of the London Library's discovery of Stoker's annotations and their subsequent commission of a play by Creation Theatre Company. This paper concerns dramatic adaptations of vampiric texts, with particular attention paid to performances based on Polidori's *The Vampyre* and Stoker's *Dracula*. A Bakhtinian approach to adaptation will be adopted and, as such, dramatizations will be considered part of a dialogue that extends in both directions, informed both by the texts themselves and antecedent adaptations that have contributed to public perceptions of the two respective stories.

## Biography

Eleanor Bryan is an Associate Lecturer and PhD student at the University of Lincoln. Her research primarily concerns dramatic adaptations of *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* and her wider research interests

include Romanticism, fin de siècle literature, and cinematic adaptation. Eleanor was awarded the Stephen Copley Award for Research by the British Association for Romantic Studies for both 2018 and 2019, and she is the blog curator for the BARS Romantic Reimaginings series.

## TIM BRYANT

American Gothic Is Dystopic

### Abstract

Despite their specific and distinct associations with the past and the future, the literary modes of the Gothic and the dystopic construct a singular temporality in American cultural understanding. Gothic narratives of suppressed and traumatic pasts are predicated on the same cultural logics as dystopic literature that projects overdetermined, pessimistic futures. In American literature these genres implicate twinned perspectives on national history: foundational freedoms underwritten by African enslavement and Native removal, and future progress defined against trace remnants of bondage and removal. The Gothic bases of colonial American freedom are evident in Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly* (1799), whose somnambulist protagonist claims his freedom by, first, hearing a story of Irish revolt against British rule and, second, clearing the landscape of Native Americans through bloody slaughter. A century later, Jack London's dystopic novel *The Iron Heel* (1908) imagines the rise of a capitalist oligarchy that suppresses working-class populations of an immigrant underclass. Across the years bookended by these novels, the United States developed into a country whose progressive futurism was built upon the traumatic, disavowed temporalities of African enslavement and Native removal, with Anglo populations claiming freedoms and expecting progress specifically by denying those past and future temporalities to others. The temporal continuities between American Gothic and dystopic linger in the Indian Reservation system, the Prison-Industrial complex, and other longstanding forms of repression that preclude whole populations from participating in the cultural fantasies of freedom and progress before, within, and beyond time.

### Biography

Tim Bryant is Associate Professor of English at SUNY Buffalo State, where he teaches courses on American literature, American Indian literature, and speculative fiction. His current research explores the relationship between the gothic and the dystopic in American literature and culture.

## ALISSA BURGER (with Jennifer Collins)

Terror, Horror, and Stephen King's Universe in *Castle Rock*

### Abstract

Stephen King employs both terror and horror regularly throughout his prodigious body of work, from short stories to novels, as well as the popular culture adaptations that have been made of that work. All of these are grounded in the distinction between terror and horror that he explains and explores in *Danse Macabre*. One example of this that lends itself especially productively to the consideration of terror and horror is the Hulu series *Castle Rock* (2018-present), which combines the immediacy of visceral, physical horror with the more diffuse and unsettling terror of potential parallel realities, perception and self-doubt, illness, and the existence of both macro-cosmic evil and the micro-cosmic evil of the individual.

*Castle Rock* is a fascinating text for this consideration for several reasons. First, the series brings together multiple King storylines, as well as creating new ones, allowing for exploration of individual narratives, the significance of their interconnections, and the repercussions of action they often suggest. Second, the series and its foundation in King's work provides the opportunity for engaging with both visual and textual traditions of the Gothic, in connecting the series to King's written work and the textual framework of the series' opening credits. Finally, the contextualization of *Castle Rock* within the larger scope of King's expansive *Dark Tower* series expands consideration well beyond the series itself to engage the reader in an understanding of and response to a terror that is boundless and ultimately uncontainable.

## Biography

Alissa Burger's teaching and research interests include the Gothic, horror, and the works of Stephen King. She is the author of *Teaching Stephen King: Horror, the Supernatural, and New Approaches to Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and is currently at work on a book project on genre influences and interconnections in King's *Dark Tower* series (contracted with McFarland). Jennifer Collins is a humanities librarian at the State University of New York at Delhi. Her professional interests include international copyright, Open Access, and folklore. Burger and Collins are the co-authors of "The Shadow of Saint Nicholas: Dougherty's *Krampus*," featured in the collection *Monsters & Monstrosity in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Film and Television*, edited by Cristina Arteni and Ashley Szanter (Universitas Press, 2017).

## JACOB BURLINGAME

"The story here presented will be told by more than one pen": *The Woman in White*, *Dracula*, and the Horror of the Compiled Novel

### Abstract

To horrify an audience, the storyteller must rely upon narrative devices particular to the genre. Should the audience step out of a narrative, the story loses its danger and thus its drive. Horror only happens in the audience's minds when the events are, on some level, real to them. One technique that horror writers have developed for generating this particular suspension of disbelief comes in the form of creating fictional eye witnesses. In the Victorian era, authors of horror and sensation novels used a version of this device, in which the audience received a novel framed as journals and letters, newspaper clippings and legal documents. This strategy, in which a fictional agent finds and arranges the "primary sources," might be called an epistolary novel, except that they include more than letters. The term "compiled novel" better captures their narrative construction. In this form of narrative, the audience takes on the role of researcher or investigator, adding to the horror of reading by involving the reader in discovering the horrific. Two texts from the era, *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins and *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, exemplify this narrative strategy

## Biography

Jacob Burlingame is a PhD Candidate in Literature at Northern Illinois University and high-school English teacher, lover of all things fantastical and speculative.

## ANDREW BUTT

A Gothic History: Fatalism, Race, and Consumption in the Fiction of H.P. Lovecraft

### Abstract

Recent criticism devoted to H.P. Lovecraft has been the site of a debate about the extent to which the author's work reinforces xenophobic and racist ideologies. The apologist historicism of S.T. Joshi and the eugenic revelations of Mitch Frye both acknowledge that Lovecraft's work participates in a supremacist ideology. While Joshi's work has largely focused on Lovecraft's biographical data, Frye's position maintains that Lovecraft's stories characterize their foreign bodies as horrors to be avoided. Lovecraft's early writings—including "The Street" and "The Rats in the Walls"—present an even more complex tie between the author's social views and his fiction. The narratives demonstrate an explicit fear of any and all alien beings, but neither story settles its primary didactic move on such a take-away. Rather than adopting a position that celebrates attempts at social change to remove or destroy foreign beings, Lovecraft's characters suffer mental and physical loss as a result of their active efforts to reclaim past sociopolitical circumstances. Lovecraft's early fiction adopts a historical fatalism that is connected with a historical sensibility often presented in the Gothic, but the stories also maintain the active potential of the present insofar as the past is left to its own moment in a historical continuum. As a result, Lovecraft's

stories present an Americanized reshaping of typified Gothic historical anxieties. Through a disavowal of historical reclamation, Lovecraft fundamentally undercuts his racist rhetorical intentions and broadens the critical interpretation of horror into a striking manifestation of a consumptive and uncritical human existence.

## Biography

Andrew Butt is a doctoral student within SUNY University at Albany's English Department. His work focuses on the American Gothic, Speculative Fiction, and Transatlantic Modernism.

# C

## JEN CADWALLADER

Picnicking at Hill House: Shirley Jackson's Gothic Vision of Heaven

### Abstract

Preparing to write her fourth novel, *The Sundial*, Shirley Jackson read through her previous work, a disconcerting experience in that Jackson discovered "a kind of similarity to them . . . in images and metaphors." Addressing her writing class at Bennington College, she explained, "Prominent in every book I had ever written was a little symbolic set that I think of as a heaven-wall-gate arrangement; in every book I have ever written . . . I find a wall surrounding some forbidden, lovely secret, and in this wall a gate that cannot be passed. I am not going to attempt to analyze this set of images . . .but I found it odd that in seven books I had never succeeded in getting through the gate and inside the wall." The symbolic set Jackson describes persists in her final two novels as well: *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in a Castle* abound with "heaven-wall-gate" imagery, both literal and figurative. Not only does this symbolic set help define the inchoate longings and frustrated desires of Jackson's heroines, it suggests a topography through which to understand her use of place. Hill House has for many years stood (alone) as a monolith of the American Gothic, embodying the "patriarchal dominance," "frightening past," and sense of the "ineffable" that defines the genre. The topographical distinctions between heaven, wall, and gate, however, call for a destabilization of the monolithic structure of Hill House, and as this paper will demonstrate, Jackson's use of these spaces within Hill House provides us with particular insight into how a feminine "heaven" can be contained within the patriarchal structure of the Gothic house.

## Biography

Jen Cadwallader earned her Ph.D. from UNC-Chapel Hill and is now Associate Professor of English at Randolph-Macon College, where she teaches courses on horror, the gothic, Victorian, and children's literature. She is the author of *Spirits and Spirituality in Victorian Fiction* (Palgrave 2016) and co-editor of *Teaching Victorian Literature in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Palgrave 2017). Her essays have appeared in *Women's Writing*, *Brontë Studies*, *Victorians Institute Journal*, and *Modern Language Studies*, among other places.

## SHELBY CARR

"In the strangling grasp of the roots": Plant Horror as a Site of Ecological Thought in Gilman's "The Giant Wistaria"

### Abstract

Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Giant Wistaria" presents its readers with a horrifying image at the end of its narrative: a skeletal woman entangled in the roots of a massive wisteria. While the initial image of the woman in the roots of the wisteria can be horrific, I propose that these sites of horror are productive for understanding difference across species and for reimagining the relationship between humans and the vegetal. Michael Marder's *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life* posits that the physicality of a

plant is an embodiment of its knowledge: the way a plant grows to reach light demonstrates this. Using an Ecogothic lens and a theoretical framework grounded in Marder's *Plant-Thinking*, I will explore how Gilman conceptualizes these human and vegetal relationships, particularly how these relationships mediate the supernatural. More specifically, the human, the vegetal, and the supernatural form a rhizome—an ever-expanding “mesh” of living and non-living entities that communicate across species difference. It is my contention that Gilman chose to write nature and the vegetal as producing and communicating knowledge in order to destabilize an anthropocentric conception of epistemology. Instead, Gilman conceives of a phyto-epistemology, one in which the vegetal, despite being horrific, communicates not only its own knowledge, but knowledge of the supernatural. Effectively, Gilman contends that the supernatural is more like the preternatural—it exists beside the natural world, not entirely reachable, nor entirely inaccessible, either. Consequently, when humans are unable to access it, vegetal life becomes an interpretive conduit for that preternatural element.

## Biography

Shelby Carr is a Masters student and Teaching Fellow at Lehigh University where she studies 19<sup>th</sup> century American literature and Gothic literature. She particularly enjoys working with women writers who engage with nature and the Ecogothic. She teaches composition and rhetoric in the first-year writing program, her classes typically revolving around the rhetoric of monstrosity.

## ALEXIS CHEMA

The Chains that Bind: Mary Shelley and the Revenge Plot

### Abstract

It has been said that Mary Shelley invented a new gothic mode when she wrote *Frankenstein*: apocalypse gothic. This mode tells the story of human transgressions against Nature and their punishment at “her” hands. It magnifies the traditional gothic revenge plot to a cosmic—but secular—scale. With her apocalypse gothic, Shelley predicted the popular contemporary genre of climate catastrophe fiction, in which crimes against Nature are punished with plague, famine, rising oceans, nuclear disaster, or some combination of these, leading to the partial or complete extinction of humankind. Though her pioneering work in the genre has been recognized, less attention has been paid to her efforts to resist gothic logics, including the logic of cosmic revenge that informs apocalypse gothic. My presentation will begin by explaining the significance of revenge in the politically radical gothic of the 1790s, which sets the stage for the central problem of Shelley’s speculative fiction: in a certain light (that is, the revolutionary twilight of post-Napoleonic Europe) revenge seems inextricable from projects of social liberation. I’ll then discuss *Frankenstein*’s preoccupation with the irresistibility of the revenge plot. Briefly, Doctor Frankenstein’s Creature begins by seeking restitution for the wrongs committed against him (he asks to be given a companion), but in spite of being desired and deemed adequate by the Creature, such a resolution proves impossible in a narrative sense and the logic of revenge prevails. I’ll conclude by proposing that elsewhere Shelley does create a fictive world that both stages and, ironically, survives the gothic logic of revenge—in her most explicitly apocalyptic novel, *The Last Man*. Ultimately, though, this survival only succeeds in casting more intense doubt upon the accessibility of justice outside of gothic narrative structures.

## KAY CHRONISTER

Ravished Papers: Terror and Horror in the Epistolary Novel

### Abstract

In this paper, I examine how the epistolary form becomes a site of Gothic horror in Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa* (1748) and terror in Sophia Lee’s *The Recess* (1785). Many Gothic novels incorporate letters or found manuscripts into their texts, but *Clarissa* and *The Recess* both purport to be entirely composed of

letters. In both novels, in accordance with epistolary novel tradition, the texts produced by the heroines act as surrogates for both their bodies and their psyches, visibly manifesting distress, violation, or repression through a variety of textual markers such as dashes, exclamation marks, and ellipses. The metonymic relationship between the heroine and her textual productions becomes clearest in both novels during episodes of trauma-induced hysterical madness, during which both Richardson's Clarissa and Lee's Elinor attempt to speak of the unspeakable, ultimately remaining imprisoned within and stymied by the signifying systems that govern language and the epistolary form. While *The Recess* follows Elinor's letters with an insertion from a sympathetic female interlocutor, who restores a sense of order and coherence to Elinor's fragmented narrative, *Clarissa* compounds the heroine's violation with her rapist's alterations to and repression of her writing. Thus Clarissa's textual productions become at last metonymic substitutes for her corpse, comparable to the victimized bodies that litter Lewisian Gothic novels, while Elinor's writing becomes part of a memorial to her life, comparable to the embedded stories of female victimization seen in the Radcliffian Gothic.

### **Biography**

Kay Chronister is a PhD student at the University of Arizona. Her research interests include the eighteenth-century Gothic novel, folklore and fairytale, and psycholinguistic theory.

### **GREGORY LUKE CHWALA**

The Gothic Tradition in Global Fiction: Teaching World Literature via the Gothic

#### **Abstract**

The Gothic pervades fictions and cultures around the world today, which presents a wonderful opportunity for teaching world literature. For two sequential semesters, I have taught a successful second-year general education course on world literature, subtitled *The Gothic Tradition in Global Fiction*; an excerpt from my course description reads, "Specters, monsters, and vampires help us to think more critically about what it means to be human in a variety of global settings and cultures. We will study how Gothic elements resurface in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>-century Iraqi, Caribbean, Turkish, and American texts to help readers confront social anxieties and fears revolving around nation, race, class, gender, and sexuality. Texts include *The Castle of Otranto*, *Frankenstein*, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, and *Dracula in Istanbul*." My students enter the course because they are fascinated by the word *Gothic*, though few of them know about its origins, history, and meaning. They are genuinely interested in learning, and in the process become receptive to thinking about difference and others. I propose that Gothic fiction provides a strong platform for understanding a variety of complex and controversial subjects, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and being human. Studying world literature through a Gothic lens is thus a useful way for understanding world cultures, diversity, and the importance of decolonization. I will illustrate how the Gothic can be used to explore imperialism, colonialism, racial injustice, violence, sexual identity, and trauma through various manifestations of the monstrous that resonate with today's average student.

### **Biography**

Gregory Luke Chwala is a Lecturer of English at Clemson University. His most recent work examines decolonial queer ecologies in transatlantic Gothic and speculative fiction. He is developing a second project that explores how transembodiment in Steampunk fiction can open up new spaces for conversations about gender and sexual identities.

## EMILY JOY CLARK

Arranged Marriages and Imprisonment: Domestic Gothic Horrors in Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda's *Dolores* (1870)

### Abstract

A number of nineteenth-century Hispanic writers produced stories in the Gothic mode by setting their texts in colonial or medieval contexts and crafting or retelling legends with elements of horror or the supernatural. Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda (1814-1873), a seminal Cuban-born writer who spent her adult life living and publishing in Spain, engages Gothic trends in her understudied *tradiciones*, or traditions, which included legends, mysteries, coincidences, and ghost stories from her travels to regions of Spain, Cuba, and the Pyrenees mountains. While Gómez de Avellaneda is best-known for her poetry and the publication of the novel *Sab* (1841), her traditions merit further study, especially in how they employ the Gothic mode to critique women's roles. In *Dolores* (1870), termed a historical novel by the author, Gómez de Avellaneda details a medieval Spanish tale of attempted murder and imprisonment using Gothic elements such as a castle setting, the abuse and confinement of the female protagonist, and a ceremonial link between matrimony and death. Gómez de Avellaneda's desire to shock her readers through the depiction of horrors suffered by her female protagonists in Gothic domestic spaces, as Anne K. Mellor has described of English literature, elucidates her criticisms of gender roles (91). By analyzing the Gothic imagery and descriptions of women's historical scripts in *Dolores*, I explore how Gómez de Avellaneda's traditions interface with a gendered Gothic mode in this paper.

### Biography

Emily Joy Clark is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at Sonoma State University. She completed her Ph.D. in Hispanic Literature at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research interests include transatlantic women's writing of the nineteenth century, the Latin American essay, Romanticism, the Gothic, and economic themes in literature. She has a variety of conference presentations and publications in journals such as *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, *Letras Femeninas*, and *Decimonónica*.

## DANIELLE COFER

Land/Sea, Terror/Horror: Exploring the Gothic in 19th-Century Women's Shipwreck Narratives

### Abstract

In the nineteenth-century, women in America were not excluded from traveling and writing about their experiences at sea, especially from 1840 to 1870 where a large proliferation of sensational novels centered tragic experiences of shipwrecks. Like other sensationalized fiction of the time, these shipwreck narratives were widely circulated, indicating a public desire for consuming the harrowing, exoticized tales which promised episodes of cannibalism, hardships, melancholia, and brushes with catastrophic danger. Two understudied personal narratives written by women, *Narrative of the Shipwreck and Suffering of Miss Ann Saunders* (1827) and *The Touching and Melancholy Narrative of Marian Moore, the Shipwrecked Female Sailor* (1853) both describe experiences of terror and horror while at sea and on land. The class status of each of these figures determines the rhetorical strategies each must use to be reincorporated into normative society, Saunders proselytizes, and Moore presents her narrative as moral didacticism. Each woman is markedly changed after partaking in cannibalism at sea, but class-status and gender constraints entrap both of these women. I argue that once home, each of these women encounters a truly inescapable horror that is far worse than the terror each faces at sea. Once reinscribed back into the domestic sphere on land, each woman's narrative reveals that these voyages were preparing them for death, a lived social deadening, which far outweighs the threats faced at sea. In their quest to avoid being designated monstrous, each of these women discovers the limitations of protection, which is the true American horror.

## Biography

Danielle Cofer is currently an American Literature PhD candidate at the University of Rhode Island. Her research interests include 19th-century death and mourning culture, women's shipwreck narratives, cannibalism, and the gothic.

## KRISTA COLLIER-JARVIS

Lichenthropy: Resisting the Chthulucene in *The Last of Us Remastered*

### Abstract

My paper argues that ecohorror videogames reinforce individualist visions of environmental improvement through their use of "possibility space" and simultaneously allow for a recognition of the problems therein, pointing to an interconnected model of human-ecological relationships. Contemporary American ecohorror narratives increasingly interrogate participation in environmental destruction. Neil Druckman's 2014 videogame *The Last of Us* presents the player with a series of "moral dilemmas" that are designed to highlight the myth that one is free to make choices, not just in videogaming, but in saving or destroying the environment. The perceived decision-making process is an inherent element of videogames that Michael Hancock calls "the lie of rational choice" or what Ian Bogost refers to as "possibility space." The function of these spaces is to reveal the horror of our awareness of climate change and suggests that participation in environmental destruction is more complicated than pushing a button on a gaming controller. The real horror of the eco-horror videogame is not the monstrous Gaia rising and destroying the human species, but the perceived "possibility space" to enact change being revealed as false. More specifically, the final scene of *The Last of Us* revokes the player's ability to choose to save the environment, revealing how the human population is not ready to accept ecological responsibility. While the final scene culminates in saving the environment, the player still pushed a button on a controller that is the product of deforestation; therefore, the player simultaneously accepted and rejected Donna Haraway's chthulucene; they resisted going green.

## Biography

Krista Collier-Jarvis is a first-year PhD student in the English department at Dalhousie University. She completed her Master of Arts at Dalhousie University in 2016 and her Bachelor of Arts (honours) at Mount Saint Vincent University in 2013. Under the tutelage of Dr. Karen Macfarlane, Krista completed two theses in gothic culture specializing in zombie narratives. While her PhD research moves away from zombie narratives, she still has a deep appreciation for this monster and the many ways it can be discussed.

## JENNIFER COLLINS (with Alissa Burger)

Terror, Horror, and Stephen King's Universe in *Castle Rock*

### Abstract

Stephen King employs both terror and horror regularly throughout his prodigious body of work, from short stories to novels, as well as the popular culture adaptations that have been made of that work. All of these are grounded in the distinction between terror and horror that he explains and explores in *Danse Macabre*. One example of this that lends itself especially productively to the consideration of terror and horror is the Hulu series *Castle Rock* (2018-present), which combines the immediacy of visceral, physical horror with the more diffuse and unsettling terror of potential parallel realities, perception and self-doubt, illness, and the existence of both macro-cosmic evil and the micro-cosmic evil of the individual.

*Castle Rock* is a fascinating text for this consideration for several reasons. First, the series brings together multiple King storylines, as well as creating new ones, allowing for exploration of individual narratives, the significance of their interconnections, and the repercussions of action they often suggest. Second, the

series and its foundation in King's work provides the opportunity for engaging with both visual and textual traditions of the Gothic, in connecting the series to King's written work and the textual framework of the series' opening credits. Finally, the contextualization of *Castle Rock* within the larger scope of King's expansive *Dark Tower* series expands consideration well beyond the series itself to engage the reader in an understanding of and response to a terror that is boundless and ultimately uncontainable.

## Biography

Jennifer Collins is a humanities librarian at the State University of New York at Delhi. Her professional interests include international copyright, Open Access, and folklore. Burger and Collins are the co-authors of "The Shadow of Saint Nicholas': Dougherty's *Krampus*," featured in the collection *Monsters & Monstrosity in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Film and Television*, edited by Cristina Arteni and Ashley Szanter (Universitas Press, 2017). Alissa Burger's teaching and research interests include the Gothic, horror, and the works of Stephen King. She is the author of *Teaching Stephen King: Horror, the Supernatural, and New Approaches to Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and is currently at work on a book project on genre influences and interconnections in King's *Dark Tower* series (contracted with McFarland).

## KEVIN CORSTORPHINE

Choose Your Own Terror: Narrative Play, Choice, and Affect in Horror Media

### Abstract

The Netflix release of the *Black Mirror* episode 'Bandersnatch' (2018) offered something new to horror fans, but something that was already steeped in nostalgia: the opportunity to 'choose your own adventure'. This form of interactive narrative has been long promised in the internet age, but streaming technology in the living room has now made this readily accessible to a mainstream audience. The story centres around a games programmer in the early 1980s, and of course gamers are no strangers to branching narratives where decisions have permanent consequences on their experience. Likewise the episode nods towards the popularity of the book format at the time of its setting, epitomised by Bantam's *Choose Your Own Adventure* series in the US and Puffin's *Fighting Fantasy* series in the UK. The classic horror/terror distinction made by Radcliffe is rooted in classical concepts of dramatic construction where the author dictates the story. In this paper I will explore the difference in the production of horror/terror when readers or viewers are given freedom to choose. If some aspects of affect are lost, then others, welling from the existential dread of choice, are gained. As part of my current research I am designing a branching-narrative videogame, and I will discuss this alongside an examination of texts such as 'Bandersnatch', the PlayStation game *Until Dawn* (2015), and Steve Jackson's classic *Fighting Fantasy* book *House of Hell* (1984). I intend to complicate notions of the relationship between consumption and play by engaging with games design theory such as Brian Upton's 'ludic model of semiosis' (*The Aesthetic of Play*, 2015). Horror and terror will be located firmly within these current models of understanding both the playfulness of narrative and the narrative of play.

## Biography

Kevin Corstorphine lectures in American literature at the University of Hull and has a particular interest in horror and Gothic fiction, literary and popular. His research interests are mainly centred on representations of space and place, including haunted houses, tainted and abject spaces, thresholds and forbidden rooms. He is currently writing a cultural history of haunted house stories, and has published on many authors of the weird and macabre such as Bram Stoker, Ambrose Bierce, H P Lovecraft, Robert Bloch, Richard Matheson, Shirley Jackson, Stephen King, and Clive Barker. Together with Laura Kremmel, he is the editor of *The Palgrave Handbook to Horror Literature* (2018).

## **GAVIN COX**

Horror Viewed in Life as Represented by Literature

### **Abstract**

The overall purpose of the paper is to show how horror is not only prevalent throughout society, but can be seen as existing throughout history as exhibited throughout literature. What is deemed as 'horror' can be unique, based on the individual. Analysis of the concepts of horror is reviewed, focusing on Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection, as well as referring to Jacques Lacan's concept of the Other. Three different texts – *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, and *Blood Meridian* – are used as examples showing this theory in action, and how it relates to the real world. The conclusion is that horror cannot be ignored – it is a part of everyday life – and it is through literature that we can be shown how to conquer horror, whatever that means to each individual.

### **Biography**

Gavin Cox is currently working on his doctoral degree in English, focusing on Horror Literature.

## **JAMES CRAWFORD**

The Inner workings of Human Sexual Behavior: The Influence of the Marquis de Sade in Gothic Literature

### **Abstract**

This essay will focus on the understanding of the overt sexual presence in gothic literature while addressing both hetero and homoerotic tendencies of characters and plots in notable literary works. The idea is to bring into the conversation the originating influence of several novels with a sexual presence within the plots, and show how the presence of sex progresses or stunts the novel concerning the relative cultural understanding of sexual repression or expression. As both sexual repression and expression reveal an idea of how the perceived culture will accept or reject the progressive or new ideas of femininity or masculinity, what then can be said of literature that has desired to repress progression. Focusing on the life of the Marquis de Sade, *Fingersmith* by Sarah Waters, and *The Monk* by Mathew Gregory Lewis to address the presence of sexual expression and repression, the marginalized and the other, the perception of fear, or the lack of understanding which is placed within literature to create a personal or subjective understanding over an idea of identity or expression, and thus influencing societal or skewed morals. The essence of the gothic genre is to reveal a sense of horror but also to depict human impulses and desires that are the undertone of human behavior. The notion is then that the queerness of gothic literature, similarly to the Marquis de Sade, is then that queerness is part of an individual's or character's sexual identity.

### **Biography**

James Crawford is a graduate student at Our Lady of the Lake University in the MA/MFA literature, creative writing, and social justice program with a focus on queer theory, gothic literature, and poetry. He is a scheduled presenter for CEA speaking about pedagogy for study tours abroad literature course, and in PCA discussing disability literature.

## **STACY CREECH**

"Oh the horrors of slavery!": Terror and Horror in the Eighteenth Century Transatlantic Gothic

### **Abstract**

The Gothic tradition in literature has always been haunted by historical and social injustice, magnifying colonial subtexts of empire, class, and race, and thereby revealing significant and ongoing cultural

anxieties within both Europe and the Americas. In the long eighteenth century, the causal factors that engendered discrete moments of crisis and, which gave rise to these ongoing anxieties, are a direct result of the way in which culture was trying to invent itself through an admixture of immigration, crumbling monarchical orders, enslavements, and colonialism. Since it is during this period that both the Gothic genre and the abolitionist movement flourished, this paper interrogates the intersections between them, examining texts (i.e., novels, and slave narratives like Mary Prince's referenced in the title) that reckon with the material histories of colonization and enslavement. The essay features a description of the relationship between terror and horror, adding the category of "shock" as a third term to the discussion in order to think in new ways about it. Since the affective line that is drawn between sensations of terror and horror in readers is never quite as blurred as when the Gothic addresses colonial concerns, this paper seeks to complicate readings of terror-Gothic and horror-Gothic by analyzing the effects and aesthetics of shock value, as it relates to this mode of writing. The paper thinks about the modes of violence that are mobilized in texts that produce effects of terror, horror, and shock, as the complexity of the Gothic rests in its nuanced way to be both balanced and unfixed at once.

## Biography

Stacy A. Creech (English M.A. 2015; BSc 2010) is a Dominican-born third-year Ph.D. Candidate specializing in Transatlantic Literature in the long Eighteenth Century. She holds an Ontario Trillium Scholarship, as well as an International Excellence Award, and is researching British, Caribbean, and American Gothic literature. Her dissertation project, supervised by Dr. Eugenia Zuroski, examines the unspeakable, yet tangible, trauma of slavery and its persistent presence in Gothic works. Stacy's research interests include early American literature, Gothic studies, the relationship between horror and terror, linguistics, horror/suspense film and theater, 18th. C. British Literature, African-American Literature, and Latin American Literature.

## OLIVIA CRONK (with Philip Sorenson)

Terror in Quotation: *TerrorVision*, Trash, and Flow

### Abstract

*TerrorVision* (1986) is very much a product of 1980s low-budget horror. It was filmed in a single, simple set, with garish colors and absurd costuming, and emits the mood of pornography. Made by the same studio that produced such iconic horror films as *Re-Animator* (1985) and *From Beyond* (1986), *TerrorVision* explores the relationship between social decay and garbage culture in a domestic context. Yet, the film advances its critique of low culture through the lowest of cultures: cheaply made monster cinema. It does so in a way that seems self-aware (an Elvira-like character arrives on scene, constant allusions to other low-rent productions are made); and it raises many critiques made by social conservatives while reflecting critiques of those critiques by thinkers such as Raymond Williams. This film places terror in quotation marks, much in the hyperbolic mode of the monster movie, while presenting its abject content. And in this space between terror and horror, it advances a muddled but ultimately compelling portrait of social attitudes around and about the advancing satellite-television era.

## Biography

Olivia Cronk is the author of *Louise and Louise and Louise* (The Lettered Streets Press, 2016) and *Skin Horse* (Action Books, 2012). With Philip Sorenson, she edits *The Journal Petra*. Recent critical work has appeared in *Critical Flame* and *The Collagist*. She teaches at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

# D

## ERIC DAFFRON

Introducing Horror and Terror: Authorial Prefaces in Minerva Press Gothic Novels

### Abstract

Ann Radcliffe's famous distinction between terror and horror has enabled scholars to classify gothic experiences and to sort gothic authors into particular schools. That distinction has even inspired the topic of this conference. Despite its usefulness, that distinction, which essentially derives from one sentence posthumously published in 1826, has overshadowed other uses of the words 'terror' and 'horror,' that, if recovered, would provide a fuller history of a literary mode rapidly evolving around the turn of the nineteenth century. To recover such an alternative literary history, one should consider, for example, the authorial prefaces in gothic novels printed at the Minerva Press in, roughly, the second half of the 1790s, the decade of Radcliffe's major output and that of her many imitators. Half a dozen or so Minerva authorial prefaces make, as a whole, the following relevant points: 1) Radcliffe is an incomparable genius; 2) she traffics in "horror" or "terror," words used almost interchangeably; 3) horror or terror includes imaginative flights, the "vast," the "wild," and the like, but it's a matter of debate whether the genre should include the supernatural, explained or otherwise; 4) horror or terror and virtue are not necessarily incompatible, but caution is in order. Collectively, these authorial prefaces introduce horror and terror, not to distinguish one aesthetic experience from another, but rather to engage in debates about authorial homage, gothic-novel features, and moral virtue.

### Biography

Eric Daffron is Professor of Literature at Ramapo College of New Jersey. Specializing in early British gothic literature, he is currently working on a multi-part project on Minerva Press gothic novels, in particular ones held in major nineteenth-century U.S. circulating libraries.

## CHELSEA DAVIS

The Gothic Doctor and the Problem of Fascination

### Abstract

Is it wrong to watch another human suffer? To write and to read about it? To enjoy any of the three? These questions mattered urgently to nineteenth-century Americans, in part because ideas about physical pain were in dramatic flux during this period. As Stephen Bruhm and Karen Haltunen have shown, the late-eighteenth century Anglophone world gradually abandoned the early Renaissance belief that bodily suffering was inherently edifying, instead framing it as a moral imperative to reduce human pain in the medical, religious, and juridical realms.

During this period of ideological change, Gothic literature came under great suspicion, not only because its Ambrosios, Melmoths, and Devil-Bugs overtly took joy in others' agony, but also because the reader of such fiction, seeking frissons in tales of brutality and death, could herself be accused of an equivalent sadism. My paper finds a personification of these criticisms in a quasi-Gothic villain who springs up with surprising frequency in otherwise *non*-Gothic fiction of the nineteenth-century U.S.: the inappropriately curious doctor, titillated by wounds and gore. In James Fenimore Cooper's *The Spy* (1821), Louisa May Alcott's *Hospital Sketches* (1863), and John William De Forest's *Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* (1867), morbidly voyeuristic physicians function as dark satires of the reader of Gothic fiction. The trope of the fascinated doctor gives voice to Americans' fear that a blood-numbed readership will eventually import the sadistic gaze of the Gothic to their non-fictional interactions with suffering others.

## Biography

Chelsea Davis is a PhD candidate in English at Stanford University. Her dissertation, “‘Lurid Interiors’: The Anti-Gothic Impulse in Early American War Literature,” builds a theory of anti-genre by looking at the surprising absences, parodies, and active repudiations of Gothic tropes in fiction about the American Revolutionary War and Civil War. She has a forthcoming chapter on Ambrose Bierce in an anthology on eco-horror. Her monthly newsletter, [Shrieks and Howls](#), investigates the relationship between comedy and horror, and she is a producer for the horror fiction podcast Pseudopod.

## PAUL DE MORAIS

The Gothic Experience: Ann Radcliffe, Rachel Carson, and the Terror of Environmental Catastrophe

### Abstract

*Thus it is always, when we attempt to describe the finer movements of the heart, for they are too fine to be discerned, they can only be experienced, and are therefore passed over by the indifferent observer, while the interested one feels, that all description is imperfect and unnecessary, except as it may prove the sincerity of the writer, and sooth his own sufferings.* –Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

*Can we devise another powerful descriptive tool that deals this time with matters of concern and whose import then will no longer be to debunk but to protect and to care, as Donna Haraway would put it? – Bruno Latour, “Matters of Fact, Matters of Concern”*

Literary critics observe how Rachel Carson’s 1962 environmental classic, *Silent Spring*, on the deadly ramifications of widespread pesticide use (DDT) evokes Gothic tropes and often reads like a Gothic novel. This paper analyzes the quizzical similarities between the aesthetic experience of reading a fictional Gothic narrative and the experience of environmental discourse based on scientific fact. Distinguishing between the illusory and fact is of course a central theme of Ann Radcliffe’s Gothic narratives, as seen in her mode of the “explained supernatural.” This problematic of distinction is also the central issue of Bruno Latour’s essay “Matters of Fact, Matters of Concern,” in which he seeks a descriptive mode that might subdue the relativism of subjective challenges to that which cannot be directly proven by experience, such as climate change. I am interested in the rhetorical strategies that writers such as Radcliffe resort to in order to persuade readers or affect them in a particular way—to move them with terror, horror, or alarm. The mobilization of a large public is obviously pertinent to environmental concerns. This paper, then, compares the Gothic tropes and rhetoric of terror found in both an environmental success, *Silent Spring*, and Ann Radcliffe’s Gothic fiction and theory in order to locate potential strategies for discourse concerned with real environmental problems—what Latour calls “matters of concern.” I conclude, however, with the gentle reminder offered by Radcliffe herself, that “description is imperfect,” as a challenge to sociopolitical projects reliant mainly on mere public persuasion.

## Biography

Paul De Morais is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Comparative Literature at UC Berkeley. His teaching and research interests include 18th- and 19th-century French, British, Anglo-American, German, and Spanish literatures; Romanticism and its legacies; political and aesthetic ideologies; issues of perception, emotion, physiology, and embodiment; literature and sociology; environmental literature and ecocriticism; the history of ideas; and gender and critical theory.

## ANDREW DEL MASTRO

Behind Her Mask: The Blood and Thunder Tales of Louisa May Alcott and Authorial Representation in the American Gothic

### Abstract

In 1862 Louisa May Alcott wrote a letter to Alfred Whitman informing him of her intention to write “blood and thunder tales” and advising him not to be shocked if she sent him a “picture of Indians, pirates, wolves, bears & distressed damsels in a grand tableau over a title like ... ‘The Maniac Bride’ or ‘The Bath of Blood’.” For many readers, such a declaration seems out of character for one of America’s foremost authors of children’s literature. Yet, in her lifetime, Alcott frequently wrote tales of violence, villainy, and vengeful women under the pseudonym of A.M. Barnard; however, with the 1869 publication of part 2 of *Little Women*, her adventures into murder, madness, suicide, and revenge ended, cementing her reputation as the “Children’s Friend” in the popular imagination. This presentation will explore the creative paradox of Louisa May Alcott, who saw herself as a writer of gothic fiction and eventually grew resentful of the tame, domestic reputation she garnered from the success of *Little Women*. I posit that Alcott’s inability to market herself as a writer of sensational tales was due to her association with hearth and domesticity. However, by her own account, she valued her lurid gothic fantasies more, as they mirrored many of her own trials as a writer and reveal her creative genius. We can use the unveiling of this alternative Alcott to investigate the gendered politics of gothic publishing, as well as explore authorial representation between the writer, publisher, and readership.

### Biography

Andrew Del Mastro received his undergraduate degree at Illinois State University in English Secondary Education. After working as a high-school English teacher in Central Illinois for four years, he returned to ISU for his Master’s degree in English. Andrew is currently working on his Doctorate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His research interests include American Romanticism, Transcendentalism, Victorian Science and Botanical Culture, and Victorian Monster Fiction.

## MARIAELENA DIBENIGNO

Spectral Waste: Horror in Museum Interpretation

### Abstract

Horror is ever-present in the history of what-became the United States of America. From cannibalism to massacre, broken bodies littered the sites of early colonial contact. In Jamestown, Virginia, the first permanent English settlement in North America, visceral and immediate violence punctuates seventeenth-century firsthand accounts and illuminates what historian Kathleen Donegan calls a “theater of atrocity.” Over the ensuing centuries, tourists visited Jamestown to seek the origins of a nation. In pilgrimage-like journeys, visitors were met with (or accompanied by) interpretive guides and more recently wander through built museums. During these encounters with the past, historical horrors were shared with varying degrees of sanitization.

This project tracks how the bodily horrors of Jamestown were included in museum interpretation, primarily during the late-twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In contrast (or perhaps competition) with nearby the Colonial Williamsburg museum complex, Jamestown eroded from collective memory because it was not visible on the landscape. Through archeological recovery, the island has been reimagined in American history as a site of horrors – horrors that fertilized the foundations of the United States. How do the exhibits in the island’s Archaearium Archeology Museum reflect the viscera of colonial misery? When (and why) did guides share the intense violence reflected in documentary and material evidence? Finally, how does the Jamestown site reflect a Gothic public history of unearthing and interpreting historical horrors?

## Biography

Mariaelena DiBenigno is a Ph.D. candidate in the American Studies Program at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. After several years as a middle school teacher, she completed her English M.A at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW). At UNCW, her graduate thesis concerned the relationship between folklore and tourism in the coastal Carolinas. At William & Mary, Mariaelena's dissertation -- *Ghosts in the Museum: The Haunting of Virginia's Public History* -- looks at the connections between popular culture, public history and the ghostly.

## NICOLE DITTMER

Spectral Anomaly: The Disappearing Act of Bridget Bishop, Salem's Absentee Witch, 1692-2018

### Abstract

The Salem Witch Trials was one of the most tragic and excessively violent, gender-specific events in early American history. This article explores how the Trials and accusations of spectral evidence against women occurred as a method of sovereign oppression to subdue and displace the contumacious behaviors into visual spectacles of carnivalesque performativity both in 1692 and modern-day Salem. This research is primarily focused on Bridget Bishop, the first woman tried and executed at the Salem Witch Trials. Since Bishop was the paradigm for which all successive trial cases were modelled after, it was likely there was archival documentation, and modern didactic information of truculent methods of treatment. Upon analysis of the Salem archives and the presentation of Bridget's examinations, I determined that she was stripped of a physical female form and forcefully transformed into the objective visual representation of the Gothic spectral, and immaterial, illusion. Through further "hands on" investigation I explored how modern society represents Bishop's iconic role but was left bewildered. Salem offers a questionable visual display of many female characters and emphasizes the heroic roles the male witches played while failing to display, or discuss, Bridget Bishop. Although she was the baseline for all other witchcraft cases in the Salem Witch Trails, Bridget does not possess representation in modern Salem and remains a wisp of a memory. It was determined that in both 1692 and 2018, Bridget ceased to exist as a reference of violent human history but was replaced by the fantastical ghost tale of terror

## Biography

Nicole Dittmer is an Adjunct Professor at The College of New Jersey who teaches *The Seduction of Horror and Human Behavior*, a course that focuses on human behavior and psychological reactions in contemporary Horror literature. She is also a first year PhD candidate of Gothic Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University in Manchester, England. She received her M.A. from The College of New Jersey in English Studies in 2016, graduated Summa cum Laude, and earned high honors as a member of Phi Kappa Phi. In the final year of her Graduate Studies, she participated in the archival research of the original court documentation from the Salem Witch Trials of 1692. Due to her research, she was asked to present at the *Society of Early Americanists Bicentennial Conference* in 2017 as a representative for Salem Studies. She is currently writing an article case study analysis of Bridget Bishop that focuses on the influences of domestic violence, the fear of deformities, and shame in modern Salem that ultimately led to the obliteration of the woman first accused of witchcraft.

## CAMERON DODWORTH

The Consumption of Terror and Horror: Exoticism and Gothicism in Victorian Cookery

### Abstract

Early in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*—a Gothic novel heavily influenced by British conceptions of Eastern-European vampire mythology involving the consumption of human flesh and blood—Jonathan Harker seems to go out of his way to specifically describe his dinner consisting of "chicken done up some way

with red pepper, which was very good but thirsty.” He mentions this “red pepper”—paprika—three times in the opening five paragraphs of a novel that otherwise spends very little time specifically focusing on food fit for human consumption.

This paper focuses on the relationship between food and the Gothic—particularly in terms of Eastern exoticism—in Victorian food as well as in selected literary/culinary examples: *Dracula*, William Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair*, Christina Rossetti’s “Goblin Market,” Eliza Acton’s *Modern Cookery for Private Families*, Charles Francatelli’s *The Modern Cook*, and Isabella Beeton’s *Household Management*. This paper discusses the food-Other as a representation of Gothic and exotic foreign fear, as well as the darker side of exoticism, with particular focus on Britain’s literary and cultural relationship with food. April Bullock notes that “the term ‘exotic’ is often associated with racist and bigoted imperialist attitudes.” No matter how thoroughly foreign foods were progressively fused or appropriated into British cuisine, the status of those foods and foreign cultures was inevitably that of the Other, and entwined in the fear of the Other (and food-Other) is not just a fear of the unknown, but also a fear of that which is a Gothic threat to one’s comfort zone and domesticity.

## Biography

Cameron Dodworth is an Associate Professor in the Department of English at Methodist University in Fayetteville, North Carolina, specializing in nineteenth-century British literature. Cameron holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, an M.A. in Victorian Studies from the University of Leicester, and an M.A. in English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Cameron has published articles in *Brontë Studies*, *Victorians Institute Journal Digital Annex*, *Supernatural Studies*, *Studies in Gothic Fiction*, and *Neo-Victorian Studies*, as well as a chapter in *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Food* (Routledge, 2018). Cameron’s research interests include Gothicism, nineteenth-century art and literature (particularly Realism, Naturalism, and Impressionism), adaptation studies, and food studies in literature. In addition to his teaching and research, Cameron is currently completing a culinary arts degree at Fayetteville Technical Community College.

## DARA DOWNEY

Exorcising the “Servant Problem” in Alejandro Amenábar’s *The Others*

### Abstract

This paper argues that Alejandro Amenábar’s 2001 film *The Others* can productively be read as dramatising and offering a solution to what was known as “the servant problem” in Britain and the United States throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. By examining the role of the Irish housekeepers, Mrs Mills, and her fellow servants, I explore the film’s portrayal of a stereotypical “servant-problem” scenario – a vulnerable wealthy woman abandoned by her servants just when she needs them most, a scenario dramatised to eerie effect in Edith Wharton’s story “All Souls”. As Grace (Nicole Kidman) comes to terms with Mrs Mills and her disturbingly taciturn companions, a gruff English man and a mute young girl, she comes to believe that her house is haunted by malevolent spirits, causing her to stray into regions of the house normally reserved for the domestic staff – gloomy attics, dusty junk rooms, and “good” rooms filled with sheeted, ghostly furniture.

When Grace and her children ultimately discover that they themselves are dead, and are in fact haunting the living family whose apparitions have disturbed their daily lives, this new state of being is therefore merely an extension of her new acquaintance with the “back regions” of the house. The movement of the film is, I argue, not so much towards Grace finding a solution to the terror that her servants (both present and absent) inspire, as towards a “servantisation” of the mistress of the house, allowing her ultimately to occupy the mansion’s shadowier nooks and crannies forever.

## Biography

Dara Downey is a Lecturer in American Literature in the School of English, Drama, and Film, University College Dublin. Her work focuses on domesticity in American gothic. She is editor of *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies* and author of *American Women's Ghost Stories in the Gilded Age* (Palgrave, 2014). She is currently working on a monograph on servants and slaves in American gothic.

## CAITLIN DUFFY

“Live or die, make your choice”: American Survival Game Horror

### Abstract

From the 2007 remake of Michael Haneke's *Funny Games* to Adam Robitel's *Escape Room* (2019), the survival game has become a recurring subgenre of American horror cinema in the last twenty years; however, its haunting presence has yet to be fully analyzed.

The American survival game horror film is uniquely able to render neoliberal conceptions of agency and endurance visible. Following Theodore Martin's call to explore the “historical drag of genre,” I first provide potential early American foundations of survival game horror, including seduction narratives and gothic novels which dramatize the struggle to survive in a nascent democratic nation. Next, through a close examination of James Wan's *Saw* (2004), I illuminate the ways in which contemporary survival game horror films provide a particular brand of torture porn that transmits horror to audiences through what Jane Elliott terms “a combination of abstraction and extremity” and “situations in which individuals make agonized choices among unwelcome options.”

I argue that the American survival game horror subgenre is a vital component of late capitalist culture with deep roots in the American gothic tradition. These films render everyday methods of survival and suffering visible through depictions of violent excess and abstraction. This presentation will also claim a radical potential for the survival game horror in its ability to provide an escape from the spectral terrors of neoliberal networks through a hyper-focus on horrors of the material body.

## Biography

Caitlin Duffy is a PhD candidate in the English Department at Stony Brook University. Her scholarly interests include 19th-century American gothic literature and American horror cinema. Her work has been published in *The Journal of Dracula Studies*, the upcoming 2019 issue of *Poe Studies*, and in forthcoming volumes on 1980's horror films and fiction featuring Donald Trump. Caitlin teaches courses in film, literature, and writing at Stony Brook University.

## REBECCA DUNCAN

Imperial EcoGothic in the Twenty-First Century: Contesting the “Anthropocene” from Postcolonial Southern Africa

### Abstract

In this paper, I read a selection of contemporary Southern African fictions to show that their rarely considered and ecologically attuned Gothic lexica resist interpretation in terms of the Anthropocene thesis. As T.J. Demos (2017) and Jason W. Moore (2015) – among others – have asserted, the *anthros* of Anthropocene is not a smooth field. The causes and caustic effects of climate change and its correlate transformations are unevenly distributed across a geopolitical landscape that is contoured by histories of imperial expansion, extraction, enslavement and other forms of human and nonhuman exploitation. Within this irregular purview, vulnerability is concentrated disproportionately in the (postcolonial) global south, while its drivers are traceable to seats of (multinational) power in the global north (Deloughrey and Handley 2011; Demos 2017). From this perspective, it is not so much the *anthros* that has brought us to

the point of biospheric crisis, nor the *anthros* that currently suffers its most acute effects. Rather, it is capitalist accumulation: Allied to a (colonial) Cartesian binary, and over its *longue duree*, capital successively identifies human and nonhuman territories of what Marx called “free gifts”, and – on a planetary scale – makes (‘Cheap’) Nature in this image (Moore, 2015).

Drawing on Moore, the Warwick Research Collective (WReC) has recently argued that ‘irrealist’ fictions register the disorientation of those moments and localities in which capital constructs and appropriates new Natures, un- and re-making the world, and doing so largely from afar (WReC 2015; cf Comaroff and Comaroff 2002; cf Botting and Edwards 2013). Gothic forms in particular emerge in postcolonial literatures as witness to the violent experience of this remotely operated corrosion, and, indexing unevenness in this way, gothic complicates any sense of deleterious Nature-making as a broadly human activity.

The ecogothic current, discernible in work by NoViolet Bulawayo, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Mia Couto, Henrietta Rose-Innes and Damon Galgut, is legible in the terms WReC provide. These are fictions that often explicitly locate the violent environments and destructive systems to which their sinister forms draw attention within the cumulative history empire, accounting for the compounding of colonial legacies by neoliberal forces in the present. To read gothic in the context of anthropogenic changes to the biosphere is thus, from the vantage point of Southern Africa, not to read of the Anthropocene. Indeed, what the fictions discussed here make clear, is that *anthros* might risk obscuring more than it illuminates, positing a universally complicit human subject that screens out actually accountable systems and their histories.

## Biography

Rebecca Duncan completed her DAAD-funded doctorate at Justus-Liebig University Gießen in 2015. She currently teaches in the Division of Literature and Languages at the University of Stirling, where she is affiliated to the International Centre for Gothic Studies. She has published widely on South African speculative imaginaries, and has active research interests in post-millennial literary and visual cultures from the global south, with emphases on materialist (and) ecocritical perspectives. She is co-editor of *Fantastika Journal*, and her monograph *South African Gothic: Anxiety and Creative Dissent in the Post-Apartheid Imagination and Beyond* (University of Wales Press) was released in June 2018.

# E

## DIANA EDELMAN

“A woman with an attitude”: Male and Female Gothic in Siouxsie and the Banshees

### Abstract

Recognized by music critics as essential to the emerging post-punk/Goth scene of the late 1970s, Siouxsie and the Banshees began their career with an epic performance at the 100 Club Punk Festival in 1976. Simon Reynolds asserts that Sioux “crystallized the emerging Goth movement’s spirit when she declared her desire to be a ‘thorn in the side of mediocrity.’” Although Siouxsie to this day takes issue with the label “Goth,” her work clearly demonstrates features of what she calls that “very powerful, twisted genre.” In *Art of Darkness*, Anne Williams frees the Gothic not only from strict generic boundaries, but also from the limitations of a specific historical time frame, arguing that the “Gothic and Romantic express a single literary impulse” that continues to this day. This impulse “shows the cracks in the [patriarchal] system that constitutes consciousness, ‘reality.’” Beginning with their debut album, *The Scream* (1978), this essay traces the elements of male and female Gothic, as defined by Williams, in the band’s music and Siouxsie’s personae. Though her music clearly expresses the Semiotic textures associated with the female Gothic, many of the conventions of her language and lyrics are male Gothic (e.g., fascination with female suffering, the supernatural). Because she exhibits features of both, Siouxsie’s work can be explained as a successful defiance of patriarchal rock culture and demonstrates that, as it did for the

many female novelists of Romantic-period England, the Gothic still offers a viable strategy for being a thorn in the side of patriarchy.

## Biography

Edelman is an Associate Professor of English specializing in British Romanticism and the Gothic novel. Edelman has published essays in *The Keats-Shelley Journal* and *European Romantic Review*. Most recently, she published "Gothic Medicine: Murderous Midwives and Homicidal Obstetricians" in *Gothic Studies*. Edelman's current book manuscript explores the intersections between Gothic literature and the reproductive sciences. *Conceiving the Gothic: Embryology and the Rise of the Gothic Novel* reads the Gothic novel, from Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* to Charles R. Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, as a reflection of and response to the scientific community's changing beliefs about how the fetus is formed and developed in the womb, a shift from preformation to epigenesis over the course of the eighteenth-century and into the nineteenth.

## Biography

### JUSTIN D. EDWARDS

Gothic, Animals and the Anthropocene: Beyond the Slaughterhouse

#### Abstract

The relationship between the local slaughterhouse and the global impact of the animal-processing industry is significant. In some cases, small-scale impacts have been seen in areas around large-scale animal processing facilities, but the global concerns about land degradation and deforestation, air and water pollution, and the loss of biodiversity have been convincingly documented. From a planetary perspective, animal agriculture contributes significantly to anthropogenic climate change. And if this continues at the current levels, the potential ramifications of meat production could have profound impacts on large populations of people due to the generation of methane, high levels of water consumption, as well as the high amounts of mature produced on industrialized farms. In addition, the thousands of animals in industrialized farms require large amounts of food, typically in the form of cereal grains. It is estimated that more than a third of the world's cereal output is dedicated to farm animal feed, despite the fact that it would be much more efficient for humans to consume cereals directly since much of the energy value is lost during conversion from plant to animal matter.

Recognising the impact of the local slaughterhouse can, I suggest, extend outward to the planetary effects of anthropogenic violence on human and nonhuman animals. And recent Gothic texts, such as the French-Belgian co-production *Raw* (2016), include representations of the mesh of violence that is incorporated into institutions not directly related to slaughterhouses or the animal processing industry. Here, the techniques of power around the consumption of meat work to induce docility in the living body by suggesting that consumption of nonhuman animals enlivens the living body by fuelling our energies. The normalized body eats meat; the rest are relegated to the margins, labelled abnormal. This, then, legitimizes a human speciesism that excludes nonhuman animals from the protections that are, at least in theory, afforded to the human community. With reference to several Gothic texts, this paper explores the biopolitical form of governing in modernity includes a detached and technical stance towards lives, turning individuals into life as a mass and resource, so that speciesism is unsettled and humans enter the same biopolitical nexus as other animals. I am not suggesting a rejection of agency in the face of biopolitical power that includes the pure and simple capacity to legislate or legitimize sovereignty in the mesh of human and nonhuman animals. Rather, biopolitics is, above all, a strategic arrangement that coordinates power relations in order to extract a surplus power from living beings. Recent Gothic texts can help us to theorize the complex power relations in this process.

## Biography

Justin D. Edwards is Chair of Gothic Studies at the University of Stirling. He is co-president of the International Gothic Association and the author or co-author of several books, including *Grotesque* (2013) *Mobility at Large* (2012), *Postcolonial Literature* (2008), *Gothic Canada: Reading the Spectre of a National Literature* (2005), *Gothic Passages: Racial Ambiguity and the American Gothic* (2003) and *Exotic Journeys: Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature* (2001). He is also the editor or coeditor of *Other Routes: 1500 Years of African and Asian Travel Writing* (2006), *Downtown Canada: Writing Canadian Cities* (2005), *Postcolonial Travel Writing: Critical Explorations* (2010), *Gothic in Contemporary Literature and Popular Culture: Pop Goth* (2012) and *Technologies of the Gothic in Literature and Culture: Technogothics* (2015), *Tropical Gothic in Literature and Culture: The Americas* (2016) and *B-Movie Gothic: International Perspectives* (2018).

## KRISTOFFER EKROLL

Whatever Walked There, Walked Alone/Together: Views on Habitation and Architecture in Mike Flanagan and Shirley Jackson's versions of *The Haunting of Hill House*

### Abstract

Mike Flanagan's reimagining of Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* was released to wide acclaim last year. However, the series' version of the eponymous house marks a stark difference from Jackson's literary abode. Jackson's Hill House is a construction of unyielding and uncanny architecture where the walls and patterns of traditional dwellings are turned on their head. To inhabit the literary Hill House means abandoning one's habitual interactions with architecture as the House is a construction unto itself that is ignorant of human concerns. Thus, Jackson's House will change those who dwell there for too long, and those who are perceptible to its 'illness', will find an untimely demise there. Flanagan's Hill House is a place where families separated by time may reconvene as they become reanimated within its walls. The 'corrupting' forces within Hill House here stem from its former inhabitants rather than from demonic architecture. This presentation will look at the different approaches the series and novel take to architecture as enforcing habits on inhabitants and vice versa. It will understand houses as dwellings originally meant to conform to human desires of habitability; something that is denied in the novel and granted in the series. Indeed, the central lesson of the story changes between the two as "whatever walked there, walked alone" (Jackson) becomes "those who walk there walk together" (Flanagan). The presentations of Hill House are testaments to their mediums and time. To compare them sparks an interesting conversation of human interactions of habit with architecture.

### Biography

Kristoffer S. Ekroll is currently a PhD student in the English Department at the University of California, Riverside. He graduated from the University of Bergen in 2017 with an MA in English literature on masculinity and intersex identities in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory*. Ekroll's current research is interdisciplinary, combining research and theorists from social science, literary criticism, psychology, and design to explore how the image of the haunted house tells us something about our relationship to and reliance on architecture. Over the course of our lives, we have developed certain habits and expectations of the buildings we occupy and retreat into for safety. Haunted houses break with these expectations as they are places that are inherently hostile towards those who seek shelter within their walls.

## MELISSA ETZLER

The "Uncanny Personhood" and Vibrant Animism in Gustav Meyrink's Gothic Tales

### Abstract

I examine the fantastical, Gothic stories by Gustav Meyrink (1868–1932) which have a focus on objects as actants and place these tales in the genre of Eco-Horror. By incorporating a discussion of the

uncanny, I explore how the liveliness of objects, the streets of Prague, and the plant-animal-human hybrids in his tales exude what W. J. T. Mitchell would call an “uncanny personhood.” Though many of Meyrink’s short stories were written before Sigmund Freud’s seminal essay on “The Uncanny” (“Das Unheimliche” 1919), several aspects of Freud’s theories are relevant in the context of Meyrink’s environmental tales that feature an uncanny symbiotic relationship between humans, plants and animals. I also show how Meyrink’s occult worldview demonstrates why his ideology and literature are conducive to an ecocritical interpretation. Given Meyrink’s historical location, he spent his formative years in Prague (1883-1904), his literature responds to a ubiquitous, environmentally-charged fear inherent among industrialized, technologically advanced societies. I explore Meyrink’s theorizing of the potential negative environmental ramifications of scientific experimentation and how such experimentation results in a backlash in which the city (Prague) with a “secret heartbeat” becomes a character or entity in its own right, independent of the humans that were the catalyst of its awakening. Meyrink saw a spiritual force within everyone and everything. Because Meyrink’s works demonstrate his concern with the potential agency of objects that many would consider dead matter, I take an anachronistic leap and bring a selection of Meyrink’s texts, such as “Petroleum, Petroleum” (1903), “The Cardinal Napellus” (1915), and *The Angel of the West Window* (1927), into dialogue with 21<sup>st</sup> century film adaptations such as *Annihilation* (2018) or *The Ruins* (2008).

## Biography

Melissa Etzler received her Ph.D. in German with a Designated Emphasis in Film from the University of California, Berkeley in 2014. Her dissertation, *Writing from the Periphery: W. G. Sebald and Outsider Art*, explores intersections of pathology, marginalization, creative production and politics. She has since published two book chapters related to her dissertation. Beyond Sebald, she is interested in ecocritical thought; the connection between food, consumption and transcendental knowledge; and the horror genre. Her recent publication in *German Quarterly* is entitled “Pernicious Plants: Imitation and Uncanny Ecocritical Thought in Gustav Meyrink’s ‘Dr. Cinderella’s Plants.’” She has been continuing her work on Meyrink, particularly by looking at his lesser-known Gothic tales and exploring the variant ecocritical tendencies therein. She has also done extensive research on the history of the vampire and is working on translations of dissertations written on vampires written around 1770 in Leipzig. She is a Lecturer of German and First Year Seminar at Butler University in Indianapolis and continues to explore all things creepy in her free time.

## F

### WENDY FALL

Images of Terror and Horror: The Development of the Illustrated Gothic Chapbook

#### Abstract

Gothic chapbooks have received little attention as an art form, because in many ways, they never represented the state of the art of publication. Sold unbound and printed on ragstock using cheap ink, chapbooks were physically not valuable items when compared with the triple-decker novels of the turn of the nineteenth century. In terms of narrative contents, the gothic chapbooking industry was founded on adaptations, retellings, and piracies of more famous works. As they became popular, however, the proportion of chapbooks containing well-written original works increased. In this paper, however, I argue that the most profound improvements in Gothic chapbooks between 1796 and 1820 were in their use of illustrations. Using examples from the Sadlier Black library in Virginia, the Pforzheimer Collection at the New York Public Library and the British Library, I demonstrate that as new generations of chapbooks were created, they were consistently illustrated using relatively expensive intaglio printmaking rather than relief printing. More importantly, these illustrations became increasingly sophisticated in terms of how they connected with each chapbook’s narrative arc. Although we will never know much about the anonymous writers, illustrators, and printers who worked together to mold and improve the art of Gothic chapbooking between 1790 and 1820, it is clear from the extant examples that they advanced from text-based,

plagiarized horror toward more visual modes relying on illustration to convey their brand of terror. In so doing, they created the readership that demanded illustrated serial fiction (such as penny dreadfuls) in the next generation.

## Biography

Wendy Fall is a doctoral candidate at Marquette University where she is writing a dissertation about the shaping of Gothic fiction by (and for) the popular nineteenth century press. She is the editor of The Gothic Archive, an online collection of chapbooks containing short retellings of gothic novels and original short stories.

## HARRIET FLETCHER

The Horror of Celebrity Decay in Andy Warhol's Art

### Abstract

Since Polidori fictionalised the internationally famous Lord Byron in *The Vampyre* (1819), the Gothic mode has engaged in a critical dialogue with celebrity culture. This paper argues that Andy Warhol's celebrity portraits from the 1960s-1980s can be placed within a Gothic discourse because they articulate the horror of celebrity decay. Using *Marilyn Diptych* (1962) and Warhol's self-portraits from the 1970s-1980s, I explore how the artist subverts Western portraiture conventions of beauty and preservation. For Warhol, the portrait functions as a double of the body by revealing the subject's mortality rather than immortalising them.

The portrait has a longstanding relationship with Gothic, as argued in Elliott's *Portraiture and British Gothic Fiction*. However, this paper departs from fictional representations and instead explores how the portrait itself represents Gothic ideas of doubling, death, and decay. I also situate Warhol's art in context of American culture; the death of Marilyn Monroe is a cataclysmic event that marks the death of the transcendent 'Hollywood star' figure and exposes the fragility of the celebrity body in the 1960s and beyond, and Warhol's own attempted murder in 1968 further impacted the tone of his later work. Warhol's art suggests that celebrity culture exhibits Gothic sensibilities. His portraits draw attention to mortality, revealing that the celebrity is an unstable Gothic body capable of death and decay. His art lifts the veil on the Hollywood myth of immortality and responds to the troubling fact that the celebrity can die.

## Biography

Harriet Fletcher is a third year PhD student and Associate Lecturer in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Lancaster University, UK. She is currently researching the intersections of celebrity and the Gothic in literature, media, and popular culture.

## MATT FOLEY

"For what is the voice but the Beast calling?": Reading Terror and Horror in Vococentric Gothic

### Abstract

This paper posits a new methodology for reading vococentric Gothic literature; one that considers the intertextual connections we can draw between the Gothic's many representations of voices of terror and horror. I read moments of vococentricism in works by Vernon Lee, Robert Bloch and William Peter Blatty to suggest the limitations and possibilities presented by considering these Gothic voices as paradigmatically uncanny or monstrous. Furthermore, I suggest that these texts, at least in part, may be read as the inheritors of those ventriloquized, disembodied, and often uncanny voices that populate the first wave of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Gothic. Exploring interdisciplinary connections, my methodology for reading this Gothic echo chamber of noise is drawn from the work of critics in sound (Jonathan Sterne), psychoanalytic (Mladen Dolar), Gothic (Isabella van Elferen), and literary studies

(John Picker, Steven Connor). While my methodology is inspired by, if not wholly in-step with, the recent turn in Gothic studies towards reading sounds, music, and timbre, my focus here is upon reading representations of what psychoanalysis has termed the 'object' voice in literature (with some examples taken, too, from relevant adaptations). I focus, then, on reading representations of articulated rather than narrative voice.

## Biography

Matt Foley is Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Literature at Manchester Met. The author of *Haunting Modernisms* (Palgrave, 2017), he is currently writing on the acoustics of Gothic literature and on the fiction of Patrick McGrath. As well as being a member of the Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies, he is also the administrator of the International Gothic Association's Allan Lloyd Smith Memorial Prizes, and academic lead for HAUNT Manchester.

## JULIA FTACEK

Desired Doubling and the Transgender Self in Byron's *Manfred*

### Abstract

Responding to an existing body of *Manfred* scholarship that examines the uneasy, reflective image of Manfred and the ghostly Astarte, this paper seeks to complicate understandings of the doubled relationship. Where existing scholarship reads *Manfred* as biographical—suggestive of Byron's own relationship with half-sister Augusta Leigh and subsequent flight from England—this paper instead examines the doubling of Manfred and Astarte in *Manfred* not as an expression of incestuous guilt, but rather as a reflection of Manfred's anxiety over his own gender. That is, Manfred experiences gender dysphoria, haunted by an image of Astarte who resembles a feminine self-image that is, for Manfred, simultaneously desired and unspeakable. Focusing on Manfred's interactions with Astarte, especially his attempts to make Astarte speak before immediately speaking over her, I reveal how Manfred seeks to *become* her voice and being, rather than merely resurrect it. A revisionary biographical understanding of *Manfred* thus becomes suggestive of Byron's own gender identity, delving deeper into a queer Byron whose full life is still in the process of scholarly recovery. Utilizing new inquiries into transgender Romanticism by scholars such as Nowell Marshall and transgender theory by Julia Serano and T. Benjamin Singer, I seek to examine some of *Manfred's* most troubling elements and initiate fresh examination of Byron's work and life through a transgender lens.

## Biography

Julia Ftacek is a PhD student at Western Michigan University who is currently completing a dissertation on literature of the long eighteenth century, with specific attention to gothic texts and contexts.

## G

## ALEJANDRO GALLEGOS RAMOS

Stephen King's *IT*: A Linguistic Balance of Fear

### Abstract

The following study focuses on the linguistic criteria of Stephen King's *IT*, particularly on the conversation between Pennywise and Georgie in the sewer, and analyzes it from the perspective of cohesion on the text concerning the linguistic balance of suspense and fear. Theories like Halliday & Hassan's Cohesion in English and Noël Carroll's Paradox of Suspense were utilized conjointly for the identification of cohesion and linguistic balance on King's writing. Fear exists in the novel and colludes with emotions and language based on human experiences; therefore, King plays with human nature and fiction. The reader is moved by the narrative because a piece of written language has linguistic elements that bind the book

together as a unified whole that will take the reader to a "meaningful text". With *IT*, Stephen King transmits an environment of horror using elements on the text that can be found in real life. There is a perceived linguistic balance on the conversation between Georgie and Pennywise and Systemic Functional Grammar helps explaining and making crystal-clear to the reader this linguistic property that balances the text and provokes a bridge between suspense and fear; although the research won't give a definite explanation on the excerpt to analyze it will give a different focal point to see with that will give the reader this linguistic balance of fear that will be researched. Shklovsky says, art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important, the novel itself is not important, but the effect is important enough and linguistic balance explains that effect that Stephen King creates.

## Biography

Alejandro Gallegos Ramos is a current student of the 8th semester in the English Language major on the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters and in the major of Musician Instrumentalist as a Pianist on the 3rd year on the Conservatory of Music of Chihuahua. He started to teach English in December 2018. He has been attached to horror and suspense both in movies and books, but recently he got to love Stephen King's writing and notice particular linguistic elements in it. When he is not in his literature world, he studies piano at the Conservatory, focusing mainly on Russian piano music and on Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonatas. He is currently working on his thesis on Stephen King's *IT*.

## CAITLIN GAMBLE

Fantasy vs. Reality: How Does the Genre of the Horror Novel Amplify Acceptance?

### Abstract

*The Dust of Wonderland*, written by American author Lee Thomas, is a Lambda Literary Award-winning novel which mixes the genres of horror and a coming-out novel. The novel depicts an epistemological battle to discover truth and reality inside a literal fantasy world created by a hostile supernatural being, Vicki Bach/Travis Brugier. The protagonist, Ken Nicholson, rediscovers his public sexual identity as a gay man by discovering reality through the illusions generated not only by the supernatural being Vicki/Travis, but also by society's heteronormativity. In fact, each character must battle not only the illusions of Vicki/Travis but also the illusions of their perceptions of society. The battles through illusion must be taken seriously: they have long-reaching and permanent consequences in the characters' real world. The theme of fantasy versus reality also plays out on a narrative level which prompts the reader to investigate how the novel's genres as a coming-out story and a horror novel function together to ingratiate the homosexual Other into heteronormative society. As multiple critics assert, the horror genre tends to define the Other as completely foreign and terrifying to the reader. However, as Andrew Cooper and Fernando Gabriel Pagnoni Berns argue, the addition of another genre amplifies the themes and tropes of both genres. In *The Dust of Wonderland*, this genre mixing not only encourages the acceptance of the Other within and outside of the book by recoding the historical connotation of homosexuality as monstrous to homosexuality, it pushes one step further, encouraging the reader, like the protagonist, to move beyond the binary of heteronormativity versus the Other.

### Biography

Caitlin Gamble is a first-year Master's student at Northern Illinois University, with an emphasis in Film and Literature. She wants to research how cultures perceive death. How do our representations of death define the living? How do our stories about death help us to conceptualize the meaning of life? Why do we imagine death, or a life-after-death, in so many different ways? She hopes to pursue these questions further as she continues her studies.

## CHLOÉ GERMAINE BUCKLEY

Witches and their Kin: Materialism, Occultism and Ecology in Contemporary Children's Fiction

### Abstract

The witch is a foundational figure of horror. The witch stereotype, which synthesizes classical mythology and European folklore, emerged in the Early Modern period and has persisted in Western cultures in much the same figuration ever since (Hutton, 2017). In her study of twentieth-century horror film, for example, Creed (1993) identifies the witch as "incontestably monstrous". Yet, the early twenty-first century has seen numerous attempts to recuperate the witch for feminist, queer, environmental and sex-positive politics. The witch's role in horror fictions of all types (both revisionist and regressive) depends on a long-standing connection between "woman" and "nature", one that all-too-often evokes pernicious dualisms (nature/culture or human/animal). This paper examines contemporary works that figure the witch in ways that trouble such dualisms and echo efforts by new materialist and eco-feminist philosophy to address human and other-than-human animals' embeddedness in materiality.

Rather than serving as a symbol for all-too-human political concerns, witches and their kin provoke unease: they remind us that this is not a "world-for-us", that matter is not passive, and that nature is not a resource for human consumption. Using Melvin Burgess' *The Lost Witch* (2018) as a case study, this paper will analyze witches and their kin as a 'wild category' (Haraway 2016) that refuses anthropocentric concepts of nature. Witch kin are multiple: animal, other-than-animal, material and immaterial. They trouble ontological categories that underpin the mechanistic approach to nature that has dominated since the Enlightenment, and which have resulted in catastrophic ecological disaster. Engaging with witches and their kin suggests an ethical and ecological imperative: we become with each other or not at all (Haraway, 2016).

### Biography

Chloé Germaine Buckley has diverse research interests within Gothic Studies. Her first book explores 21st-century children's Gothic literature and film, but I have also written on Zombies, Weird Fiction, Postcolonial Gothic, and Witches. She is a member of the [Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies](#) and the [Manchester Game Studies Network](#).

## MONICA GERMANÀ

The Resistance of the Undead in *Sicilian Ghost Story* (2018)

### Abstract

As the title suggests, Fabio Grassadonia and Antonio Piazza's *Sicilian Ghost Story* (2018), centres around the spectral in multiple ways. Based on the real story of eleven-year-old Giuseppe Di Matteo's abduction by the Sicilian mafia in 1993, the ghost-story of the film title is, in this sense, the 'real' ghost of Sicily's mafia history. As the film captures one of the most brutal, and exemplary, chapters of a recent past that still haunts contemporary Sicily, its aesthetics, heavily influenced by the darkly surreal and magical-realist mise-en-scène of Jane Campion and Guillermo del Toro's cinematography, raise questions about genre classification and tone. But Giuseppe's ghostly condition is problematic in other ways. On one hand, in a way comparable to Argentina and Chile's *desaparecidos* during Operation Condor and, in general, under Pinochet's regime, what turns Giuseppe into a ghost is the invisibility created by the community's indifference to his disappearance, which his high-school sweet-heart, Luna, resists and campaigns against. Simultaneously, however, the film constructs the ghost-story as a narrative of psychic intelligence, through which Luna comes to solve the mystery of Giuseppe's disappearance, against the façade of pretence put up by Giuseppe's family. Significantly, in Luna's psychic world, Giuseppe's ghost survives the physical ordeal his body endures in a way that juxtaposes the ethereal and eternal spirit of the undead to the abject and visceral abuse of the living body. The film's multiple spectral embodiments converge, at the end, in Giuseppe's dissolved body, which becomes, in

spite of the mafia's attempts to annihilate it completely, a perpetual part of Sicily's living ecosystem. What the film's treatment of spectrality intimates, then, is the erosion of neat boundaries between physical horror and intellectual terror, as both, problematically co-exist in the unsettling dismantlement of real/fantasy, living/dead, spiritual/physical categories in *Sicilian Ghost Story*.

## Biography

Monica Germanà is Senior Lecturer in English Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Westminster. Her research concentrates on contemporary British literature, with a specific emphasis on the Gothic and gender. Her publications include *Scottish Women's Gothic and Fantastic Writing* (EUP, 2010), *Ali Smith: New Critical Perspectives* (Bloomsbury, 2013) co-edited with Emily Horton, and *Scottish Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion* (EUP, 2017), co-edited with Carol Davison. Stemming from her previous work on dangerous women in Gothic fiction, her new monograph called *Bond Girls: Body, Fashion, Gender* explores the subversive femininity of the female characters in the James Bond narratives (Bloomsbury, 2019). She is currently developing a new project on haunted Scotland.

## MARIE GETHINS

Severed Heads: L. Frank Baum's Gothic Portrayal of Mind/Body and Sense of Self in Oz

### Abstract

L. Frank Baum's *Ozma of Oz* (1907) and *The Tin Woodman of Oz* (1918) explore the themes of beauty, identity, and motivation in disturbing settings using body horror. Both novels feature disembodied heads that debate the merits of physicality with other full-body characters. In *Ozma of Oz*, Princess Langwidere uses a collection of thirty heads to alter her appearance. However, she also undergoes personality changes with each head swap. Seeking to be ever more beautiful, she frequently changes heads and employs her position of power to acquire new ones – a terrifying prospect for unsuspecting visitors. In *The Tin Woodman of Oz* the title character – a man who chopped off his own body parts that were replaced by tin -- discovers his old flesh head, Nick Chopper, in a cupboard, leading to a discussion between the two on what constitutes self.

Through these characters' graphic body violations and psychologically unsettling scenes, Baum forces both adult and child readers to ponder the existential questions: Is identity based on memory or current impulse? Does physical change alter fundamental personality? Princess Langwidere and Nick Chopper's head interactions with other characters reveal Baum's views on body mutation and what constitutes spiritual self.

### Biography

Marie Gethins' work has featured in *The Irish Times*, National Flash Fiction Day anthologies, *Flash: The International Short-Short Story Magazine*, *NANO*, *Jellyfish Review*, *Litro*, *The Lonely Crowd*, *Wales Arts Review*, *The Incubator*, *Firewords Quarterly*, *Banshee*, *Synaesthesia* and others. She won or placed in the British Screenwriters Awards, Dorset Fiction Award, The Short Story, Tethered by Letters, Flash500, Dromineer, *The New Writer*, *Prick of the Spindle*, and others. Additional pieces listed or commended in *The London Magazine*, *Australian Book Review*, *Boulevard Emerging Writers*, Bath Short Story Award, Bristol Short Story Prize, Bridport Flash, Brighton Prize, Fish Short Story/Flash/Memoir, RTE/Penguin competitions and others. Marie is a Pushcart, Best of the Short Fictions nominee and a recipient of the 2016 Frank O'Connor Bursary mentorship under Zsuzsi Gartner. She lives in Cork and received her MSt in Creative Writing from the University of Oxford, currently studying for her PhD from the University of Limerick.

## ALEJANDRA GIANGIULIO

An Ecogothic Take on *Costa Rican Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes* by Carlos Salazar Herrera

### Abstract

*Costa Rican Short Stories of Anguish and Landscapes* is the translated version of one of Costa Rica's most important short stories compilation: *Cuentos de angustias y paisajes* by Carlos Salazar Herrera. The stories were written during the first half of the twentieth century, and all portray a stylized landscape of loneliness, poverty and anguish as an idiosyncratic depiction of the life in Costa Rica in those times. This romantic view of everyday activities and places can be studied from an ecogothic perspective as nature holds a major role in the production of terror in some of the stories. Out of thirty stories, six stand out with a heavy emphasis on nature; three deal with animals or insects, two with weather phenomena, and one with a mountain. The stories "The Bocaracá," "The Young Bull," "The Cricket," "The Drought," "The Rainstorm" and "The Mountain" will be analyzed from an ecogothic and ecoterror perspective. Nature, in these stories, is not naïve; it produces strong feelings that lead to terror, silence, stoicism, and death.

### Biography

Alejandra Giangiulio Lobo has been an English professor at Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica since 2013. She is interested in analyzing the Gothic in Costa Rican literature.

## MATTHEW GIBSON

Time and Space in the Fantastic Theory and Fiction of Charles Nodier

### Abstract

One of the most important theorists and practitioners of the *conte fantastique* in France was Charles Nodier. Reacting to both the recent publications of Hoffman's work in French and Scott's denunciation of Hoffman's work and the "fantastic" school in general for breaking the acknowledged laws of nature. Nodier wrote 'Du Fantastique en Litterature' (1830), in which he argued that there had been three phases in the development of literature. The phases are the Marvellous, when man trusts his senses and describes what appears to him, including divine manifestation; the realist, in which man cease to trust his instincts and allows an abstract and regular reason to inform his understanding of reality; and the fantastic, when man realizes that reason and science are not enough and so uses imagination to contemplate other avenues, which may then embellish science. In this piece I will be observing, in Nodier's *Trilby* and *La Fee aux Miettes*, how this understanding of the Fantastic also helps to create a new *chronotope* in its depiction of Scotland, where the experience of space and time challenges the regularity of the laws of nature in a way which harks back to Berkeley's *A New theory of Vision*.

### Biography

Matthew Gibson is the author of several books, including most recently *The Fantastic and European Gothic: History, Literature and the French Revolution*. He is LSO Associate Professor at the University of Macau.

## MARY GOING

My Brother's Keeper: Examining the horror of Cain and Abel in CW's *Supernatural*

### Abstract

'Saving people, hunting things, the family business': first uttered by Dean Winchester in 'Wendigo' (1.2) this family motto is central to CW's longest running show, *Supernatural* (2005-present). Telling the story of the Winchester brothers, *Supernatural* follows Sam and Dean as they travel across America to continue the

legacy of their father (and that of the Winchester and Campbell families) to save people and hunt everything from demons and angels, werewolves and vampires, ghosts, ghouls, and spectres, and even dragons. Drawing from the established traditions of Gothic and Horror, this contemporary TV series explores all things Supernatural, the monster of the week trope, and even theological narratives of the Apocalypse. Ultimately, however, at the heart of the show, and arguably the reason for its continued popularity, is Sam, Dean, and their relationship as brothers.

In particular, this fraternal relationship echoes that of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4): yet, while this biblical story centres on a moment of horror as one brother kills the other, *Supernatural* plays with and inverts this narrative trajectory. At times, the brothers are encouraged to, and sometimes *almost*, commit fratricide; but, typically, Sam and Dean are shown to be willing to do anything to save, not kill, the other. In this paper, I will explore this inverted narrative trajectory and the creation of a new kind of sacrifice in *Supernatural*. Moving away from a Christ figure who sacrifices themselves to save the world, *Supernatural* uses the Cain and Abel story to present instead two brothers who continually sacrifice themselves for the other, at times to the detriment of saving the world.

### Biography

Mary Going is a PhD candidate at the University of Sheffield, exploring depictions of Jewish characters, myths and legends - such as Shylock, Cain, vampires, and the Wandering Jew - in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century literature. She is co-organiser of Sheffield Gothic, and lead organiser of the 'Reimagining the Gothic' and 'Gothic Bible' projects. She has a forthcoming chapter in *Horror and Religion* (July 2019), and is also the current Web Officer for the International Gothic Association.

### CHARLOTTE GOUGH

Devil's Den in the Trump Era: A Gothic Return to US 1980s and 1990s Satanic Panic and Masculine Trauma Narratives in *True Detective*, Season 3 (2019)

### Abstract

Through close-analysis, this paper examines the third instalment of American seasonal anthology series, *True Detective* (2019), which centres on a macabre investigation involving missing children in Arkansas. Playing out over three timelines, the fractured narrative is presented through the subjectivity and memory of a Vietnam veteran detective who later declines into dementia, haunted by the case and its troubling legacy in the national consciousness. The narrative notably recalls the real-life 1980s and 1990s "Satanic Panic", with the fictional investigation set in the very period in which US society was permeated on a national scale by largely paranoid claims and problematic "recovered memories" surrounding Satanic conspiracies and "Ritual Abuse" of children; mobilized by the conservative rhetoric of the Reagan Era and New Right Christian Fundamentalism. This phenomenon was culturally entwined with post-Vietnam trauma and the 1990s "masculinity-in-crisis" (Malin, 2009), and we see these Satanic themes, through a lens of fragmented masculine identity, centralised in popular cinema of the time; such as *Angel Heart* (1987), *Jacob's Ladder* (1991) and *Fallen* (1998). Thus *True Detective*, significantly broadcast in the Trump Era, evidences a distinct American Gothic sensibility of traumatic thematic repetition in conservative patriarchal culture (Savoy, 1998). Indeed, the same fundamentalist rhetoric and populist paranoia has undeniably been courted from the Salem Witch Trials (1692-1693) up to the current American landscape. This study is therefore of vital importance to the broader understanding of the perpetual turn to occult scapegoating, and its cultural representation, in periods of national patriarchal unrest throughout American history.

### Biography

Charlotte Gough is a first-year PhD student and tutor of Film Studies and Gothic Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her thesis investigates the representation of and relationship between masculinity, trauma and Satanic Panic in American Gothic cinema 1980-2000. She has previously been published in *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies* and *Fantastika Journal*.

## RUNE GRAULUND

Area X, the Zone, and the Anthropocene: Posthuman States of Exceptions (and the New Weird)

### Abstract

Jeff VanderMeer's novel *Annihilation* (2014) and Alex Garland's adaptation of the novel into a film of the same name have been hailed as emblematic aesthetic expressions of an Anthropocene world. VanderMeer's descriptions of the mysterious Area X in which the boundaries between human and animal, individual and environment, sentient and non-sentient life erode and become one have been praised for its posthuman perspective as for its depiction of bodies and an environment that are, as the narrator of the novel terms it, 'transitional'. Similarly, Garland's *Annihilation* (2018) - loosely based on VanderMeer's novel - was seen as representative of a similar turn in cinema. However, while it is true that novel as well as film serve as poignant examples of a recent and relatively novel interest in non-anthropocentric concerns, VanderMeer as well as Garland nevertheless lean on a long tradition of the gothic and science fiction: both borrow heavily from the gothic tale in terms of plot, tone, and tropes (doublings, hauntings, the monstrous), just as they rely on science fiction's tradition of the exploration of alternate realities, alien entities and visitations from other worlds.

I will examine the implications of retrofitting the themes, narratives and perspectives of genre fiction for an anthropocene world. First, I will engage with Amitav Ghosh's claim that it is in the 'outhouses' of genre fiction that we tend to find the most perceptive critiques of anthropogenic change (*The Great Derangement*, 2016, Chicago UP, p. 66). Second, I will specifically explore the notion of the 'state of exception' that the gothic as well as science fiction share in their focus on challenging anthropocentric normativity by visitations of the abnormal, the inhuman and the monstrous from a world 'beyond' the one 'we' know. Whether it is in the haunted house, the blighted landscape, or in extraterrestrial and extradimensional territories, gothic as well as science fiction share a fascination with zones of exclusion in which an anthropocentric world view is proven to be at best outdated and at worst useless. Finally, I will examine how novel as well as film depict the relationship between human and environment as being fundamentally uncanny, but also how there is a clear elision from the abject horror of the weird fiction of e.g. H.P. Lovecraft on to the eerie but far more ambivalent unease of the new weird of writers like VanderMeer. For whereas the former always end on a scream of terror, the latter tend to be far more often acquiescent as the tendrils of the void engulf and consumes the human.

I will argue that gothic fiction - and the new weird in particular - can be seen as illustrative of the inclusiveness of the non-human turn in for instance new materialism and critical posthumanities, even as such Anthropocene gothic is still in narratological terms strongly dependent on the horror engendered by traditional gothic tropes of othering from the inhuman and the unnatural. In addition to VanderMeer's novel and Garland's film, the essay will present readings of H.P. Lovecraft's short story 'The Colour Out of Space' (1927), Arkady and Boris Strugatsky's novelette *Roadside Picnic* (1971), Andrey Tarkovsky's film *Stalker* (1979), as well as the cultural aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster (1986) in e.g. Svetlana Alexievich's book of reportage *Voices from Chernobyl* (1997), Pol Crutchen's film essay *Voices From Chernobyl (The Supplication)* (2016) and the computer game *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Shadow of Chernobyl* (2007).

### Biography

Rune Graulund is Associate Professor in American Literature and Culture at the Institute of Literature, Media and Cultural Studies, University of Southern Denmark. His research centers on American popular culture and literature (especially Gothic studies, science fiction, and post-apocalyptic film, literature and games). He also writes about political fiction (migrant and postcolonial novels) and non-fiction (nature writing and travel writing) relating to questions of migration, empire, ecology and the Anthropocene. He has written books, chapters and articles on a variety of subjects ranging from zombies over nanotechnology, from the American desert to the Arctic, digital art and experimental prose. His current research focuses on the question of resources and the manner in which literature has grappled with

pollution and resource depletion from the Industrial Revolution and onwards. He is director of the research group 'Anthropocene Aesthetics' at the University of Southern Denmark.

## **SARAH GRAY**

"I will fall a corpse at your feet": (Anti)Seduction and the Liminality of Live Burial in the American Gothic

### **Abstract**

My study uses anthropologists Arnold van Gennep's and Victor Turner's concepts of liminality to describe the social death and metaphorical live burial experienced by nineteenth-century "fallen women" both in Gothic fiction and life. The fallen woman's social death becomes immediately evident in the language used to narrate not only her fall but also her subsequent life and actions. Such language as well as representations of fallen women as the living dead springs from the tradition of the Male Gothic exemplified in Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk*. In his presentation of two fallen women, Antonia and Agnes, who each experience literal live burial, Lewis establishes a framework upon which authors and legislators would build theories of punishment for fallen women for the next century. A modern reader would assume the difference between the two women's circumstances is one of rape versus consensual sex; however, the delineation is actually between sex without and sex with the intention of future marriage. Thus, the promise of marriage became for authors such as Susanna Rowson, George Lippard, and Rebecca Harding Davis a common trope for instigating an otherwise virtuous young woman's fall and for critiquing society's double standard for sexual conduct between men and women. Generally speaking, nineteenth-century courts, like nineteenth-century society, treated women who engaged in sexual activity without any promise of marriage as morally depraved "unsalvageable victims of their own degeneracy," regardless of the circumstances that may have led to their fall (i.e. rape). Authors such as Lippard and Davis, however, used the Gothic apparatus of living death and live burial to implicate societal norms in the perpetuation of fallen women's plight.

### **Biography**

Sarah Gray is an Assistant Professor of English at Missouri Valley College, USA, Secretary of the SCMLA Gothic panel, and co-organizer of conference activities for The Society for the Study of Rebecca Harding Davis and Her World. She earned her Ph.D. from Middle Tennessee State University where her dissertation examined the Gothic in nineteenth-century American reform writing. Her research continues to focus on American Gothic and reform fiction.

## **LUISA FERNANDA GRIJALVA MAZA**

The Power of Subaltern Women in the Gothic: How Hybridity Suspends the Horror/Terror Distinction in "Diablero"

### **Abstract**

Although men are also targets of demonic possession in films, it is women who are the common mark of possession/exorcism. What is it about women that makes them a target of this kind of domination? Explanations of the feminine in the Gothic allude to the potential transgressions of women's sexuality against the foundational heteronormative and patriarchal morality. Without denying this important element, I argue that an "other" reason can be found in the case of subaltern women in a context of postcoloniality and what Homi Bhabha terms "hybridity". A closer look at Postcolonial Gothic, in the Mexican Netflix series "Diablero", allows us to see that the power of women is related not only to a transgression, but to a suspension of the dominant and oppressive category of identity. I look closely at two female characters of the series, Nancy and Mamá Chabela. The former invites demons into her body and can expel them at will; the latter controls demons to do her bidding. What is interesting about these women is that through the demands of colonial hybridity, they have learned to suspend identity and move in an in-between plane where binaries collapse (terror and horror, mind and body, male and female, white/brown). To do this implies a potential suspension of traditional social relations and therefore a

refounding of the social matrix through different social encounters. The power of women, then, is one of deleuzian *becoming*, where horror and terror encounter each other to produce “other” Gothic mysteries.

## Biography

Luisa Grijalva has a PhD in Creation and Theories of Culture. Her research seeks to identify the potential political transformation of repetitive movement. In particular, she looks at the ways in which repetition can transform categorical and binary divisions between human and non-human animals. She is also the managing editor of *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society* (Routledge).

## KAREN GRUMBERG

Poe in (Jewish) Palestine: American Terror or European Horror?

### Abstract

Edgar Allan Poe is an anomaly in the history of the prolific Hebrew translation industry from the mid-nineteenth century to the late twentieth. As the only Gothic author to be translated to Hebrew until the 1980s, his writing was a fixture in pre-state Palestine and, later, in the Israeli school curriculum. Zionist culture, which emphasized mental and physical health, was not conducive to works that elicited anxiety and fear – emotions that Zionists sought to leave behind, in the Diaspora, as they constructed a strong New Jew in a Jewish state. The earliest Poe text to appear in Hebrew was “The Raven,” translated in 1914 by the man who would become the founder and fiery leader of Revisionist Zionism, the precursor to today’s right-wing Likud party – Vladimir Jabotinsky. His classic translation of “The Raven” linked Jabotinsky to Poe forevermore for Hebrew readers, who have grappled with his affinity to Poe. This presentation considers Poe’s positionality in Hebrew eyes as an author suspended between America and Europe, and argues that it constituted a key tension in the eyes of many of Poe’s Hebrew readers. Reading Poe as a European author meant understanding him primarily in the context of darkness, degeneracy, and death, a context antithetical to the Zionist project. Reading him as an American author, on the other hand, meant identifying him with the revolutionary, pioneering values of Zionism. Indexing America as the site of terror to be overcome and Europe as that of horror to be left behind, Hebrew readers mobilized Poe to political ends to legitimize their attraction to his seductive poems and stories.

## Biography

Karen Grumberg is Associate Professor in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies and the Program in Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at Austin. She has recently completed her second book, *Hebrew Gothic: History and the Poetics of Persecution*, to be published by Indiana University Press in September of this year. She is also guest-editing a special issue of *Poe Studies* on the subject of “Poe in the Middle East.”

# H

## BRENDA MANN HAMMACK

Reviving the Corpse Bride in Gothic Fairy Tale

### Abstract

Snow White’s glass-encased body could easily be mistaken for a wax cadaver used for medical training as Elisabeth Bronfen observes in *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (1992). The exiled princess might also be viewed as an analogue of the incorruptible saints, whose bodies remained inviolable after death. Does her figure retain the fascination it held as sanctified relic *after* the prince disrupts the prolonged trance?

This essay examines the ways in which contemporary fabulists challenge stagnating tropes, including that of the passive inviolability of princesses. In Robert D. San Souci's *Cinderella Skeleton*, for example, Prince Charnel seeks the anklebone that fits a footbone lost when a skinless lovely fled from his All Hallow's ball. Tim Burton's *Corpse Bride* adapts a Jewish folktale, in which a murdered woman resurrects from a fleshless finger. Angela Carter's "Snow Child" conflates two fairy tale princesses (Snow White and Sleeping Beauty), but the desired child does not revive after a necrophiliac assault, though her body transforms more passive aggressively than is usual with mythic rape victims.

Catherylene M. Valente's "The Maiden Tree" offers the most baroque and grotesque reimagining of the sleeping-dead beauty. In this retelling, Briar Rose narrates the process of her body's ruination and resurrection. A thorn punctures her foot. Vines entangle limbs. A wooden spindle mutates from her breast. This corpse flowers. Valente rewilds character as well as environment in this neo-Gothic adaptation of classic fairy tale.

## Biography

Brenda Mann Hammack serves as coordinator for the Concentration in Creative Writing at Fayetteville State University where she also teaches folklore, modern poetry, and women's literature. She has published scholarly articles on fiction by Florence Marryat, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, Algernon Blackwood, Umberto Eco and Karen Russell. Her first book (*Humbug: A Neo-Victorian Fantasy in Verse*) was released in 2013. Her poetry, short fiction, and photography have appeared in numerous literary journals including *Gargoyle*, *A capella Zoo*, *Menacing Hedge*, *805: Lit + Art*, *Anthropoid*, and *NILVX: A Book of Magic*. *The Fabulist* will be featuring a number of her self-estranged portraits in 2019. Hammack also leads online workshops at Poetry Barn and is managing editor and web designer for *Glint Literary Journal*.

## DAVID HANSEN

From Stoker to Seyfi: Turkey's Nationalist Version of Dracula through an Onomastic Lens

### Abstract

In 1928, the Turkish novelist, historian, and poet, Ali Riza Seyfi wrote "Kazıklı Voyvoda" (Vlad the Impaler), the first vampire novel in Turkish literature - published as an original story in Ottoman Turkish with no reference to Bram Stoker's novel. In transforming Stoker's gothic novel, Seyfi changed the characters' names for Turkish names, shifted the time and place of the story from 19th century Britain to Turkey in the 1920s, and changed the synchrony between the context and the meaning that created a "transcultural adaptation". As the novel's name suggests, Seyfi uses the historical character of Vlad Tepes and his connection to Turkish history as a means to combine the original European gothic aspects with a Turkish nationalist discourse to create a national identity.

This presentation will examine the historic and military motivations that led to Seyfi's remediation and uncover how the ideologies that paved the way for the language reform also created the perfect conditions to bring Stoker's fictionalized gothic form of Dracula into the modern Turkish cultural. Finally this presentation will demonstrate how the lens of onomastic study, when applied to the trajectory of Seyfi's remediations of Stoker's novel, illuminates a layered history concerning names as political signifiers beginning with the origins of the name Dracula, through Mustapha Kemal's adoption of the name Ataturk, and finally through to Seyfi himself and the shortening of his name in solidarity with the newly formed Turkish identity.

### Biographies

David Hansen is a native of Gladstone, MI and received his undergraduate degree at Northern Michigan University in English before taking a year off to tour with The Repertory Theatre of America. After the tour, David entered the Master's program at NMU and later went on to earn an additional Educational Specialist degree in Literacy Leadership. David is completing his education at Illinois State University where he is currently working on his Doctorate.

Co-researcher Mahide Demirci is originally from Turkey and has earned her M. A. and PhD in Linguistics from Michigan State University. She is specialized in "Sociolinguistics" and "Second Language Acquisition/TESOL". Her research areas include Social Psychology of Language, Language Attitudes, Perceptual Dialectology/Folk Linguistics, Language Policies and Planning, Language Ideology and Identity, Ideological Views of Language: the role of language in the construction of national, cultural, ethnic and religion identity, language standardization as formation of a national language.

## **KIN FAI HAO**

The Comic and the Radcliffean Terror in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

### **Abstract**

Many criticisms on the comic reversals in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* focus on its counteractive effect against the Gothic trope, making the comic equivalent to the "explained supernatural". Nevertheless, to categorize the Radcliffean comic as merely rational reflection fails to address its underlying affective and epistemological complexities. This paper argues that the Radcliffean comic serves for realizing the "terror" which Radcliffe proposes in *On the Supernatural in Poetry*. The Radcliffean comic originates from the works of Walpole and Shakespeare. In these Gothic predecessors the hybridity of genre between the serious and the comedic, as well as the hybridity of affect between terror and its dissipation by laughter, trigger an epistemological debate between neo-classicism and the Gothic aesthetics, which focuses on the capability of a hybrid genre to represent a transcendent vision of Truth. Signifying the generic and affective hybridity of the text, the comic in *Udolpho* possesses two contradictory impulses for the text's epistemology: on the one hand, it facilitates a vision on the epistemological synthesis between reason and imagination, which consummates with the Burkean sublime; on the other hand, it deflates the sublime through comic laughter and thus altogether dissolves the transcendent epistemological vision. The interplay between the affective-epistemological impulses contributes to the generation of the Radcliffean terror, as Radcliffe excites the pleasurable emotion of sublime terror with the Gothic trope but controls its intensity by deflating it with the comic reversal. This manipulation opens up a prospect of truth-through-imagination which she envisions in the Shakespearean dramas.

### **Biography**

Kin Fai Hao is a graduate student of University of California, Riverside. His research interests include Romanticism, Gothic literature and affect studies.

## **CARINA HART**

The Forest as Site of Gothic Eco-Terror, from Radcliffe and the Brothers Grimm to Ali Shaw

### **Abstract**

This paper argues that the motif of the forest has been central to the development of Gothic terror, which has therefore always included eco-terror within it. The forest is a meeting place for Gothic and fairy tale in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with Ann Radcliffe adapting semi-fictional tales of brigands haunting the forests of Germany in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794); the Brothers Grimm included similar tales such as "The Robber Bridegroom" and "The Castle of Murder" in their *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* of 1812. The labyrinthine darkness of the forest establishes it as a key site of unknown dangers and therefore an ideal location of Gothic terror. Jack Zipes (2002) has studied this function of the forest in historical Germany, as the last part of the landscape to remain commonly owned and unmapped in an era of growing industrialisation: this paper will further explore how the changing historical forest impacted its representation in Gothic fiction and visual art.

A historical understanding of the Gothic forest illuminates Ali Shaw's 2016 novel *The Trees*, a prime example of eco-Gothic contemporary fiction. In this text, the terrors of unknown climate change are

embodied in a threatening and supernatural forest that springs up across Britain and Europe overnight, turning eco-terror into a visceral eco-horror. Following centuries of global deforestation, Shaw's text registers the terror of a backlash from the natural world, modifying Gothic eco-terror to accommodate the guilt and alienation of contemporary human relations with the forest.

### **Biography**

Carina Hart is a Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Nottingham. She specializes in contemporary Gothic and fairy tale literature, and has also published on Romantic poetry and alchemy in contemporary fiction. She is guest-editing a special issue of *Gothic Studies* on Gothic Folklore and Fairy Tale, and working on a monograph, *Beastly Beauties: The Contemporary Gothic Fairy Tale*.

### **KATE HARVEY**

Sound Bites: The Media, Americana & Fear in John Marks's *Fangland*

#### **Abstract**

Media images are a powerful thing, and a difficult beast to kill. Many popular media images still relevant today are a product of the American marketing machine. Terrorist acts in this century are synonymous with the footage of the Twin Towers of 9/11. Trends of true reports vs 'fake news' are rampant in this current climate, but are they actually new? Has the media not always been the classic case of your side, their side and the truth?

In *Fangland*, the story is a retelling of Stoker's tale: what if Dracula had access to something as powerful as the American media? The story begins with Evangeline Harker, a reporter from New York heading to Romania to interview a notorious crime leader for an exposé. Her job is to assess if he would be eligible for the piece, most critically if he can speak English. From the start – the 'truth' of the piece has to conform to certain standards, so the authenticity is already doctored. Of course, this sense of superiority over the 'foreigner' does not bode well.

The fear of The Other is never far from consciousness; when Harker is travelling through Romania with Clemmie, a fellow Texan she meets along the way, her superstitious tales from her missionary days cause practical thinking Evangeline to become unnerved. The differing culture she finds herself in also unsettles her, so that when she finally meets the Romanian crime lord, the subsequent events are inevitable. Her faith in 'The American Way' is proven to be no more than an illusion, one created by her own media.

#### **Biography**

Kate Harvey has studied Gothic literature at Stirling University, having completed her Undergraduate and Masters degrees under the guidance of Dale Townshend and Glennis Byron.

She has had the privilege to have been selected to present papers at MMU's *Gothic Styles* conference, and at Trinity College, Dublin at their *Gothic Nature* conference, both in 2017. She has also presented at Sheffield University at their annual Reimagining the Gothic conference, the *Supernatural Cities* conference held at the University of Hertfordshire and the IGA in Manchester celebrating the *Frankenstein* bi-centennial in 2018.

## JASON HASLAM

“The electric feeling in the air”: Stoker’s Gothic Energies

### Abstract

This paper builds on earlier studies of Bram Stoker and energy industries to argue that *Dracula* (1897), especially when read through his earlier novel *The Snake’s Pass* (1890), employs Gothic, immaterial energies to highlight the unintended consequences of both an unwavering belief in new energy technologies, such as electricity, and an unyielding appeal to the past authority of older means of production. The paper will begin by referencing Derek Gladwin’s analysis of *The Snake’s Pass* as a primary source text of “bog gothic,” which carefully positions the novel in relation to debates over colonial appropriation of land and the use of peat as an indigenous energy source. But for Stoker, as I will argue, the bogs also serve as a fulcrum between different forms of energy extraction and use, and the ways in which those various energies enable and are enabled by the hidden but always present exploitation of human physical labour. Jesse Oak Taylor and Michael Niblett similarly point to *Dracula*’s engagement with energy culture, this reading can be expanded through a comparison to *The Snake’s Pass*’s canny rendering of multiple energy forms through its weaving of material science, energy production, and gothic myth.

Specifically, I read *Dracula*’s gothic rendering of coal against its equally gothic rendering of electricity. As David Punter writes, *Dracula* “stages a debate between” the forces of tradition and those of modernity, with each cast in a negative light. In terms of energy production, various past, extant, and burgeoning forms—and their discontents—abound in *Dracula*, but the brief but insistent representations of coal and electricity are especially significant. Coal is both a source of power for Dracula (as the spirit of consumption itself), and a tool that can be used against him: for example, Dracula is thought to hide in coal cellars, while a “heavy hammer, such as in households is used in the coal-cellar for breaking the lumps” is used to drive the fire-hardened stake into Lucy’s heart. Electricity, conversely, is only ever used by the vampire hunters: it is thus an enlightened force against the barbarous past, yes, but it is also always referenced as a new form of mysticism. Both past and present energy regimes are thus reified and mystified at once, with the physical labour involved in their production hidden but always present behind their never fully explicated “necessity.” Read through *The Snake’s Pass*, *Dracula*’s various forays into energy expose a concern about the hollow authority of social structures built on older technologies, and a fear of who will control—and to what purpose—the energies of the future.

### Biography

Jason Haslam is Professor of English at Dalhousie University and current co-president, with Justin Edwards, of the IGA. His research pivots around American cultural studies, with particular focuses on prison studies, popular culture, science fiction, and the gothic. He is the author or editor of several books, including the monograph *Gender, Race, and American Science Fiction*, the textbook *Thinking Popular Culture*, and the essay collection *American Gothic Culture*.

## LEAH HEIM

Monstrous *Jouissance*: Abjection and *Écriture Féminine* in Guillermo del Toro’s *Mama*

### Abstract

In “The Laugh of the Medusa,” Hélène Cixous illuminates her theories on *écriture féminine* with this powerful metaphor: “You only have to look at the Medusa straight on to see her. And she’s not deadly. She’s beautiful, and she’s laughing” (885). Cixous’ *écriture féminine* frightens proponents of patriarchy, who like Perseus can only walk backward towards it, unable to know its truths until they are willing to face the Other. It finds literal expression in female monsters, many of whom serve as challenges to patriarchal ontologies. On the flip side of this coin, however, is the female monster as, in Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s words, “an abjected fragment that enables the formation of [patriarchal] identities” (“Monster Culture:

Seven Theses" 19). How may the latter become the former? How may Medusa shake the gaze of Perseus and come into her laughing, beautiful self?

One female monster who has made this transformation is the titular character of the 2013 film *Mama*. The film tells of two little girls who are saved from death and raised by a monstrous woman they refer to as "Mama." After being recovered from the wilderness years later, the girls must abandon Mama. This paper uses the theories of Cixous and her contemporary Julia Kristeva to understand how a female monster like Mama can escape the pain of her abject monstrification and rise into the place of love and beauty envisioned by Cixous in her laughing Medusa.

## Biography

Leah Heim is currently applying to graduate programs in English as she completes her senior year as a Literature major at Ball State University. Her published works include "On Fungi, Future, and Feminism: An Ecofeminist Analysis of M.R. Carey's *The Girl with All the Gifts*" (*The Digital Literature Review*, an international undergraduate research journal) and "Women's Work," a short nonfiction essay (*The Oakland Arts Review*, an international undergraduate arts journal). She has presented her research twice at Butler University's Undergraduate Research Conference. Additionally, she has worked as a lead editor for the *Digital Literature Review* and as a lead copyeditor for *Stance: An International Undergraduate Philosophy Journal*. The core of her theoretical interest revolves around Kristevan psychoanalysis, religion, and ecofeminism, and she is particularly fascinated in how literature of both "high" and "low" forms expresses, addresses, and even heals difficult cultural disagreements and traumas.

## KATHARINA HENDRICKX

Twenty-First Century Domestic Noir and the Literary Legacy of the Female and Male gothic

### Abstract

The female gothic's continued popularity is evident in the multiple modern adaptations of novels such as *Jane Eyre* (1847). In the second decade of the 21st century a variation of the female gothic has become popular, the crime fiction subgenre of domestic noir, which commonly features novels on bestseller lists. Domestic noir presents many narrative elements of the female gothic including the heroine being confined in a house and threatened by a male figure. However, domestic noir does not conform fully to the conventions of female gothic novels but also engages with elements typically associated with male gothic narratives such as open endings, multiple points of view and concrete supernatural elements.

Like the female gothic of the 19th century, domestic noir also narrates female fears around marriage, the domestic space and gendered violence but shifts them firmly into today's political climate with its feminist movements such as #MeToo. Rooted in everyday life experiences, domestic noir uses terror to build suspense but also utilises elements of horror to represent the gruesome reality of domestic and sexual violence against women.

Drawing on the continuities and distinctions between the female gothic and domestic noir, this paper looks at two recent examples of bestselling domestic noir novels, *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and *The Girl Before* (2017), and examines how these two novels blur narrative elements of both male and female gothic, terror and horror, destabilising these categories.

## Biography

Katharina Hendrickx is a Doctoral Researcher in Cultural and Media Studies at the University of Sussex investigating the literary phenomenon of domestic noir. Katharina's research interests include crime fiction, the gothic and audience research.

## KALA HIRTLE

*Blackwood's* Early, Gothic Tales of Taphephobia

### Abstract

In terms of gothic literature, while *Blackwood's* may be best remembered for publishing Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Dickens' stories, the magazine has a history of publishing gothic and supernatural tales, which were later collected by Robert Morrison and Chris Baldick in *Tales of Terror from Blackwood's Magazine* (1995). My proposed paper, "*Blackwood's* Early, Gothic Tales of Taphephobia," explores the relationship between the gothic short stories *Blackwood's* published, like Daniel Keyte Sandford's "A Night in the Catacombs" (October 1818), John Gault's "The Buried Alive" (October 1821) and Henry Thomson's "Le Revenant" (April 1827), and the fears, expressed as either Radcliffean terror or Lewisite horror, grounded in medical innovation and experimentation, that were circulating at the time (Bondeson, Redkope, Segerblad). Although it wasn't until 1919 that Freud coined the fear of premature burial "taphephobia," which he defined as "linked to wider terrors related to the un/dead" (241), early-nineteenth century writers used their short stories to examine such liminal or altered states. My paper will also draw on non-fiction published in *Blackwood* to illustrate other ways that the magazine engaged with the fear of premature burial, such as the series of articles written by Herbert Mayo (1846), "Letters on the Truths contained in Popular Superstitions," and published reviews of contemporary books, such as Joseph Taylor's *The Dangers of Premature Internment* (1816) and John Snart's *The Thesaurus of Horror* (1817). My paper aims to analyze both short fiction and non-fiction published in *Blackwood's* that engaged with the fear of premature burial and issues surrounding burial practice changes in the early nineteenth-century and the ways they invoke terror and horror.

### Biography

Kala Hirtle is a Killam-funded doctoral candidate in English at Dalhousie University. Her dissertation builds on her interest in medical humanities and is tentatively titled "Altered States of Consciousness: Gender, Nineteenth-Century Medical Discourse and Gothic Literature." Her most recent publication can be found in *African American Review*.

## MELISSA HOLTON

Teaching the Gothic in a Community College Honors Program

### Abstract

How does a teacher of gothic literature transmit her deepest passions about literary creation and ignite interest in students who don't think of themselves as scholars, and, more particularly, as Gothic scholars? I began teaching a course I created, Honors Gothic Literature: Gothic Literature and Its Popular Accomplices, in 2010. ACC's Honors Program was established already, but I had to think about how best to offer the course to students who had likely never taken a literature class before, and yet were qualified to participate in the Honors Program. I also had to comply with course mandated learning outcomes and college wide goals of integrated research, service learning and diversity. My short paper will explore the best practices I have used in my community college honors program Gothic Literature course, and will also discuss why certain activities/readings didn't work out as planned. I will speak to trying to hold the slippery space of gothic literature open for inexperienced students. I will also discuss the various ways I have tried to decolonize the writers included on the syllabus and to increase engagement for a diverse community college student base. One best practice category would be activities, including musical performances, gothic literature puppet shows, ghost tours, and viewings of archival materials (including manuscripts and first editions) at the Harry Ransom Center. Each of these has invested my students in the learning process by incorporating an experiential understanding of the gothic. Currently I plan to add a service learning component to the course by offering a blood donation field trip.

## **Biography**

Professor Melissa Holton has taught at Austin Community College since 1993. Her B.A. is from The University of Texas at Austin, and her M.A. is from The University of Houston. She has taught Gothic Literature in the ACC Honors Program since 2010, and her work on David Foster Wallace and the Gothic is published in conference proceedings from the David Foster Wallace Conference in 2016.

## **ALEXANDREA HORTON**

Gender Roles, Patriarchy, and Serial Killers in the Dramatic Monologues of Carol Ann Duffy

### **Abstract**

In two of her dramatic monologues, British poet Carol Ann Duffy, explores the minds of two distinctive serial killers and their unique interpretations and recollections of their horrific offenses. Examining Duffy's, "Psychopath" and "The Devil's Wife" through the lens of feminist theory, reveals a startling reversal of patriarchal status quo. Building upon the work of Ellen Moers and Donna Mitchell, my study will investigate Duffy's complex views on the role of patriarchy in democratic, albeit male centric cultures. Duffy portrays the female serial killer as guiltless and manipulative while portraying the male serial killer as aggressive and boastful. Reading the serial killers' behaviors through the lenses of feminist theory and role theory, Duffy solidifies her place in challenging the patriarchy and gender role expectations of American society. A parallel analysis of these particular works, posits the implications of Duffy's stylistic choices and their correlation with the perceptions and expectations of the gender roles that have been ingrained in American society for centuries. Rather than portraying American patriarchy as a sign of weakness in women, Duffy offers her own representation by purposefully choosing to have the female serial killer in her dramatic monologue, "The Devil's Wife," manipulate this perception to her advantage. Duffy uses the power of patriarchy in the United States, to upend its common stereotype. Using this strategy, Duffy's female serial killer in, "The Devil's Wife," persuades her audience to believe her plea of innocence. Duffy continues to utilize the role of American patriarchy to the female advantage in the boastful confession of the male serial killer in her dramatic monologue, "Psychopath," ultimately rendering the female victims and their families' justice. The study reveals how the horrors of the nation extend beyond the physical and metaphysical realms of the gothic, burying itself deep within American culture.

## **Biography**

Alexandrea Horton is a candidate for a Doctor of Education in Interdisciplinary Leadership in Higher Education Administration at Governors State University. Presently serving as a Dual Enrollment Instructor and Adjunct Professor for Advanced Composition and World Literature through Crown Point High School and Purdue Northwest University, she purposefully incorporates various gothic texts within her curricula – guiding her students in the examination of the writing styles, languages, and gothic themes of diverse cultures. In 2015, she received her Masters of Art in English with a concentration of gothic literature, writing an extensive graduate thesis on "19th Century Gothic Inspiration: Investigating the Next Generation of Poes." She has since presented aspects of this gothic research at Governor State University's Research Day Conference, focusing on the implications of Poe's relevance to and importance in the American education system.

## **KATHLEEN HUDSON**

"Monsters of the imagination": The Gothic Servant as a "Terrorist" Author

### **Abstract**

The early Gothic mode in the late 18th century inspired an ongoing discourse on the nature of 'terror' and its literary value and did so through an engagement with the social and political boundaries which made up contemporary domestic hierarchy. Critics both celebrated and lamented the emergence of so-called 'terrorist' novel writing, suggesting that "it is to no great purpose, indeed, that we have forbidden our

servants from telling the children stories of ghosts and hobgoblins, if we cannot put a novel into their hands which is not filled with monsters of the imagination.” The cultural characterization of servants and their stories as pseudo-originators of Gothic ‘terrorist’ writing allows individual Gothic authors explore and defend ‘terror’ as a potentially elevating and edifying form of expression by including servant characters in their texts. Servants in Gothic novels construct metonymic tales of the supernatural through fragmentary narratives which tap into a historical legacy of oral storytelling, echo the discursive strategies found in the novel form, and inspire rational irrationality, emotionality, and “monsters of the imagination” in young minds. Therein, they provide a cultural context for ‘terror’ and explore the inner machinery of the Gothic story by exposing individual emotional responses. This paper will examine how ‘terrorist’ novel writing overlapped with social fears of domestic violation at the hands of servants, and, using an excerpt from Regina Maria Roche’s 1798 novel *Clermont* as a case study, how early Gothic authors used servant characters to explore the nature of Gothic storytelling.

## Biography

Kathleen Hudson is an adjunct faculty member at Anne Arundel Community College. She is a graduate of the University of Scranton and the University of Sheffield and is the author of *Servants and the Gothic: 1764-1831*.

## JOYCE HUFF

The Fat Uncanny: Abjection and the “Phantom of Fat”

### Abstract

In the gothic genre, fat is intimately associated with horror. A central element of the iconography of the grotesque, fatness recalls Kelly Hurley’s notion of gothic materiality in that, when fatness enters a text, it forces a visceral confrontation with “the inescapable fact of embodied-ness’ and ‘the ineluctability of matter that resists and exceeds form” (*The Gothic Body* 31). Indeed, fat, like the gothic, is culturally defined through the notion of excess.

Yet, in works of fictions throughout the last century, abjected fatness has been made an object of terror. Playing on the term “phantom limb,” Katariina Kyrölä identifies a phenomenon she labels “the phantom of fat”: the notion that, in a culture that abjects fat from its image of the acceptable body, fear of gaining weight turns fatness into a threatening apparition, a “corporeality that persistently haunts all bodies” (*The Weight of Images* 29). While Kyrölä uses the language of phantoms and hauntings metaphorically, the texts I propose to examine present abjected fatness as a source of uncanny terror that threatens the boundaries of the body. From H. G. Wells’s “The Truth about Pyecraft” (1903), in which abjected fat takes a supernatural form, to Ray Bradbury’s “Skeleton” (1945), in which fat is what remains when the body’s structure is abjected, to Shelley Jackson’s “Fat” (2002), in which abjected fat literally falls from the sky, repressed fat threatens to return and haunt the body, reminding us of the inevitable grotesquerie, flux, and materiality of embodied existence.

## Biography

Joyce L. Huff is Associate Professor of English at Ball State University. She is co-editor of *A Cultural History of Disability in the Nineteenth Century*, forthcoming from Bloomsbury press. She has published on fatness in works such as *The Fat Studies Reader* (NYU), *Bodies Out of Bounds* (U of California), and *Victorian Freaks* (Ohio State). Her work includes two essays on gothic and horror fiction: “The Domesticated Monster: Freakishness and Masculinity in Fitz-James O’Brien’s ‘What Was It?’” in *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*, and “Fosco’s Fat Drag: Performing the Victorian Fat Man in Wilkie Collins’s *The Woman in White*” in *Historicizing Fat* (Ohio State).

## VICTORIA HUNDLEY

Mann's Modern Gothic Monsters

### Abstract

It is only within recent decades that scholars have attempted an intentional study of the Gothic in modernist fiction, so perhaps it is not surprising that scholarship on Thomas Mann's use of the Gothic is not readily available. Examining the Gothic influence on traditional romantic narratives in contrast to Thomas Mann's modern novellas shows how the Gothic adapts to support first romantic then modern aesthetics. In *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *Death in Venice*, and *The Black Swan*, the Gothic pervades both the monsters and their settings, theoretically making the two inseparable. This study of Gothic monsters aims to illustrate the harmonious relationship of the Gothic and Mann's modernist style with the hope that future scholars will frame discussions of the Gothic with Modernist Gothic narratives alongside foundational Romantic Gothic texts.

### Biography

Victoria Hundley will be completing her MA degree in English at University of North Carolina Greensboro in May 2019. Her research interests include twentieth and twenty-first century literature with a focus on pop culture.

## ZITA HÜSING

Investigating Gothic Bodies in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*

### Abstract

In Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, human and non-human bodies in various forms play a crucial role in emphasizing the transcendent nature of the narrative. Arguably, voices of the dead or ghosts are Gothic bodily instances of overcoming binaries between the invisible, outer-worldliness of the dead and the protagonist Tituba's realm of the living. Additionally, within the narrative, dark slave bodies function as a symbol for transgressing further divides between objects and subjects. These transgressions are accentuated throughout the novel by recurring descriptions of the pregnant body, the dying body, and the horrific abstract body. Furthermore, the carnal body is introduced with Tituba's unsatiated sexual desires. While meshing these forms of bodily definition, a new one emerges: the 'Gothic body,' which also entails definitions of Mikhail Bakhtin's grotesque body. It is important to ask how the construction of such 'othered' bodies compliments the reading of the novel as a (Southern) American Gothic work. Thus, my aim is to investigate the functioning of bodies throughout Condé's work while especially focusing on Tituba's development. A form of bodily haunting reappears and repeats itself in Condé's work which makes it comparable to other Southern Gothic works such as Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. Throughout Condé's novel, Tituba is becoming a "non-being" form of the Other (Condé 24). By transcending thresholds, she takes up ontological questions of being. By especially focusing on her body I will question if she exceeds our own human grasp of the being of the world and if she thus successfully moves away from anthropocentric notions of existence. In the context of this scholarly endeavor, I will consider theorists such as Ian Conrich and Laura Sedgwick as well as Kelly Hurley. I am also attempting to connect my insight to the investigation of the Southern Gothic scholar Patricia Yaeger.

### Biography

Zita Hüsing is a PhD candidate in English at Louisiana State University. She received her M.A. in English Literatures and Cultures and her M.A. in North American Studies from the University of Bonn in Germany. Her research interests include American and specifically Southern Studies as well as theories surrounding the Posthuman, Ecocriticism and the school of thought concerned with Object-oriented Ontology. For her master thesis she investigated the transformation of definitions of the human due to interactions with technologies in the television shows *Black Mirror* and *Westworld*. Zita is the social co-

chair of the English Graduate Student Association at LSU and assists organizing the Delta Mouth Literary Festival while functioning as the website manager and social media coordinator.

## J

### MAYSAA JABER

Horror, Trauma and the Female Serial Killer in Stephen King's Fiction

#### Abstract

Described as “a paradox of the heart” (Barbault 2006:131), horror is a genre that brings forth many untold and unseen realities; it is a genre that speaks to a plethora of emotions and unravels some aspects of the human psyche that are otherwise locked and well-masked. Stephen King's work crystalizes these emotions and human reactions in the face of uncontrollable and overpowering forces. King's work also addresses trauma in the forms of abuse, violence, murder, facing supernatural powers and creatures, among other things. Like horror, trauma is about overwhelming experiences that are hard to process, disruptive and full of fragments and gaps. Both horror and trauma address intense emotions like shock, fear, guilt; hence the techniques that horror uses become aptly appropriate to dramatize trauma. King creates a recipe that connects both horror and trauma where one feeds off the other and opens up a new space – the horror/trauma space to tell stories of the unspeakable, the unrepresentable, the untold.

One of these aspects that are difficult to decipher and depict is violent women; particularly the female serial killer. She is the ultimate transgression and disruption of conventional gender roles and societal norms. What King succeeds in doing, however, is bringing unlikely elements together where shocking representations of women speak to not only issues of trauma, abuse, fear and horror but also to wider issues of power, agency and gender roles. And while King has been accused of using stereotypes of female roles, yet a closer look at novels such *Carrie*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *Rose Madder*, *And Lisey's Story* shows that there are female characters who not only have depth and are the central characters, but also present the amalgamation of trauma and horror in narratives of serial murder. The representation of the *female* serial killer pushes the boundaries and generic conventions of horror where the female is usually the victim, to transcend into the domain of trauma. I would like to argue that it is within the trauma/horror space that these women are positioned and where they negotiate and navigate gender roles as well as dynamics of power, agency and violence. The many seemingly "evil" women in King actually fall both within and outside the parameters of the horror genre to occupy a new dimension where trauma and horror meet.

By examining female characters such as Carrie White in *Carrie*; Annie Wilkes from *Misery*, Dolores Claiborne in the titular book, Mother Carmody in *The Mist*, I argue that in his representations of the female serial killer/victim, King's fiction focuses on trauma more than horror. These representations create a new space to see the connectedness between the trauma and horror in a way that invites to re-assess the genre and generic conventions in which King writes as well as the question of the portrayal of women within these generic norms. Trauma is not only central to the plot and characterization of King's narratives but it is also foundation on which the "horror" of the portrayal of the serial killer stands. Horror is a catalyst and medium to speak about the unspeakable; trauma, and by positioning trauma at the heart of his narratives, King destabilizes and problematizes clichés about serial killers and female violence as well as those about conventional depictions of horror heroines.

#### Biography

Maysaa Jaber completed a PhD in English and American Studies from the University of Manchester, UK in 2011. Her doctoral work examined literary representations of criminal femmes fatales in American hardboiled crime fiction in relation to medico-legal work on criminality, gender, and sexuality. Now she is a lecturer at the University of Baghdad where she teaches different modules on literature to undergraduate and postgraduate students. She was a fellow in The University of Massachusetts Boston from September

to November 2013, and the recipient of fellowship in the International Visitor Leadership Program in the US in 2017. She published with Palgrave, Cambridge Scholars, *The Arab World English Journal*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, and *The Canadian Review of American Studies*. Her first manuscript *The Criminal Femmes Fatales in American Hardboiled Crime Fiction* came out in November 2015 with Palgrave Macmillan.

## ELIZABETH JEMAR

Terrorized Women: Suspense and Terror in Ann Radcliffe's Gothic Romances

### Abstract

With eighteenth-century critics considering terrifying and horrific Gothic novels too scandalous for the public, one author challenges the stereotype. Ann Radcliffe links terror with sympathy, creating distressing scenes with a positive psychological function. Radcliffe teaches her readers how to cope in times of crisis. Analyzing Radcliffe's female protagonists reveals how suspenseful and terrifying situations strengthen and positively impact the victims. Her first novel, *Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, introduces Mary of Athlin, who survives two kidnappings, a blackmailed engagement, and endless melancholy resulting from her brother's imprisonment. Mary's terrifying encounters bring out her underlying selflessness. *A Sicilian Romance* focuses on Julia of Mazzini's misadventures involving an arranged marriage, imprisonment, kidnapping, and a shipwreck. She maintains sensibility and strength soaring above difficulties. Using her sublime genius, Adeline de Montalt, in *The Romance of the Forest*, rebels against confinement, defends herself in court, and creates her own happy ending. Her genius is revealed through rejection, abandonment, kidnapping, and threatening ruffians. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Emily St Aubert is orphaned, escapes imprisonment, and survives a shipwreck. Emily's faith gives her the ability to find hope and strength to survive, escape, and regain her inheritance. *The Italian* follows the orphan Ellena Rosalba who stays true to herself, marrying for love not safety, while her suitor's family plots her death. Exhibiting virtuous traits such as selflessness, strength, genius, faith, and morality, these female protagonists encourage readers to stand resolute during distress. Ann Radcliffe establishes an emotionally positive Gothic legacy that inspires writers for generations.

### Biography

Elizabeth Jemar is a literary adventurer working as an Associate Customer Content Specialist for PR Newswire in Albuquerque, NM. She earned a Masters of Arts in English at Wayland Baptist University, where her thesis focused on Gothic literature. She has a Bachelor of Science in English Education from Mayville State University. Prior to pursuing an editing career in Albuquerque, Elizabeth was an adjunct instructor in Anchorage, AK teaching English Composition and Rhetoric, Composition and Reading, and advanced literature classes. While she enjoys editing, she aspires to teach English as a full-time professor.

## K

## COLLEEN KARN

From Horror to Terror: American Transmediations of *Frankenstein*

### Abstract

200 years ago, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, a British Gothic horror narrative, was the big bang from which Frankenworld was created. Frankenworld is comprised of hundreds of transmediated versions of Shelley's narrative and characters. When Frankenworld expanded across the Atlantic, American storytellers—writers, directors, and producers—reincarnated the narrative and its monsters—human and creature alike—to suit the needs of the American populace. The evolution of the narrative, especially the monsters, has steadily progressed from horror to terror, not that the two were ever mutually exclusive

because they exist, I posit, on a horror-terror continuum. This presentation will explore the American transmediations of this Gothic tale focusing on the early films that were on the horror end of the continuum and how they evolved into the contemporary television programs that have swung to the terror end of the continuum. Additionally, the gender and sexuality of the monsters will be examined to better understand the use of horror versus terror, as well as the contemporary need for women and members of the LGBTQ community to be represented by an ill-treated, Frankensteinian, monster—the monster made by society. Due to the continued growth of Frankenworld by the constant creation of Frankensteinian cultural texts, we need to ask: why do storytellers keep going back to *Frankenstein* to tell their stories and teach their lessons? Why do storytellers keep using *Frankenstein* to represent the plight of the othered? Why do Others terrify us so much?

## Biography

Colleen Karn is working on her doctorate from Illinois State University in English Studies with a focus on Literary and Cultural Studies and certificate in Women and Gender studies. Her research focuses on the non-traditional use of monsters in cultural texts with a specific interest in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, horror television, and the works of Guillermo del Toro. Much of her work falls into what she calls "Frankenworld," for which she created a website: [www.monsterculture.org](http://www.monsterculture.org).

## DANIEL KASPER

The Lesbian Vampire in Henry James's *The Bostonians*

### Abstract

Denigrated in its own time by critics, the author's brother, and the author himself, Henry James's *The Bostonians* is a singular novel among his oeuvre for at least one reason: the love triangle plot that James employs in many of his novels is in *The Bostonians* fought between not a man and a man over a woman (as in *Roderick Hudson*), or a woman and a woman over a man (as in *The Wings of a Dove*), but between a man and woman over a woman. Inaugurating, as Natasha Hurley argues, a particular strand of the lesbian novel, *The Bostonians* positions two cousins, Basil Ransom and Olive Chancellor, as a doubled/mirrored pair of competitors for marriage with Verena Tarrant. In making such an arrangement, James (perhaps unintentionally?) recreates the narrative offered by Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* by positioning both Olive and Basil as quasi-vampiric characters. Both use a symbolic version of vampiric traits in order to control and deploy Verena's strangely hypnotic voice for their own political ends. Though the conclusion of the novel might seem to foreclose the possibility of lesbian existence, the deployment of Olive as semi-vampiric in her sexual competition with Basil actually showcases the queer possibilities of nineteenth century Anglo-American society.

## Biography

Daniel Kasper is a PhD Candidate at the University of Arizona, currently at work on his dissertation "Biopolitics, Female Choice, and Eugenics: English and American Fiction, 1871-1916." His research interests include The Gothic, biopolitics, feminist and women's studies, the political impact of the novel, and African American fiction.

## ADAM KEALLEY

"A Strange Madness": The Horror of the Lost Child in Australian Gothic YA Fiction

### Abstract

The lost child motif haunts the Australian cultural imagination, and is particularly evident within its Gothic tradition. The Australian Gothic has typically explored the anxieties of a settler society situated uneasily within an uncanny landscape; a dislocation arising from isolation, subsistence living and a fear of retribution from a dispossessed indigenous culture. Tales of children lost to the bush represented a fear

of the nascent nation's failure, frequently operating as a discursive strategy to legitimise white settlement by overwriting the realities of indigenous loss. By the mid-twentieth century, however, the lost child motif represented a new horror: predatory adults and the failures of institutions supposed to protect both white and indigenous children. In contemporary works, children no longer just disappear into the bush, but are lost to institutional abuse, forced removal by government agencies and the breakdown of the family unit. Australian Gothic authors such as Gary Crew, Sonya Hartnett, David Metzenthen and Louis Nowra have adapted this motif to explore the uneasy coming of age of their adolescent protagonists. Iconic Australian settings such as the vast interior, tangled bushlands and wild coastlines serve as sites of sublime terror, as protagonists are confronted by both Australia's brutal history and the horrors of contemporary abuses against children. These authors reveal the haunting effects of settler colonialism in shaping the Australian landscape as a place of Gothic terror, symbols of a culture in which children continue to be physically and psychologically lost.

## Biography

Adam Kealley is a graduate student undertaking a PhD as part of a collaboration between Curtin University, Western Australia and the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. His thesis explores the role of convictism on shaping homophobia in Australia, and its haunting effects on the contemporary queer young adult subject. He was awarded the 2016 *Children's Literature in Education* Emerging Scholar Award for his paper "Escaping Adolescence: Sonya Hartnett's *Surrender* as a Gothic Bildungsroman for the Twenty-First Century" and has been published in *Interpretations*, *Axon: Creative Explorations* and the creative anthology, *Pause*. The author would like to acknowledge the contribution of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship in supporting this research.

## KAY KEEGAN

Uncanny Architecture and Domestic Horror in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*

### Abstract

This conference paper examines the Blackwood estate in Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* in conversation with Anthony Vidler's *The Architectural Uncanny*. Vidler explores aspects of architecture through notions of the uncanny and interprets the unsettling qualities of modern architecture, reflecting on questions of social and individual estrangement, alienation, and exile. I argue that Vidler's interpretations help us better understand Jackson's use of fantasy and verisimilitude on a craft level in her construction of the novella's setting and atmosphere, and a narrative structure that continuously contracts inward upon itself. The structure of the book is deeply resonant due to the sense of isolation Jackson felt living in New England with her family and how she eventually suffered from agoraphobia during the time she wrote *Castle*. The physical space that the Blackwood family occupies within the text becomes smaller and smaller, and subsequently more violent. These specific details lend themselves to the domestic horror genre Jackson cultivated during her writing career.

## Biography

Kay Keegan is a PhD student at Ohio University. Her area of study is creative nonfiction writing, where she often writes personal narrative essays, as well as investigate pop culture phenomena, and the intersections of baseball and contemporary romance. In her spare time she enjoys researching Shirley Jackson and her contributions to American Gothic literature. The best literature class she ever took was on the uncanny novella, taught by Marjorie Sandor at Oregon State University, where she received her MFA in creative writing.

## RAQUEL KELLER

The Cannibal and the Feminine in the New French Extremity Films and in *Raw*

### Abstract

The cannibal element has been a presence in western narratives since Ancient Greece and its form of presentation varies from shamanic rituals to a cultural appropriation of the *other*, as in the case of the *Anthropophagous Manifesto* by the Brazilian writer Oswald de Andrade. The theme cannibalism has shown itself, synchronic and diachronically, as an interestingly cultural, economic, social and, above all, literary and filmic narrative. In this work, I investigate the anthropophagous nuances motivating interest for cannibalism's current consumption in terror narratives, more specifically the so-called body horror kind of film. If, anthropologically considered, the theme has presented itself and still presents as a culturally situated characteristic, fictionally, it proves to be omnipresent in TV series, books and films, bending to terror or comedy. The study makes use of the feminist theory in order to verify the relation between the cannibal element and the feminine, going through the concept of body genre by Linda Williams. Finally, the work will visit narratives whose theme is cannibalism, such as the films in the New French Extremity movement, to the moment one gets to the film *Raw* (2017) by the movie director Julia Ducournau, which brings the combination of feminine and cannibal.

### Biography

Raquel Maysa Keller is a PhD candidate at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil, in Literature and Cinema. She has been studying Brazilian Literature and English Language Literatures and is currently interested in feminist criticism and its intersection with horror films, particularly in the way recent films have portrayed women.

## JONGKEYONG KIM

Distant Reading of Terror, Horror, and Sublime in Gothic Novel 1764-1991

### Abstract

Since its introduction to literary studies, distant reading, as a research method and theme, has enabled literary scholars to test existing axioms in literary studies, such as canonicity or creativity. For instance, Jodie Archer and Matthew L. Jockers's *The Bestseller Code: Anatomy of the Blockbuster* (2016) has debunked a popular myth about twenty thousand bestseller fictions on *New York Times* bestseller list by using text-mining research on a matrix of codes that structure novels destined to success. This project aims to re-consider the purported distinction between terror and horror through a computational analysis of collocates (proximity of each keyword) and correlations (the extent to which keyword frequencies vary in sync) of the terms 'terror,' 'horror,' and 'sublime' in the eighteen key Gothic novels provided in *The Gothic* (2004) by David Punter and Glennis Byron. Radcliffe's distinction between terror and horror is grounded on her idea of the sublime experience sparked by terror. Is her claim applicable to even Lewis's *The Monk* or to the other major Gothic fictions? Does her idea of terror and horror resonate with Steven King's distinction? Voyant, web-based application for performing text analysis, and R, a computational language and environment for statistical computing and graphics, allow us to visualize textual context in which terror, horror, and sublime diverge and converge, thereby diachronically examining a tendency for the usage of these terms in major Gothic texts across periods and origins of the writers. The corpus for this project includes *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), *Vathek* (1786), *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), *Caleb Williams* (1794), *The Monk* (1796), *Frankenstein* (1818), *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), *Wuthering Heights* (1847), *The Woman in White* (1860), *Uncle Silas* (1864), *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), *Dracula* (1897), *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), *Psycho* (1959), *Interview with the Vampire* (1976), *The Shining* (1977), and *American Psycho* (1991).

## Biography

Jongkeyong Kim, Ph. D. candidate at the department of English at Texas Christian University, US, is currently working on topics associated with objects and technology in the Gothic literature in the long nineteenth-century British literature, 1764-1910. His concerns span Speculative Realism, New Materialism, Object-oriented Ontology, Posthumanism, Digital Humanities, and ICT. He has published "A Study of Narrative Structure of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*: Doors, Hide-and-Seek, and "Liquid Fear"" (2015) and co-authored "The Spatial Form of Ghost Stories: "The Jolly Corner" and "The Demon Lover"" (2015). His selected presentations include "Robotic ghostlike 'thing' in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*" (2018) and "The Evolution of Apparitions: The Ghosts, Spectres, and "Cybernetic Ghosts"" (2018).

## NEAL KIRK

Networked Spectrality as Challenge to Neoconservatism in *CSI: Cyber*

### Abstract

*CSI: Cyber*, the shortest-lived instalment of the previously successful and long-running *CSI* television franchise, inherits a stylised and formulaic focus on the forensic evidence gathered by capable agents who, through their knowledge, skill and intuition are able to solve the weekly episodic crime. I argue that the intended reading of the relentless solution of the cybercrimes each week endorses a neoconservative political ideology of assurance wrought by the State's committed use of an expansive and effective theatre of security and surveillance. Blake and Aldana Reyes (2016) find that constant exposure to digital surveillance, data tracking, and neoliberal political ideologies that valorise digital technologies has solidified a horror of the digital in the increasingly globally networked collective consciousness of film producers and audiences, and that the aesthetics of our technologies are being reflected in our cultural productions in the tone of digital horror.

My innovative networked spectrality methodology helps reveal that despite *Cyber's* attempts to shut down associations with the spectral and prioritise a focus on evidence and police procedure, it shifts the roles once attributed to ghosts to hackers, the State and its agents. A networked spectrality reading of *Cyber* thus undercuts the intended neoconservative political reading in favour of the contemporary digital horror of the overreaches of an opaque, State controlled technical surveillance and security network.

## Biography

Neal Kirk received his Ph.D. from Lancaster University. His work is included in the collections, *Digital Horror: Haunted Technologies, Network Panic and the Found Footage Phenomenon* (Aldana-Reyes and Blake, 2016) and *Gothic and Death* (Carol Margaret Davison, 2016) and the forthcoming *Gothic and the Arts* (Punter). Neal is currently a lecturer in Film and Digital Media Production at Plymouth College of Art. Neal has thought in Sociology, Media and Cultural studies, and English literature and continues to explore digital media and culture and contemporary Gothic scholarship.

## CYNTHIA KLEKAR-CUNNINGHAM

The Agency of Absence in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

### Abstract

This paper analyzes how Mary Shelley's novel, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*, disrupts the boundary between absence and presence and dramatizes the agency of absence and its role in constituting the self. Drawing on recent work in Thing Theory and philosophies of absence, my discussion of Shelley's novel enables new readings of the immaterial and transcendent in Gothic fiction. I begin by showing how material objects in the novel, such as letters, frames, pictures, and body parts, that seemingly establish a corporeal presence for both the living and the dead, fail to stabilize the

present/absent binary or provide meaning and representation in presence. Rather, symptoms of absence—longing, abstention, negation—in the novel locate both a simultaneity of presence and absence (absence that is always present and a potential presence in absence) and agency in the immaterial and ambiguous. Absence, therefore, is a concept in Shelley's novel that ranges beyond registers of loss or lack or not being and becomes a "thing" deployed to constitute social, emotional, and political selfhood within a Gothicized environment.

## Biography

Cynthia Klekar is Associate Professor of English at Western Michigan University, and the author of *The Culture of the Gift in Eighteenth-Century England* (Palgrave Macmillan).

## ASHLEY KNISS

"Let us be ended by wild beasts": American Ecohorror in Harriet Prescott Spofford's "Circumstance"

### Abstract

Rather than the Old World's "castles and chimeras," America's gothic fictions exist in the howling wilderness of the New World, an untamed natural setting that lends itself to the ecohorror construct. Ecohorror emerges out of early American literature when authors explore the visceral fear of physical annihilation. Harriet Prescott Spofford's "Circumstance" (1860) is a prime example of ecohorror, in which the non-human world of nature threatens the integrity of the body. Spofford's text depicts a woman's violent encounter with a panther in the forest. In one particularly compelling scene, the woman describes her anguish at the thought of becoming the beast once he devours her. This fear represents a key anxiety within ecohorror texts—blurred distinctions between human and non-human. The woman only survives by exhibiting her faith, singing hymns all night to lull the beast to sleep. In Spofford's tale, as in many early American ecohorror texts, the natural world is characterized in opposition to religious beliefs. The woman in the tale survives nature's attack through her faith, demonstrating the biblical promise of humankind's dominion over the natural world. This narrative highlights a common sentiment of ecogothic literature set in the American wilderness: that humankind is superior to and separate from the non-human world of nature. This uniquely-American blending of religion and self is problematic, as it prevents an ethic of integration in which the environment is not an external evil—as represented by Spofford's panther—but is instead an integral part of the body and human identity.

## Biography

Ashley Kniss is a spring 2017 graduate of The Catholic University of America and a full-time lecturer at Stevenson University. Her areas of specialization include the American gothic, narratives of apocalypse, nineteenth-century American literature, American religious culture and history, Ecohorror, and Ecogothic.

## ZOFIA KOLBUSZEWSKA

Hybrid Identity at the Cusp of Horror and Terror: The Gothic Roots of the Neobaroque 'Imago' in *The Saragossa Manuscript*

### Abstract

The paper focuses on the chiasmic exchange of horror and terror in *The Saragossa Manuscript* (1965), a film adaptation of Jan Potocki's (1761-1815) Gothic novel with a Chinese box narrative, *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa* (written over the period 1791-1815), by the Polish director Wojciech Jerzy Has (1925-2000). The novel's main narrative tells the story of a captain of the Spanish emperor's Walloon Guards, Alphonse van Worden, who, on his way to Madrid, is misled by demonic forces and keeps coming back to the same haunted mountain inn. This by now cult film, *The Saragossa Manuscript* has been admired by Pedro Almodóvar and was a favorite of Luis Buñuel, Martin Scorsese Francis Ford Coppola, and Jerry Garcia, the lead guitarist and vocalist of the psychedelic rock band the Grateful Dead.

In the film the Chinese box structure of Potocki's Gothic text and the complexity of its characters' identities are conveyed by employing neobaroque aesthetics. The movie engages, in multiple-frame narratives, the horrors of war, in particular the Napoleonic invasion of Spain and the atrocities visited at Saragossa on the Spanish by the French army; an army that Polish soldiers had joined under the illusion that Napoleon would help them to liberate their own country. The terror conveyed by the multiplication of narrative frames and encounters of doubles is presented in the film as arising from the fear of racial impurity and from the menace multiple hybrid identities pose to the myth of the purity of Spanish blood underpinning the country's power structure. The neobaroque formal strategies employed in Has's film bring out the clash and mutual interpenetration of the colonial (centripetal) and postcolonial (centrifugal) perspectives of identity-formation. The director demonstrates how the resulting Gothic hybrid identity of the protagonist, Alphonse van Worden, may be construed in terms of the neobaroque *Imago*. It arises at the cusp of terror and horror whose chiasmic interchange results from van Worden's uncanny encounters with the repressed Other: the Moors, Muslims, Romani people, criminals and cabbalists.

## Biography

Zofia Kolbuszewska is currently Associate Professor in the Department of English, University of Wrocław, Poland. The author of two books, *The Poetics of Chronotope in the Novels of Thomas Pynchon* (2000) and *The Purloined Child: American Identity and Representations of Childhood in American Literature 1851-2000* (2007) and several articles on American Gothic, Thomas Pynchon, dystopian film, ekphrasis, neobaroque, and forensic imagination, she edited a collection of essays *Thomas Pynchon and the (De)VICES of Global (Post)modernity* (2012), co-edited, with Barbara Klonowska and Grzegorz Maziarczyk, a collection of essays on utopia *Echoes of Utopia: Notions, Rhetoric, Poetics* (2012) and *(Im)perfection Subverted, Reloaded and Networked: Utopian Discourse across Media* (2015). She is currently working on two projects: the neobaroque cinema of Wojciech Jerzy Has and the forms of forensic imagination in global popular culture.

## LAURA KREMMEL

Morbid Horror: Anatomy, Pathology, and the Gothic

### Abstract

Medical Gothic naturally errs on the side of horror in its tendency to disturb and unsettle: pain, disease, and transformations of the body too close to ever escape. From its animation, the medicalized living corpse of Frankenstein causes visceral horror by defying scientific understanding and categorization. As a result, Victor and the creature attempt to pathologize this morbid body, its causes and immediate effects, using revolutionary techniques of the time. Steeped in dissections of the dead, Matthew Baillie-- best known by literary scholars through his sister, Joanna Baillie--devises a detailed and systematic analysis of pathology in his successful medical text, *Morbid Anatomy of the Most Important Parts of the Human Body* (1793). The first of its kind this text identifies nonnormative, "morbid" bodies as their own subject of study, even if an unsettling one. The Gothic, already full of unsettling bodies, takes on methods from this crucial text.

In this presentation, I argue that Baillie's influential medical text coincides with a pathologizing and investigative lens taken up by the Romantic-era Gothic tradition to describe early body horror. Baillie's uncanny, hyper-specialized catalogue of body parts essentially turns the whole body into merely a combination of its parts, turning the living into the pathologized undead. What's more, Gothic literature itself becomes subject to the pathologizing eye, all but classified as the "morbid anatomy" of the Romantic literary tradition. Grounding the presentation literary uses of Baillie's theories of pathology, I include discussions of works by Mary Shelley, Coleridge, Lewis, and Baillie's one-time patient, Lord Byron.

## Biography

Laura Kremmel is an assistant professor of English and Humanities at South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. Her collection, *The Palgrave Handbook to Horror Literature*, co-edited with Kevin

Corstorphine, was published in 2018. She has also published in the areas of British Romanticism, Gothic Studies (particularly medical Gothic), and Disability Studies. She also occasionally blogs for [www.horrorhomeroom.com/](http://www.horrorhomeroom.com/).

## L

### AARON LADUKE

Choose Your Own Gothic: Final Projects, Independent Learning, and the International Classroom

#### Abstract

I teach at Northwestern University in Qatar, which is a part of Education City, a collection of international campuses that offer specialized programs of study. At NU-Q, students pursue a degree in either journalism or communications. My current Gothic literature course is an intro level class populated by sophomores through seniors, most of whom have taken a literature course at NU-Q previously. Half of my students hail from Qatar, while the rest are from Palestine, Bahrain, India, China, and Singapore.

For a final project, I will be asking my students to select their own Gothic text to investigate. Students will analyze their text as an example of the Gothic genre, make a claim about the repressed history the text recovers, and argue for the exigence of their choice. Students will write an essay as well as make presentations. I will organize the class into four panels, with each student presenting individually (with slides) and then fielding questions from the rest of the students. I believe this project will provide a high stakes assignment that will require a comprehensive understanding of the Gothic genre. I hope that exploring a text of their choice allows students to engage more deeply in the project and to recognize the pervasive influence of the Gothic. I would like one or more of the panels to be specifically focused on the question, "What is Middle Eastern Gothic?" as part of a more ambitious goal to guide students toward selecting a text from their home region in an effort to highlight the Gothic's global presence.

Twins, Doubles, Duality: Gothic Formations of Transcultural Identities in Louise Erdrich's Justice Trilogy

#### Abstract

Storytelling is a central part of Native American life, and since writing her first novel, *Love Medicine*, in 1984, Louise Erdrich has been using her talent as a storyteller to recover the buried and forgotten voices of indigenous people. Erdrich's most recent three novels have been referred to as her "Justice Trilogy," and *The Round House* (2012) focuses on federal law as an abuse of power that has consistently and systematically marginalized Native Americans. In unearthing over a century of injustice in *The Round House*, I argue that Erdrich is practicing a new regional Gothic, a Great Plains Gothic.

The novel's title structure, the round house, sits on three different types of land—reservation, private, and federal. The location of this Gothic architecture has become deviously suited for the perpetration of crimes because of the law declaring that non-Indians may not be prosecuted by Native American law on reservation lands. The antagonist of the novel takes advantage of the complexities of these converging lands and laws to commit a rape and murder, neither of which he is prosecuted for. The son of one of the victims becomes Gothic detective and seeker of justice. While in pursuit, he moves through a series of supernatural events that unfold in the form of Gothic tropes, and a return of the repressed occurs in the suffering Native Americans endure under federal law. In *The Round House*, Erdrich's use of Ojibwe tradition and storytelling gives rise naturally to the Gothic which, in turn, becomes a method for reclaiming marginalized voices.

#### Biography

Aaron LaDuke serves as Assistant Professor in residence at Northwestern University in Qatar, where he teaches writing and literature. He received his Ph.D. in American literature from Ohio University. Before joining the faculty at NU-Q, he taught at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and the University of Illinois.

Aaron's scholarly interests include the American Great Plains region and, more widely, texts and their relevance to place, space, and borders. He recently contributed an article on Toni Morrison's novel *Paradise* to a special issue of *Humanities* on history, gender, and the Gothic.

## ALEXANDER LALAMA

La Jablesse: Latinx Goth Femininity in *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*

### Abstract

This paper seeks to analyze within Junot Díaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* the relationship between Latinxs and the goth music subculture. This will come through in looking at the character Jenni Muñoz, who is also known by the moniker *La Jablesse*. Her penchant for donning all black lipstick and make-up, dressing up as a dominatrix, and the focus on her listening habits, such as seminal goth rock band Joy Division, tie her to the goth scene, marking her as anomalous and confusing to the characters as Latina who works within the largely white subculture. Her sobriquet *La Jablesse* also marks Jenni as Caribbean religious practices and beliefs, specifically the Orisha-centered practices found in the region. In Trinidadian culture, *La Jablesse* "is conceived of as a beautiful woman...[who] engages a besotted man in conversation and leads him astray" (Lewis 179), Jenni leads Oscar astray by revealing an empowered woman who is able to rupture cultural gender roles through her associations with demonized and misinterpreted cultures such as goth and Yoruban practices. She operates as a way for the novel's characters to come to comprehend how a woman—in a novel where machismo runs rampant—could possess her own type of power and control through her ability to navigate seemingly disparate cultural borders. Because of this, Oscar cannot fully accept her refusal of patriarchal norms when he discovers she is sleeping with other men. Here, the Latinx goth female body allows for an androgynous play of gendered behavior, being both sexualized in the feminine, but presenting an alternate form of power that challenges assumptions of Dominican machismo's domination over control and authority through its border crossing. Yet, this goth group is still unintelligible to cultural associations of the novel, and must operate within niche subcultures in order to resist being divested of its (limited) power.

### Biography

Alexander Lalama is a PhD candidate in Latinx Literature and Culture at Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. His research focuses on Latinxs in music subcultures and how these subcultures allow for blurring and reconceptualizing radicalized and gendered notions of latinidad. He is currently an adjunct instructor of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island, teaching courses in Latinx Masculinities in Popular Culture and Queer Studies in Visual Media.

## REBECCA LANGWORTHY

Redeeming the Victorian-Addict-Vampire: The Vampiric as Framing Device in George MacDonald's *Donal Grant*

### Abstract

In George MacDonald's novel *Donal Grant* Lord Morven, the owner of a large gothic house, is routinely described in demonic and vampiric terms. Although he does not drink blood, he appears to feed upon the distress of others when he secretly drugs their food and drink. Lord Morven functions as the gothic monster and villain of the tale and is a figure of gothic horror who causes moments of gothic terror for the protagonists.

This paper demonstrates how the vampiric is associated with opiate addiction in *Donal Grant* and examines why MacDonald seeks to use the vampire as a means by which his readers interact with those who suffer from addiction. MacDonald uses this supernatural framing device as a means of engaging his readership with Christian acts of charity aimed at sections of society that are seen as 'other' and therefore

hold an aura of fear. In *Donal Grant* the addict is redeemed, and the vampire cured providing an exemplar of the Christianised response to figures of gothic horror.

## Biography

Rebecca Langworthy has an MLitt in The Gothic Imagination from the University of Stirling and a PhD from the University of Aberdeen, her doctoral thesis examined the development of adult fantasy in the work of George MacDonald. She has published on a range of subjects including George MacDonald, Margaret Oliphant, J.K. Rowling, and Michel Faber.

## JEANETTE LAREDO

A Guide to the Gothic: Writing an Open Source Gothic Textbook

### Abstract

When I was preparing to teach an 8-week online course in Gothic literature last year my textbook options were limited. Many critical guides on the Gothic I found provided too brief, thumbnail sketches of elements of the genre, while more in depth resources seemed too advanced for an introductory undergraduate course. Regardless of their level of difficulty, many of these guides did not include readings from seminal Gothic texts I wanted my students to engage with. The reasons for these limitations are the incredible scope the Gothic genre in literature, poetry, music and film, and the physical constraints of traditional, paper publishing. Faced with these restrictions, I decided to create A Guide to the Gothic, an open source, comprehensive, online textbook that would present a careful, critical examination of the genre and provide seminal readings for students. When it is released, A Guide to the Gothic will include annotated selections from more than 200 years of Gothic works that are in the public domain with critical essays exploring each work's author and themes. This presentation will outline my editorial process using Jarlath Killeen's open source textbook *The Emergence of Irish Gothic Fiction* (2014) as a model, detail my collaboration with the University of North Texas Libraries' Scholarly Communication department to navigate copyright and fair use of materials, and describe how I selected and edited student work. This talk will coincide with the release of the open source textbook via the PressBooks Open Textbook Network. It is my hope that by presenting at IGA this project will continue to grow and become a living, collaborative resource for instructors of the Gothic and inspire the next generation of Gothic scholars.

## Biography

Jeanette Laredo ([JeanetteLaredo@my.unt.edu](mailto:JeanetteLaredo@my.unt.edu)) is a scholar of all things awful including 18th-century British Gothic literature and Victorian horror. She studies the origins of Gothic horror and its evolution in the Victorian period, in addition to literary and cinematic monsters, horror films, and how digital tools can transform our modern understanding of the dark specters of our past.

## LUCIANA LILLEY

The "Intemperate Appetites" of *The Monk* by Matthew Lewis: Reading Rape as a Form of Cannibalism

### Abstract

Judith Butler develops the theory that language not only motivates or causes violence, but that it "enacts its own kind of violence" ("On Linguistic Vulnerability" 9). While Butler's theory focuses on the violence of spoken, embodied language, I am extending Butler's theory to written language. The language used to describe metaphorical cannibalistic acts is not just depicting a violent image, but the language itself is violent; hence, reading rape as a form of cannibalism is founded in uncovering the extreme violence of rape. Much of Gothicism delves into the "perverse" with Butler's theory uncovering the violence lying within the gothic language, and holds the readers more accountable for their own fascination with the macabre. Many critics have studied the gothic sexual and religious perversions that are prevalent in

Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*; however, the consumptive sexual appetite of the monk, Ambrosio, has yet to be truly fleshed out. Analysis of the text through religious, socio-historical, and linguistic contexts reveals the consumptive theme. While Lewis does not write about anyone literally performing cannibalism, he uses consumptive language and imagery to illustrate Ambrosio's illicit sexual desire and the ultimate rape of Antonia. Upon closer inspection of *The Monk*, the language used to indicate rape is the same or similar to that of cannibalism. Consequently, viewing rape as a form of cannibalism shifts the focus from the victim, Antonia, to the rapist, Ambrosio, coloring rape in an even more taboo light, revealing the inherent violence that lies within the language signifying rape.

## Biography

Luciana Lilley is a third-year year English Ph.D. student at UNC Greensboro whose concentrations are 19th-century British and American literature. Her areas of interest are explorations of literal and metaphorical consumption in texts, feminist and embodiment theories, and women writers.

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## AGNIESZKA ŁOWCZANIN

Folklore and superstition in the Age of Reason: *Baden Nights, or of ghouls and revenants; fairy tales and other pieces of humorous writing* (1783/1852) by Count Józef Maxymilian Ossoliński

### Abstract

"In the past, wet nurses and nannies terrified children with stories of devils. Today devils have become mere playthings, also in the hands of adults; wet nurses and mothers do not yarn such them anymore, but write them down."

This is the opening passage of a collection of stories written by one of the most notable minds of Polish Enlightenment, founder of the Ossoliński Institute and a member of many learned institutions of the day. Written in the heyday of Polish Enlightenment, they were published posthumously seventy years later. This collection of stories blends two, centuries-long traditions of oral narratives: the predominantly female tradition of *klechdy*, and the male tradition of *gawęda szlachecka*. *Klechdy* were told usually by women to instruct the young and impart folklore wisdom, whereas *gawędy* were stylised tales, full of digressions, narrated on various social occasions, which were an intrinsic part of male Sarmatism. They retain the breath and flow characteristic of oral transmission, and are full of colloquialisms, household wisdom and elements of folk lore. Written for the audience saturated with the awareness of the otherworld, for whom various forms of pagan superstition and rituals survived well into the Age of Reason, these stories aptly illustrate that for an average country gentleman on the territory of Poland-Lithuania belief in the supernatural provided common ground for merging two conflicting types of spirituality: their "bedroom" folk lore and the Catholic creed.

## Biography

Agnieszka Łowczanin is an Associate Professor in the Department of British Literature and Culture at the University of Łódź, Poland. She specialises in eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries fiction and has published on the politics and poetics of the Gothic. Her publications include: a monograph *A Dark Transfusion: The Polish Literary Response to Early English Gothic. Anna Mostowska Reads Ann Radcliffe* (Peter Lang, 2018), and edited volumes *All that Gothic* with Dorota Wiśniewska (Peter Lang, 2014), and *Gothic Peregrinations: the Unexplored and Re-explored Gothic Territories* with Katarzyna Małecka (Routledge: 2019).

## **KHARA LUKANCIC**

A Libertarian's House Cannot Stand: Navigating Ideology in the Ecogothic

### **Abstract**

Trey Edward Shults's *It Comes at Night* (2017) is an excellent example of the contemporary "ecogothic." The film grapples with concepts posed by Andrew Smith and William Hughes in the introductory chapter to *Ecogothic*, for whom representations of nature in the Gothic lead to estrangement. Shults's film features the rural alienation of a family after a devastating viral pandemic.

The binary oppositions common in genre studies—human and nature, civilization and wilderness—often express a theme of alienation. My reading of *It Comes at Night* focuses on the isolation of human being from his humanity. This separation is driven by fear. The tagline for the film reads: "Fear turns men into monsters." The main character, Paul (Joel Edgerton), enacts an extreme form of libertarianism in the film. Throughout the movie, Paul's primary concern is for himself and his family. He shows no signs of altruism. Each of his actions is to protect the survival of his family. Thus, the film deploys this ugly characterization of political ideology—of extreme libertarianism—to facilitate a critique of contemporary American social life.

Political theory will allow me to use the opposing ideologies of libertarianism and communitarianism to read the film. Paul's actions, fiercely libertarian; become much more worrisome than the horrific disease itself.

Gothic responds to the development of Romanticism, a philosophy of the power of the individual over the social order. In its invocation of the ecogothic, the film comments on anxieties of a biological threat lurking outside the home. The main character assumes a monstrous power in order to protect his libertarian interests. The film delivers its strongest critique in its final moments, as, in the end, Paul's selfish actions are unable to protect his family from the disease.

### **Biography**

Khara Lukancic is a doctoral student in Mass Communication and Media Arts at Southern Illinois University. She has authored three book chapters in edited collections and two film reviews in academic journals. Her academic interests include: Gothic/horror studies, film and television criticism, and gender/sexuality studies.

## **M**

## **IRMGARD MAASSEN**

"The horror! The horror!": Gothic transfigurations of colonial terrors

### **Abstract**

'The horror' is the term by which Conrad has Kurtz sum up his colonial experience in the darkest heart of Africa. The Gothic here seems the most appropriate mode to figure the imperialists' confrontation with and eventual descent into savagery, to express the meaningless noises of the jungle, to signify irreducible otherness, and the ultimate void at the heart of the colonial project. Gothic horror is the medium in which both Conrad and Kipling explore the break-down of Western categories of knowledge, and as such it has become immensely productive of critical discourse about the imperial Gothic. 'Horror', referencing as much as itself inducing dread and fear, can, after all, make tangible the central anxieties in imperial discourse: of miscegenation, of atavistic regression, of the reversal of the direction of invasion, of the fundamental incommensurability between the Other and our tools of cognition. However, by failing to name them, Gothic horror at the same time can serve to obscure those terrors that constitute the material

reality of colonial rule. By figuring them as beyond certain knowledge, the discourse of horror can contribute to the obfuscation of the structures of terror that underpin colonial power.

By taking as example two of Kipling's Anglo-Indian Gothic stories, my paper examines these slippages between the political and the supernatural, between colonial terror and Gothic horror. It aims to look into the ways in which the political violence at the basis of colonial rule – a violence that must not be named – interacts with the Gothic mode of representing them. I am going to discuss how violence becomes visible in the same figuration of horror that blurs the sources, the means and rationalities of that violence. By examining some of the ways in which Kipling's Gothic enacts disavowals and displacements of colonial terror, creating intensified horror at moments when colonial and patriarchal violence collapse into each other, my paper aims to contribute to a discussion of the ideological work that the intermeshing of horror and terror can be seen to perform in the colonial Gothic.

## Biography

Irmgard Maassen is a lecturer in British and Postcolonial Studies at Bremen University (Germany) where she teaches 19th, 20th and 21st c. British cultural history, with a focus on contemporary British film, as well as on class, gender, race and national identities, and on fictions of empire. She has taught British literary and cultural studies at universities in Berlin, Hannover, Potsdam, Magdeburg, and Norwich (UK), and was a Visiting Fellow at Clare Hall (Cambridge). Her publications include a 12-volume edition of early modern *Conduct Literature for Women 1500-1640 and 1640 to 1710* (with William StClair, Pickering & Chatto 2000 and 2002), numerous articles on women authors ranging, among others, from Mary Wroth to Mary Wollstonecraft, Virginia Woolf, Margaret Drabble and feminist detective fiction. She has also published on early modern performances of love, mourning and madness, and on the theory of textual performativity. She is currently co-editing a special issue of the journal *Hard Times* on gender in Britain. Her research interests lie in the fields of early modern cultures of emotion, women's literature and gender studies with a special focus on Virginia Woolf, contemporary British film, and imperial fictions, esp. Kipling. Her interest in the Gothic started with ghosts and madness on the early modern stage, and finds fresh food in *Frankenstein* and Kipling's colonial Gothic.

## CAMERON MACDONELL

The Resurrection and Body Horror in A.W.N. Pugin's Victorian Gothic Architecture

### Abstract

In Britain, A.W.N. Pugin (1812–52) was the leading Roman Catholic architect of his generation, spearheading the shift from the Georgian to the Victorian Gothic Revival. Foundational to Pugin's theory of Gothic architecture was the belief that medieval forms were the direct expression of Catholic dogma. In this paper, for example, I focus on Pugin's argument that the verticality of Gothic architecture was emblematic of the corporeal resurrection, wherein the Catholic faithful rise bodily from the grave to receive judgment.

Optimistically, Pugin's Gothic Revival was a sincere belief that medieval architecture had been brought back to life, but Pugin was not always so optimistic. His desire for a Gothic Revival was a reaction against the perceived sickness of Victorian society, including his own deadly malady—syphilis, apparently. In such a sick society, Pugin complained that his churches were often ghosts of what he intended them to be (i.e., they were not fully materialized forms), and his biographers have demonstrated his sincere Catholic fear of ghosts. One such biographer even went so far as to suggest that Pugin's personal life was worthy of a lurid Gothic fiction, but no one, prior to my research, has tested that suggestion against Pugin's Gothic architecture. In this paper, I read the incomplete verticality of Pugin's own house-and-church complex at Ramsgate, England, in terms of his horror with his bodily illness and with the ghost as an incomplete corporeality.

## Biography

Cameron Macdonell received his PhD in the history and theory of architecture at McGill University (2013), specializing in the relationship between modern Gothic architecture and literature. This is evident in his first book, *Ghost Storeys* (McGill-Queens University Press, 2017), based on his dissertation about American Gothic Revival architect and ghost story writer Ralph Adams Cram (1863–1942). This is also evident in his book chapter (*The Companion to the History of Architecture: Nineteenth-Century Architecture*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2017) on a nineteenth-century definition of the uncanny as veiled divinity and the rood screens of British Victorian architect A.W.N. Pugin (1812–52). His current project is a book-length manuscript on the recurrence of ghosts in the writings of British and American architects, including a chapter on Pugin.

## ANNE MAHLER

Beyond the Wound: Transgenerational Trauma Transmission in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818)

### Abstract

In scholarly discussions surrounding Mary Shelley's Gothic classic *Frankenstein*, much attention has been paid to psychoanalytical and biographical readings of the text. In the context of trauma theory, the novel has been read as the author's attempt to overcome her personal traumas caused by the early loss of her mother and premature deaths of her children. However, issues of underlying, more textual representations of trauma in *Frankenstein*, and other Gothic texts, have not yet been subjects of the academic discourse.

Closing this gap in *Wounds and Words* (2013), Christa Schönfelder has coined the term "Romantic trauma novel" and linked its key characteristics of contemporary trauma representation to elements of the Gothic. Continuing her analysis by providing a trauma reading of *Frankenstein*, this paper argues that Victor transmits his own psychological trauma to the creature through abandonment, as well as physical and verbal abuse. By tracing traumatic symptoms in Frankenstein's narrative and his treatment of the creature, I will explore Gothic qualities of transgenerational trauma transmission, and link recent literary trauma studies (by for example Alan Gibbs and Roger Luckhurst) to the Gothic canon, reading the creature's violent reaction to this chronic rejection as a symptom of insidious trauma which can also be found in victims of domestic violence and abuse. My analysis extends discussion in the emerging field of Romantic trauma studies developed by Schönfelder, both expanding the corpus of trauma literature, and advancing the understanding of literary representations of trauma in Gothic texts in the early 19th century.

## Biography

Anne Mahler is a second-year PhD student in the School of English at University College Cork (Ireland). Her PhD project, supervised by Dr Alan Gibbs, is concerned with the representation of trauma in contemporary fiction about high school shootings. She holds an MA degree in Victorian Literature from the University of Bristol (UK). Her research interests centre on the Gothic, literary trauma studies, and Victorian literature.

## SABRINA MANERO

Of Yellow Books and Monstrosity

### Abstract

Gothic literature is oft cast aside as an outdated genre, though the mass popularity of its works remains a driving force for its inclusion in the literary tradition. Sigmund Freud's essay on the "Uncanny" as well as Ann Radcliffe's critical and authorial influence serve as major modes of interpretation in reading the gothic genre. Freud's psychoanalytic approach coupled with Radcliffe's undeniable stake in the establishment of

the gothic have proven to be ubiquitous in analyzing the genre, but I argue that my concept of the “unsettling” occupies a space yet to be identified in that analysis.

The unsettling is a disruptive critical lens, incorporating facets from both psychoanalytic and affective schools of thought. It emerges after a “linguistic terror” that is a result of the tumultuous relationship between language and syntax, its lingering nature differentiating it from fear itself. This idea of the unsettling works particularly well with Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* because of the self-reflexive quality of Wilde’s writing, and calls precise attention to the tension between aestheticism and the agential quality of art itself in the novel. In examining the linguistic play and abject affectual response of the unsettling alongside a close reading of Lord Henry’s gift of the yellow book to a young Dorian Gray, this essay aims to destabilize previous conventions of gothic literature—ultimately providing a critical lens through which to reinvigorate the genre.

## Biography

Sabrina Manero is a first-year PhD student in Literary Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research interests include the intersection between Victorian literature and the gothic genre, trauma studies, and affect theory. Recently, her interests have also expanded to include the consideration of short-form horror podcasts as a reinvigoration and reconceptualization of the gothic.

## BRIDGET MARSHALL

Cheap Gothic: Free, Open Educational Resources (OER), and Low-Cost Texts for the Gothic Classroom

## Abstract

For many students at my public University (and across the United States) purchasing textbooks is a huge financial burden. This paper will consider the decisions we make about choosing our texts – not just which texts, but which EDITIONS of which texts. I could assign the \$30 *Annotated Dracula*, or, for roughly half the price, the Broadview or Norton Critical Edition, or for \$7 my students can get the Signet Classic that includes *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and *Jekyll and Hyde*. My aesthetics about books, and my pedagogical preferences have to strike a balance with the realities of my students’ wallets. In addition to low-cost options like Dover Thrift Editions, we need to consider the fact that many early Gothic texts are in the public domain, and freely available on Googlebooks, Archive.org, Hathi Trust, and Project Gutenberg. Some of these editions can be fraught with issues. I will also highlight other free online alternatives, such as the Just Teach One project, which provides high-quality, well-annotated PDF versions of interesting stories that can fit into a Gothic course. The textbook choices we make are not without consequences, but a classroom full of different editions can lead to some teachable moments. I was surprised to realize that students reading the Dover Thrift Edition of *The Monk* were missing the “Haughty Lady” final paragraph, and students with different editions of *Frankenstein* were confused in class discussion about how Elizabeth is related to Victor. But textual variants like these ultimately bring us back to foundational Gothic concerns: the unreliability of a text, and the changing and confusing nature of familial relationships.

## Biography

Bridget M. Marshall is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell where she teaches courses on Gothic novels, American literature, and disability in literature. She is the author of *The Transatlantic Gothic Novel and the Law, 1790 – 1860* (Ashgate 2011), and co-editor of *Transnational Gothic: Literary and Social Exchanges in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Ashgate 2013). She is currently working on a project focused on the interconnections between Gothic literature and the Industrial Revolution

## KELI MASTEN

From Terror to Horror: Taming Wild Beasts in Conan Doyle's "The Brazilian Cat"

### Abstract

Although best known for his popular Sherlock Holmes series, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle also wrote many lesser-known stories exploring the horror and terror to which all humans are prey. "The Brazilian Cat," from *Tales of Terror and Mystery*, features elements familiar to the gothic tradition. A dissolute gentleman, Marshall King, stumbles into the clutches of his sadistic cousin, Everard, who seems to be master of both an exotic menagerie and a racially ambiguous, threatening wife, both culled from mysterious colonial spoils in South America. Drawing the reader in much like its protagonist, the tale gradually reveals a terrifying game of cat-and-mouse, framing Marshall initially as a powerless, feminized character whose entrapment (reminiscent of an earlier Ann Radcliffe heroine) will force him to discover if his nature is fundamentally civilized, enervated, and doomed or primal, violent, and capable of survival. In Conan Doyle's Gothicized English setting, both the master and his estate seem to emerge like a primordial island amidst the English countryside, invoking the haunting echoes of violent Brazilian uprisings and instability contemporary with the story's publication, and culminating in an unsettling moral which suggests that the "hero" gains much but learns nothing from his remarkable experience.

### Biography

Keli Masten is a doctoral candidate in English at Western Michigan University, specializing in the study of American literature, particularly the gothic, the detective story, and the early United States through 1945. She is a lifelong resident of the Grand Rapids area of Michigan and passionate about local history. She is a King-Parks-Chavez fellow and received the 2018 All-University Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award at WMU after attaining the English Department Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award in 2017. She is currently writing her dissertation on the progression of the American gothic from mysteries of detection through hard-boiled detective fiction 1799-1929, and recently published her article, "*Cherchez la Femme: A Good Woman's Place in Hard-Boiled Detective Fiction*," in *Clues: A Journal of Detection*. With nearly 8 years of university teaching experience, she eagerly anticipates returning to the classroom full-time upon completion of her PhD October 2019.

## CATHERINE MCCRARY

"A Small Piece of Flesh Between Us and the Blade": Survival Horror Video Games and the Male Gothic Form

### Abstract

The influence of the female Gothic form on modern horror film is well-documented and thoroughly explored in academic literature, but what is perhaps more interesting is where the female Gothic has failed to penetrate the genre. Horror video games in particular have by and large resisted the influence of the female Gothic form. In fact, with the emergence of survival horror, horror video games have leaned in the opposite direction towards the male Gothic form. Consumer demographics do not account for this difference, so whence the discrepancy? Why the abundance of helpless, imprisoned heroines on the silver screen while AAA horror video game protagonists remain largely male and oftentimes armed? It would be easy to point towards differences between the media themselves. Film is after all a medium of spectacle that offers itself up to the voyeuristic pleasure of the (primarily male) audience, while video games are designed for immersion, roleplaying, and identification with the protagonists—an experience that gaming journalists have argued is actively harmed by asking male gamers to identify with a helpless female protagonist. However, in this paper I aim to look below the surface discrepancies. By exploring the mirroring effect in video games like *Resident Evil* and *Outlast* and in films like *Halloween* and *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, I aim (1) to tease out some of the connections between the male Gothic form and the luxury of play and (2) to examine the "soil conditions" that allowed the male Gothic form to take root where the female Gothic could not.

## Biography

Catherine McCrary is a candidate for the Masters of Theological Studies degree at the Boston University School of Theology.

## BRYAN MCMILLAN

Death Embodied: Ecogothic Interventions in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

### Abstract

While most ecocritics envision paradise as a place of interspecies equity, Victor Frankenstein sees paradise as a place that strictly divides human and nonhuman, but his Creation shows that such a division is impossible. I draw from Mary Shelley's 1818 edition of *Frankenstein* to show how oppositional relationships unsettle the nature-culture split specifically, subsequently illuminating the importance of the emerging ecogothic subfield. I argue that when the Creature first awakens, readers witness a newly forming antagonistic relationship, which derives from Victor's almost immediate awareness that his Creature embodies the darkest and most secret parts of his mind, his obsessions, delusions, and terrors. His Creature's malice and desire for vengeance force Victor to acknowledge, even if he cannot face, death's certainty and subsequently its ability to overcome binaries. As Victor unsuccessfully evades the Creature, and so attempts to suppress the idea of his own mortality, the Creature violently invades Victor's mental and physical spaces, exposing not only Victor's vulnerability to death, but also his anxiety about nonhuman agency. This invasion ultimately blurs the dividing lines between Victor and the Creature, and human and other-than-human beings. Extending Simon C. Estok's seminal work on ecophobia, I demonstrate how Shelley uses nonhuman violence to expose how patriarchal dominance both masks human fear of nature, anticipating ecofeminist concerns, and reinforces the nature-culture split. Finally, my paper showcases Shelley's proto-ecological argument and Gothicism's significance as an environmental mode.

## Biography

Bryan McMillan is a fourth-year Ph.D. candidate at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. His teaching and research interests include nineteenth-century American and British literature, Gothicism, and the Transcendentalists. He has recently contributed a chapter to *Rhetorical Approaches to College Writing* and he is currently writing a dissertation about the environmentalisms of nineteenth-century Gothic literature.

## DAVID MCWILLIAM

No Alternative: Aborted Revolutions and Lost Futures in *Mr. Robot*

### Abstract

When the hacker collective fsociety encrypt E-Corp's consumer credit records, they fail to bring about the revolutionary change they had hoped would topple neoliberalism and it appears as though *Mr. Robot* (2015-) embodies Mark Fisher's notion of capitalist realism, unable to conceive of an alternative way of organizing society. However, the leader of the revolution, Elliot Alderson (Rami Malek), on discovering that he has been working with another aspect of his divided mind under the guise of Mr. Robot (Christian Slater), his Gothic double, withdraws from the revolution before it even begins. Despite the ensuing chaos, there are initially mass demonstrations in support of fsociety that incorporate images of revolt circulating in twenty-first-century popular culture into the show's visual language, haunting it with failed or incomplete revolutions. Without a political alternative to corporate control, they instead experience the imposition of dystopian disaster capitalism and hope is ground from them. However, this paper reads *Mr. Robot* as built around an aborted revolution rather than one that fails and, consequently, it retains the ghost of the future lost in this act of abandonment. Instead of showing the negative consequences of revolution, *Mr. Robot* offers a metamodern narrative that focuses on the torment of a character torn between taking action to change the world and recoiling from the consequences. As such, it provides a

provocative, damning indictment of a fractured left that cannot cohere around an alternative to neoliberalism.

## Biography

David McWilliam is Lecturer in Film Studies and English Literature at Keele University. His research interests include cult television, cosmic horror, theories of monstrosity, cultural representations of dissent, posthumanism, gaming, game narrative, and adaptation. He has published in the fields of Gothic, science fiction studies, and crime. Reviews have appeared in 'Foundation', 'The Gothic Imagination', and 'Horror Studies'. Alongside Glyn Morgan, I am the co-founder of Twisted Tales, an award-nominated series of horror readings.

## WALTER METZ

"Here's Johnny"... Again and Again: The Puritan Gothic in Contemporary American Cinema

### Abstract

The legacy of the Gothic tradition in the United States captured by the cinema is typically assumed to grapple with the American South, linking the decadence of Europe to the vicious treatment of African-Americans. Developed from the literary foundation of William Faulkner, such a trend in cinema is clearly important: a chain of films from *The Night of the Hunter* (Charles Laughton, 1955) to *The Beguiled* (Don Siegel, 1971) to *Angel Heart* (Alan Parker, 1987) to *The Skeleton Key* (Ian Softley, 2005) develops that tradition. However, the cultural analysis this creates tends to let the rest of the United States off of the hook, as if the Gothic critique of American civilization applies primarily to the horrors of slavery. I propose to study another repressive cultural regime, that of the Puritans, to apply the Gothic tradition to contemporary American cinema. I will begin with the most obvious example, the intertextual reworking of Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" (1835) in *The Witch* (Robert Eggers, 2016), both narratives that use the Gothic tradition to critique American hypocrisy. The American version of Romanticism, Transcendentalism, with its emphasis on an individual path to God subtends these two narratives about the Puritan enforcement of repressive values on individual women.

I will use this theoretical frame to read an otherwise very perplexing film, *mother!* (Darren Aronofsky, 2017). With the film's reliance on trapping its central protagonist in the old dark house, planted amid the Garden of Eden created by a seemingly all-powerful male deity, I will position *mother!* as a Gothic film about an America forged within the repressive Puritan framework of Christianity.

I will focus particularly on the way both *The Witch* and *mother!* rely on intertextual reworkings of *The Shining* (Stanley Kubrick, 1980), as critical expressions of the abuse of women within a contemporary American milieu, one unable to release itself from the shackles of Puritan assumptions about the rightful containment of female agency. Jack Torrance's flight from his status as a disgruntled high school English teacher in Vermont to a murderous patriarchal maniac in the snowy American West will serve as the motor for my Gothic readings of *The Witch* and *mother!*.

## Biography

Walter Metz is Professor in the Department of Cinema and Photography at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. He is the author of three academic media studies books: *Engaging Film Criticism* (Peter Lang, 2004), *Bewitched* (Wayne State UP, 2007), and *Gilligan's Island* (Wayne State UP, 2012). He is the film critic for WSIU radio; his film criticism website can be found at <http://waltermetz.com>.

## AMANDA MIDDLETON

Regional Gothic Microliterature

### Abstract

One of the advantages of studying Gothic literature is the vast time range the genre has covered and has incorporated. While traditional Gothic studies can limit the focus to the classics, modern reinterpretations of tropes and themes concerning the Gothic adds new flair and reinvigorates the literary body. One of the newer locations of Gothic literary additions is social media websites.

Region-based Gothicism is a concept that has been explored at length throughout the history of the genre. From the rolling and mountainous French landscapes covered by *The Mysteries of Udolpho* to the desperate, dark streets of London in *Dracula* to the secret, bougainvillea-scented backyards of New Orleans lounged in by Anne Rice's vampires, settings have shaped the genre as clearly as the tropes that define its bounds. "Regional Gothic" as a movement has taken this idea and created instantly identifiable moments that are subjective enough to allow for incorporation of theme yet tangible enough for those who only have tangential knowledge of a region to understand them thoroughly.

"Regional Gothic" began on Tumblr in 2015 and has since spread to other mediums, like Instagram and Twitter. Tumblr itself continues to host a large body of works varying from simple one-off commentary sentences to entire short fictions, with various commenters and bloggers providing analysis and furthering the connections made. The interactive nature of these social platforms allows for ad-hoc analysis and allows for surface comparisons to take new meanings.

I am deeply interested in further analyzing the connections these authors make to classic Gothic literature while also paving the way for new microliterary explorations to unfold.

### Biography

Amanda Middleton is a public school teacher in the Portland, Oregon region. She has a Master's in English from Portland State University with a focus on Gothic literature.

## CAREY MILLSAP-SPEARS

"He doesn't know you like I do": Barbara Kean's Bisexual Appeal, the Male Gothic, and *Gotham's* Woman Problem

### Abstract

Unlike the devoted wife and mother depicted in comic-book form, Barbara Kean in *Gotham* (2014) is a character filled with sexual energy and adept fighting skills. In the FOX series, before her break-up with the character of James Gordon at the midpoint of season one, Barbara is a wealthy art dealer and a beautiful, cisgendered homemaker. After her break-up with Gordon, Barbara is characterized as an oversexed bisexual. She also presents as a mentally-ill villain who kills her parents, takes hostages, and plans the overthrow of Gotham's underworld. As her story arc continues with an eventual reanimation through the powers of the Lazarus Pit, her more unified self emerges. This is significant in the context of the Male Gothic world of *Gotham*. The problem with Barbara's character is obvious (the Depraved Bisexual Trope), but it is of note that a strong female character in a Male Gothic space survives and thrives is feminist progress, in the traditional, horror Gothic genre—even if she has to be reborn to claim such power.

Thus, examining the character of Barbara Kean through the lens of the Male Gothic reveals the intensity of Barbara's new life as her more complex, albeit darker and more masculine, self emerges. At different times in the series, Barbara appears as both a classic damsel-in-distress and the ultimate villain, and that

is what makes her character different in the Male Gothic tradition. Ultimately, *Gotham* reimagines the Male Gothic world of the Batman universe through the development of Barbara Kean.

## Biography

Carey Millsap-Spears teaches at Moraine Valley Community College. Her publications include “‘How About a Pie?’: Mrs. Lovett, Sweeney Todd, and the Double” (2013), “Under the Weather: Being (Un) Well in a Gothic World” (2016), and “‘Sometimes, You Need to Roll a Hard Six’: Posthumanism and Female Gothic Science Fiction in *Frankenstein* and *Battlestar Galactica*” (2018).

## AVERY MORRISON

“Goodnight, ladies”: The Women of the Whitechapel Murders and Recontextualization in Adaptation

### Abstract

In his graphic novel *From Hell*, Alan Moore dedicates the work to the five confirmed victims of Jack the Ripper’s 1880s killing spree. He addresses the women directly: “You and your demise, of these things alone we are certain.” Indeed, due to its unsolved state - the lack of justice on behalf of the women slain, the mystery of the killer’s identity - the Whitechapel Murders have fascinated audiences for over a century, leading to their inclusion and fictionalization in stories spanning multiple mediums. This fictionalization is often speculative, imagining entirely new motives for the murders, re-casting the Ripper as anything from the faceless slasher to being hidden in plain sight. Most interesting in this process is the re-shaping of the victims in their historical context, depending on the contemporary social mores of the adaptor. The Whitechapel Women are arguably one of the only constants of these retellings, and yet their lives and violent deaths see just as much re-contextualization as the faceless Jack himself. This paper hopes to examine these various interpretations across multiple mediums, with a particular eye towards their agency after death, the consistency of characteristics left unchanged vs. entirely speculated, their treatment before and after the current True Crime obsession, and their adaptors’ ability or reluctance to see them as complex human beings. Works examined include Alan Moore’s graphic novel *From Hell* (1989), Kerri Maniscalco’s novel *Stalking Jack the Ripper* (2016), and the Jack the Ripper downloadable content from the video game *Assassin’s Creed: Syndicate* (2015).

## Biography

Avery Morrison is a first-year PhD student in English at Louisiana State University. She received her BAs in Creative Writing and Film Studies from Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia. Her primary areas of research are the Gothic genre through the ages, with particular interest in monsters as metaphor, film adaptations, and more recently the Southern Gothic. She is also interested in the contemporary Romance genre, and its overlap in critical reception/female and LGBTQ authorship with the Gothic.

## SAMANTHA MORSE

Dread: The Neglected Gothic Affect in *Otranto*, *Udolpho*, and *The Monk*

### Abstract

Though closely associated with fear and terror, dread is a unique feeling, defined since the thirteenth century as “Extreme fear; deep awe or reverence; apprehension or anxiety as to future events” (*OED*). This affect thus sutures two extensively theorized emotions: fear and anticipation. Although dread powerfully contributes to terror, this affect needs to be considered as its own category because of its temporal orientation, which has significant consequences for how we understand the Gothic. The fear elicited by dread is necessarily directed toward the future (dreading the fulfillment of a prophecy, discovering what lies behind the veil, or God’s judgement), whereas terror, more broadly, arises from experiencing a fright in the present or lingers after a past scare.

My paper begins with a cursory examination of *The Castle of Otranto* to demonstrate how the heuristic force of dread demands a reconceptualization of the Gothic mode as one that engages the future as well as the past. I then explore how this future orientation comes to bear in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Monk* by analyzing how these novels present emotion scripts for English readers to protect themselves from excessive and manipulative revolutionary affects like enthusiasm and alarm. Although these two novels are most often discussed in terms of terror and horror, I will elucidate how they correspond in their representations of dread as an aesthetic category and offer affectively oriented ways of shaping England's future in revolutionary times.

## Biography

Samantha Morse is a PhD Candidate in English at the University of California Los Angeles. Her dissertation traces the shifting purchase of dread as an aesthetic category in British literature over the long nineteenth century. She argues that representations of this feeling in fiction, poetry, and periodical discourse actually enabled, not stultified, moderate political reform throughout the century. Samantha has published in *The Journal of Victorian Culture* and has forthcoming articles in *Studies in the Novel* and *Cultural Critique* on topics that range from democratic sociability in early Victorian "penny bloods," to laws of consent at the Victorian fin de siècle, and the overlap of Gothic and punk aesthetics in a twenty-first century London "zine" responding to the 2012 Olympics.

## HANNAH MOSS

Behind the Black Veil: Gothic Terror, Gothic Horror and Female Creativity in the Works of Ann Radcliffe

### Abstract

This paper will address the conference theme of *Gothic Terror, Gothic Horror* in relation to Ann Radcliffe's representation of female creativity. In her essay 'On the Supernatural in Poetry' (1826), Radcliffe delineates terror and horror by contrasting their creative potential: 'Terror and horror are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them.' Whilst Radcliffe presents terror as a stimulus for the imagination, I will argue that horror also has a role to play in the development of the artist.

The experiences of artistic Radcliffean heroines will be analysed alongside the *Souvenirs* (1835) of the artist Élisabeth Vigée le Brun (1755-1842). Although Radcliffe proposes that horror 'freezes' the faculties, Vigée le Brun frames an experience of horror as a test of her ability as an artist. Recounting a visit to the cabinet of the anatomical artist Felice Fontana as a Gothic tale, she is forced to confront her fears when a model of a beautiful woman is opened to reveal her internal organs. Vigée le Brun is sickened by the sight of the exposed intestines to the extent that this uncannily lifelike model haunts her, recalling that she could not look at a woman 'without mentally stripping her of her clothing and skin'. Recalling Emily St. Aubert's encounter with a wax *memento mori* image in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), Vigée le Brun's narrative provides an opportunity to reappraise the Radcliffean terror/horror dichotomy. Terror may be exploited as a suspenseful literary technique by Radcliffe, but facing up to horror remains important if her heroines are to learn from what they observe.

## Biography

Hannah Moss is a 3rd-year PhD candidate at the University of Sheffield, supervised by Professors Joe Bray and Angela Wright. Hannah's thesis focuses on the representation of the female artist in novels of the long eighteenth century, with a particular focus on the works of Ann Radcliffe, Charlotte Smith, Jane Austen and Mary Shelley. Hannah is an active member of the Sheffield Gothic postgraduate community and is also the organiser of 'Women and the Arts in the Long Eighteenth Century' (a one-day conference in March 2019 bringing together literary critics and art historians), and is co-editing a collection on Jane Austen and the Arts for Edinburgh University Press. Her wider research interests include aesthetics, ekphrasis and women's education.

## BRITTANI MROZ

The Gothic Absence of an Afterlife in Robert Montgomery Bird's *Sheppard Lee*

### Abstract

Dr. Robert Montgomery Bird's novel *Sheppard Lee* (1836) presents metempsychosis as the fantastical premise for its protagonist to experience life in various bodies. Throughout his journey, Lee migrates from one physical body upon its death to the next, calling into question the ontology of humanity. Furthermore, the stark contrast in how Bird portrays the white characters versus Tom, a black slave, reveals Bird's true ontological view. The white characters, many of whom suffer from only psychosomatic or self-perpetuating illnesses, have rich inner lives, sparked by questions of consciousness and human drama. In contrast, Tom is described as only a corporeal being, his physical sufferings brushed aside as simply a function of his race, and his race the force that controls his body. This absence of an inner life mirrors the absence of the idea of an afterlife in the novel and multiple deaths with no creator, no heaven, and no hell. In Bird's antebellum America there is no escape from suffering, only a perpetual cycle devoid of rest or improvement. The bodies Bird shows us are empty shells, the soul moves into each and takes the shape of the container, influenced by only what can be seen. In the literature of American Gothic, it is often the voids, absences, and darkness where terror lies. Through *Lee*, Bird comments not only on human suffering, but also a world where any hope of the afterlife is gone and the end of the body is the end entirely. Bird's absent afterlife gives the body all of the power, but yet the body is mortal and final. The Gothic works within themes of entrapment, isolation, and fear of lost consciousness. In *Sheppard Lee*, Bird builds on these basic fears by making the physical body a prison no one can escape, even in death.

### Biography

Brittani Mroz is a graduate student at SUNY Buffalo State. Her current research includes work on the poetry of Sylvia Plath as a depression narrative, and the effects of industrialism on folk-healing culture in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*.

## BARRY MURNANE

Dead Man Walking: Kafka's America as Gothic Modernity

### Abstract

In popular discourse, critical debate, and modernist literature and culture in Germany, America occupies the position of a threatening spectre. From Siegfried Kracauer to Theodor Adorno, the USA figures as modernity gone mad, less a phantom from the past and more the spectre of a Gothic hypermodernity to come. America becomes a space onto which the anxieties of a rationalized, urbanized, industrialized, and anonymous modernity are projected, a fantastic space onto which the fears and traumas of European modernity are abjected. In this paper I will discuss Franz Kafka's unfinished novel *Der Verschollene/The Man who Disappeared* (previously known as *America*) as the vision of a liberal, capitalist modernity turned monstrous. From the start, the USA is figured as a space of threatening violence, entrapping the protagonist Karl Roßmann in a web of surveillance, ceaseless motion, and suffering. This is a space in which Roßmann never belongs and can't put down roots, a space which he can never understand and in which he can never belong. But while Roßmann thus seems to be doomed from the start, the real problem is not America but the spectres of a violent European past which he seems to encounter at every turn. Kafka's America is an uncanny space: familiar fears from home play out in an unfamiliar space, and if Roßmann is a dead man walking it is because he brings Europe's Gothic modernity with him. This is a horror that does indeed come from Germany but it unfolds far away from home.

### Biography

Barry Murnane is Associate Professor in German and Comparative Literature at the University of Oxford. He has published widely on the Gothic from the eighteenth century to the present day, has published a

monograph on Kafka's Gothic fiction, several edited volumes on German Gothic and has most recently been working on medical Gothic in contemporary cinema and television.

## **BERNICE M. MURPHY**

"The Indian in the Garden": Mrs. Winchester's Ghosts and the Origins of the California Gothic

### **Abstract**

The 2018 horror film *Winchester* is, allegedly, "Inspired by Actual Events". Its chief protagonist, Mrs. Sarah Winchester (Helen Mirren), the widow of an armaments manufacturer, is tormented by guilt and by ghosts. At the behest of the angry spirits of those killed by Winchester firearms, she spends her fortune on constantly adding rooms to the architectural folly known here as 'The House that Ghosts Built'. As we shall see, the truth behind Mrs Winchester's 'Mystery House' was a great deal more nuanced than this film suggests.

This paper argues that the Winchester legend is one of the foundational strands of a regionally distinct "California Gothic" tradition. The California Gothic is a previously neglected subgenre which articulates anxieties specific to the historical, cultural and geographical complexities of the Golden State. Only a decade before Sarah Winchester settled there, California concluded a 30-year extermination campaign against the region's Native Americans. Yet although previous commentators have rightly noted that the Winchester legend owes much to the brutal legacy of nineteenth-century imperialism, what has been overlooked are the story's specifically *Californian* resonances. The 2018 film, as we shall see, again ignores these horrific local truths. As Philip Fradkin noted in 1995, "Modern California was founded on greed and violence" (*The Seven States of California*, p.85), and, as we shall see, the Winchester legend is one, in its own way, highlights this fact, yet perpetuates the cultural amnesia which so often occludes it.

### **Biography**

Bernice M. Murphy is lecturer in Popular Literature in the School of English, Trinity College, Dublin, and a Fellow of TCD. She has published extensively on topics related to American horror fiction and film. Her books include *The Suburban Gothic in American Popular Culture* (2009), *The Rural Gothic: Backwoods Horror and Terror in the Wilderness* (2013), and *The Highway Horror Film* (2014). She is the co-founder of the online *Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies* and is a founding member of the 'Irish Network for Gothic Studies' (INGS). Her current book in progress is a monograph entitled *California Gothic*.

## **KEVIN MURPHY**

More Gothic than *American Gothic*? Technological Terror in Grant Wood's *Death on the Ridge Road*

### **Abstract**

In 1935, American Regionalist artist Grant Wood painted *Death on the Ridge Road*, which depicts an imminent crash between a speeding luxury automobile and a boxy cargo truck cresting a hill in rural Iowa. Although unprecedented in Wood's *oeuvre*, and in early twentieth-century American art, the painting has received less attention from scholars than the artist's other works that celebrate and satirize rural life, including the iconic *American Gothic* (Art Institute of Chicago). This paper places *Death on the Ridge Road* in context of gruesome "crusading realist" literature that emerged in the United States during the Great Depression to terrify readers into altering their behavior.

The first and most prominent essay in this new genre, Joseph Chamberlain (J.C.) Furnas's "...And Sudden Death," targeted automobile drivers, and appeared in *Reader's Digest* in 1935, the same year Wood created his painting. Furnas invokes many tropes of gothic literature and film, including the personification of death, ghosts, unnatural shrieks of the dying, and graphic descriptions of injuries from car crashes that outdo nearly anything found in body horror films today. The essay was reportedly

reprinted 1,500,000 times, and became quasi-official government propaganda when handed out to the public by judges, police officers, and teachers. Textual and visual evidence suggests that Wood knew Furnas's essay, and that the painting became instrumentalized as an artistic analogue to it. Discussing *Death on the Ridge Road* alongside "...And Sudden Death" provides valuable new insights into America's ambivalent, sometimes terrified, relationship to technological progress in the twentieth century.

## Biography

Dr. Kevin M. Murphy is Eugénie Prendergast Senior Curator of American Art at the Williams College Art Museum and Affiliate Faculty in Art. He is currently developing an exhibition exploring the visual culture of car accidents in twentieth-century America. His recent exhibitions accompanied by book-length catalogues include *"Not Theories But Revelations," The Art and Science of Abbott Handerson Thayer* (2016) and *American Encounters: Anglo-American Portraiture in an Era of Revolution* (2014). Murphy also teaches interdisciplinary courses in Art History, American Studies, Economics, and seminars in the Williams College Graduate Program the History of Art.

# N

## NATALIE NEILL

Including Digital Narratives in the Gothic Curriculum

### Abstract

From the phantasmagoria shows of the eighteenth century to today's survival horror games, Gothic has always found expression in new technologies. Today, more than ever before, Gothic is an aesthetic that crosses diverse forms and media. In this paper, I will share my experiences of using technology-enhanced learning and digital texts to teach the Gothic in undergraduate literature courses. In particular, I will describe the benefits of expanding course "reading lists" to include podcasts, text adventures, fan fictions, twitter stories, and video games. I will explain how online storytelling (e.g., the vampire story "The Right Sort" told in 280 tweets by David Mitchell and Adam Cadre's first-generation interactive fiction "9:05"), narrative podcasts (e.g., *Welcome to Night Vale*), and Gothic-oriented games (*Resident Evil*, *Fallen London*, etc.), can be brought into dialogue with – and used to illuminate – traditional Gothic texts. I will also raise some of the challenges that are associated with teaching what Lorna Piatti-Farnell and Donna Lee Brien call the "digital Gothic" (2). By summarizing what has worked for me (and what has not), I hope to start a conversation about some of the following questions: Are new methods and critical vocabularies required when we teach and analyze digital narratives? How much technical expertise is needed to teach a video game effectively? Are post-millennial students as digitally literate as they seem? What knowledge, skills, and insights are we expecting them to acquire when we assign a video game? What criteria should we use in selecting and evaluating online, self-published fanfic (and what exactly can our students gain from reading such texts)? How should we redesign traditional assessment tools (i.e., essays) to meet expanded definitions of Gothic literature and Gothic literacy? And, finally, from a practical and fairness standpoint, how can we ensure that all students have access to the new kinds of texts that we include on our syllabi?

## Biography

Natalie Neill teaches in the English Department at York University, Toronto. Her areas of specialization include undergraduate teaching and learning, Romantic literature and culture, the Gothic, satire, and film adaptation. She has published essays and book chapters on popular culture reworkings of *Frankenstein*, Romantic-period Gothic parodies, and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century horror novels (among other topics). She also participates regularly in pedagogical workshops and is especially interested in giving students experiential opportunities and using technology to enhance their learning.

## JUSTIN J. J. NESS

Gothic by Any Other Name: "Horror" as Censorship

### Abstract

Birthed by British nobility, the Gothic novel has a complicated relationship with its "bastard brother," the horror story. In his quest to ascertain a definition of the latter, Clive Bloom veritably throws up his hands: "Unlike the Gothic tale, the horror tale proper refuses rational explanation, appealing to a level of visceral response beyond conscious interpretation." Having performed my own analysis of dozens of critical definitions of "Gothic" and "horror"—which often are vague, inconsistent, and/or contradictory—I claim that the primary distinction between the two terms reflects neither literary form nor content but rather a post-WWII history of social mores. In 1983, Stephen Bann mentioned that the horror genre developed in its "current" form over only the previous few decades. Although Bann did not mention the Children and Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act of 1955, which banned the distribution of horror comics in Great Britain, Martin Barker discussed this era's political sentiment toward horror fiction as similar to the Red paranoia of McCarthyism.<sup>3</sup> Gina Wisker chronicles this "moral panic [as] originating in the fears of teachers and parents that [horror] stories ... were not merely terrifying [their] children but warping their imaginations." In conjunction with what Enda Duffy has identified as the convergence of mass literacy since the 1870s and the separation of high- and low-brow literatures throughout the twentieth century, my presentation would chart how the distinction between "Gothic" and "horror" became more commonplace as the mainstream religious cultures in Britain and America grew increasingly uncomfortable with non-traditional forms of anxiety-motivated fiction.

### Biography

Justin J. J. Ness's dissertation, under the guidance of David J. Gorman and Wolf Schmid, develops the new and practical methodology of "interest structure analysis," which he applies toward romance, horror, and detective fictions. (He will defend my dissertation this March.) He introduced my methodology at the 2017 International Conference on English Language, Literature and Linguistics (London), where he was awarded for "Best Presentation." Later that year, he presented an excerpt from his second chapter at the International Conference of the European Narratology Network (Prague) in a paper titled "The Literary Anxiety Complex: Story Interest in British Horror Fiction."

## JONATHAN NEWELL

Swine Horror: Pigs, Proles and Pessimism in Thomas Ligotti's *My Work is Not Yet Done*

### Abstract

At the climax of Thomas Ligotti's novella *My Work is Not Yet Done*, the vengeful spectre Frank Dominio, comes to a startling realization: he and everyone else in the world, indeed everything that exists, are extrusions from the tenebrous, behemoth entity he calls "The Great Black Swine Which Wallows in a Great River of Blackness" (137), a "nightmarish obscenity" (136) that manipulates knotted tendrils of itself like grotesque puppets. This, it turns out, is the secret essence of reality. The novella is a story of "workplace horror," its protagonist an alienated employee of a nameless company, driven to madness and violence by the cruelty of middle management. My paper builds on Darrell Schweitzer's reading of the text as an exploration of anxiety and agoraphobia, a literal "fear of the marketplace" (131), and on Ben Woodard's speculative realist interpretation of Ligotti's work as expressing a "malevolent idealism" (16), to consider Ligotti's novella in relation to the work of two seminal nineteenth-century philosophers: Arthur Schopenhauer and Karl Marx. I argue that Ligotti's tale of the corporate and the corporeal intertwines an essentially Marxist perspective on the exploitation of alienated labour with a Schopenhauerian ontology that construes the world we perceive as nothing more than a phenomenal manifestation of a de-individuated will-to-live, what Schopenhauer calls the "inner content, the essence of the world," a "blind, irresistible urge" (275). Focusing on the figure of the "swine" as a multivalent symbol for exploited labour, exploitative capital, and, ultimately, for the monstrous world-in-itself, my paper considers the novella's

examination of philosophical speculation and late capitalist superstructure, illuminating the political and metaphysical horror at the heart of *My Work is Not Yet Done*.

## Biography

Jonathan Newell is an instructor at Langara College and the University of British Columbia. His first book, *A Century of Weird Fiction, 1832-1937: Disgust, Metaphysics, and the Aesthetics of Cosmic Horror*, is forthcoming from the University of Wales Press. His research has been published in *Horror Studies*, *Science Fiction Studies*, and *Studies in Gothic Fiction*.

## SORCHA NÍ FHLAINN

The Rift Between Worlds, or the Gothic 1980s: Revisiting the ReDecade, Reagan's America, and Chasing Our Futures (Again)

### Abstract

The Netflix series *Stranger Things* is one of a host of recent 1980s-set texts that returns to the 1980s as a site of significant relevance today, revisited through the lens of cultural nostalgia. Recalling and resituating its viewers into the Reagan-era, the series presents its narrative at a period of profound cultural importance, setting its secondary space, the Upside Down, as a secondary world that conveys profound implications for a terrifying future. Examining the decade as a nexus point for socio-political change that is keenly felt today under President Trump, I argue that *Stranger Things* situates its characters at the precipice of a wrong turn in history, a period in which its protagonists, like so many 1980s heroes in its science fiction and fantasy cinema, are chasing their own futures in order to prevent a terrible fate that they have witnessed as a disjunction in space-time. These rifts in time, as argued by Wood, Britton, and Gordon, among others, are presented as having apocalyptic implications, perfectly in tune with the rhetoric of the Reagan administration, and are reimagined around moments of historical significance and pressure points (including crisis points in the Cold War, and presidential elections).

Best described as the ReDecade by critic Tom Shales, the 1980s is driven by the compulsion to 'replay, recycle, recall, retrieve, reprocess, and re-run' of earlier anxieties and concerns. And yet, for the 1980s generation onscreen, the future has to be chased down in the face of the Cold War, generational doom and alienation, and economic precarity. These themes and ideas as evidenced in celebrated 1980s texts cited in *Stranger Things*, alongside other 1980s generic tropes onscreen, articulate our own terrors in the contemporary moment; today, we loop back to the 1980s nostalgic past to trace the moment of the rift, the inception of the nightmare, in order to find solutions to, or to escape from, our present horrors.

## Biography

Sorcha Ní Fhlainn is Senior Lecturer in Film Studies and American Studies, and founding member of the Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies, at Manchester Metropolitan University. She has published widely in the fields of Gothic and Horror Studies and Popular Culture, specializing in monsters, subjectivity, and cultural history. Her recent books include *Clive Barker: Dark Imaginer* (Manchester University Press, 2017), and *Postmodern Vampires: Film, Fiction and Popular Culture* (Palgrave, 2019). She is currently leading a project on the long 1980s onscreen and its cultural legacy.

## LAUREN NIXON

"This is the conduct of a boy [...] not of a man: be more moderate in your speech.": The Terror Experience in the Gothic as Bildungsroman

### Abstract

In Ann Radcliffe's 1794 novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* the villain, Montoni, frequently admonishes both the heroine, Emily St. Aubert, and the men of his company for what he perceives as immature behaviour.

For Montoni sentiment, passion and grief are irrational, and therefore childish behaviours that cannot be tolerated: 'Count, this language is ridiculous, this submission is childish!—speak as becomes a man, not as the slave of a pretty tyrant.' Despite Montoni's cold obsession with maturity, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is nonetheless a coming of age novel: as she is not yet of age, upon her father's death Emily must resign herself to the care of her aunt, Madame Cheron. Unable to control her own fate, Emily must withstand the designs upon her person and property until she comes of age.

The terror which Emily experiences, particularly during her imprisonment at the castle Udolpho, therefore becomes formative in her journey from adolescence to adulthood. In the Gothic novels of the late eighteenth century, terror as an experience which expands the mind (as Radcliffe suggested in 'On the Supernatural in Poetry'), is repeatedly capable of refining the heroic and admirable qualities of the protagonists, thus becoming a transformative force that facilitates worthy maturity. Equally, Those adult identities forged without terror or trauma are often portrayed as insufficient: even the most promising child can grow into a deviant adult without proper education, as demonstrated by Theodore in Francis Lathom's *The Midnight Bell* (1798). This paper will explore and analyse the way in which the experience of terror is used to forge maturity and identity in the Gothic novels of authors such as Radcliffe and Regina Maria Roche.

## Biography

Lauren Nixon is a PhD researcher at the Centre for the History of the Gothic, at the University of Sheffield. Her thesis is entitled 'Conflicting Masculinities: The figure of the soldier in Gothic novel, 1764 to 1826' and her research explores ideas of heroism and masculinity in the Gothic. She has previously published works on Jane Austen, and is currently the co-organiser of Sheffield Gothic, the Reimagining the Gothic project and Gaming the Gothic.

## BEN NOAD

The Lovecraftian Asylum: Gothic Horror from Elsewhere

### Abstract

Contrary to the expectations of popular culture, Lovecraft's portrayal of the asylum is not an instantly recognisable Gothic space. In Lovecraft's tales, such as "Beyond the Wall of Sleep" (1919), and "The Thing on the Doorstep" (1933), the asylum is not a dimly lit padded cell; neither is it represented as a horrifying site open to institutional abuse. If anything, Lovecraft offers little description to his mental hospitals, which is surprising given the many "insane" narrators who end up in such institutions. 21st century popular culture, on the other hand, enjoys a fascination with the Lovecraftian madhouse as a physical space associated with criminality, monstrosity, and themes of imprisonment. For Lovecraft, madness is always an empathetically reasonable response to the threat of impossible, incomprehensible and unknown things from elsewhere; in Lovecraft's sanatoriums, madness is demonstrated as a sane response to cosmic horror, rather than a form of criminal transgression. Turning to historical sources such as the records of Butler Hospital, Rhode Island, and Danvers State Hospital, and relating these institutions to the known biography of Lovecraft, I argue that Lovecraft's asylums are curiously sanitised. There is something particularly privileged about Lovecraft's view of mental illness, privileged in the sense that it represents for Lovecraft an elite state of knowledge. By reading this impulse in Lovecraft's asylums, a sense of seclusion emerges; a haven for the weird reader as much as for the weird character. The Gothic horror of this institution comes from elsewhere.

## Biography

Ben Noad has recently completed his PhD at the University of Stirling. He successfully defended his thesis on Gothic Asylums at his viva voce in November 2018. Since then, Ben has lectured on Victorian literature to undergraduates, and continues to teach at the University. He has also delivered public talks about the history of Stirling and its Gothic connections. Ben's current research examines the links between Gothic tropes and regional Scottish folklore.

# P

## MARIA PARRINO

“Here, here! – it is the beating of his hideous heart!”: Gothic Acoustics in E.A. Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart”

### Abstract

Edgar Allan Poe’s narrative is filled with sound effects. Repetitions, onomatopoeia, euphonia and anaphora are only some of the literary devices used in a large number of his texts where sounds of all types abound: human and non-human, heard and imagined, voices and noises.

In ‘The Tell-Tale Heart’ (1843) a first-person narrator reveals he has committed a crime and forces the reader to listen to him. In his attempt to convince his interlocuter that his offence was caused by a fixation – the evil eye of an old man he was looking after – the narrative unfolds a sequence of acoustic issues which prevail over the visual. Endowed with an extraordinary acute hearing sense, the narrator records a range of auditory elements which build up his obsession in a sonic Gothic atmosphere. Eventually the crescendo of sounds surround the narrator who, unable to distinguish between the real and the imaginary, transforms into a sounding body, one which cannot contain the secret of the crime committed, haunted as it is by a heart beating, a sonorous presence, the voice of a body (M. Dolar). By analyzing the sounds effects of the story this paper will discuss how sound evokes terror, pity and distortion of the imagination. It will also discuss the relationship between human beings and the sounds of their environment, and analyse what happens when we interpret the audible world, and what happens when we listen to the body.

### Biography

Maria Parrino obtained her first PhD in English Studies from the University of Genova, Italy in 1989 and discussed a dissertation on Italian-American women’s autobiographies. She then pursued her studies and obtained a second PhD at the University of Bristol in 2014 with a thesis on nineteenth-century English Gothic Literature. She is currently a full-time teacher of English Language and Literature in a Secondary School in Vicenza, Italy. She is also a Research Fellow at the University Ca’ Foscari in Venice. She has published textbooks on short stories and Gothic Literature. She has written essays and articles which include “Lorrída magnificenza del luogo”. Gothic Aesthetics in Antonio Fogazzaro’s *Malombra*, (*Gothic Studies*, vol. 16 n. 1, 2014), “Signs for Speech”. Language Learning in *Frankenstein* (2015); ‘Crossing the Borders: Hospitality in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* and Florence Marryat’s *The Blood of the Vampire*’ (2017). In February 2018 she co-organized the International Bicentenary Conference on Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* which was held at the University of Venice, Italy.

## AARON PEDINOTTI

Virtual Tendencies of Gothic Aesthetics: Terror and Horror in the *Souls* Series and *Bloodborne*

### Abstract

This paper explores a relationship between the history of modern Gothic aesthetics and the virtualizing tendencies of contemporary media via an analysis of extremely popular, gothic videogames produced by Bandai-Namco Entertainment. It argues that core motifs and tendencies of Gothic fictions by Walpole, Radcliffe, Reeve and Lewis anticipated and contributed to the development of immersive and interactive virtual media throughout recent centuries. More specifically, it claims that in seeking to conjure experiences of overwhelming enormity and immersive darkness, gothic literature has relied upon well-rendered, 3D-mappable settings that provide a necessary contrast for the sublime motifs that evoke such experiences. Within this framework, terror and horror function as regulative aesthetic ideals and alternating modalities of the sublime whose tensions are built into the fabric and experiential sequences of virtual Gothic worlds.

After unpacking this argument, the paper turns to the deeply Gothic worlds of *Demon's Souls*, *Dark Souls 1-3*, and their Victorian cousin, *Bloodborne*, for contemporary demonstrations of its thesis. These games are first shown to contain extremely detailed renderings of immersive and interactive worlds whose finite scalar proportions provide a backdrop for sublime experiences involving interactions with player combatants and aspects of the setting. These experiences are then shown to involve alternating elements of terror (in the malevolently numinous aspects of the setting) and horror (in the player's engagement with grotesque enemies). Both are thereby shown to play a role in virtual world construction.

## Biography

Aaron Pedinotti received his PhD from New York University's Department of Media, Culture and Communication. He is currently engaged in research for two book projects. One is on virtual reality, videogames and gothic history. The other explores culture of the 1960s and '70s through the eyes of comic book artists and media theorists.

## MAYELIN PEREZ

Object Scare: Materiality, Consumerism, and Gothic Affect in Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* and Radcliffe's *Romance of the Forest*

### Abstract

This paper explores the Gothic's entanglement with material objects and consumer culture in eighteenth-century England. Through readings of two foundational Gothic novels, Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764) and Ann Radcliffe's *Romance of the Forest* (1791), it argues that the negative affects—of terror, horror, and sublimity—the Gothic stimulates are largely transmitted through material objects and their ties to consumerism. The Gothic as multimedia category of cultural production has, from its start, participated in the move towards voracious consumption and commodity mongering, an involvement that characterizes the mode to this day. The early century's vogue for Gothic objects and architecture saw residences and interiors furnished in a style exemplified by Walpole's Strawberry Hill—its wallpaper recreating Prince Arthur's tomb walls—and the Countess of Pomfret's "Pomfret Cabinet," inlaid with towers, arches, and coats of arms. Such unions of fashion, availability, individualized demand, production, and contemporary technology within single objects not only point to newfound levels of individual interaction with the market, but also to the shifting social function of objects. No longer markers of intangible hierarchal distinctions of class, knowledge, and taste, objects became prime participants in consumer practices that radically transformed English society. Transmediating the Gothic to fiction, *Otranto* and *Romance of the Forest* established Gothic novels as imaginative spaces particularly suited to negotiate the increased presence and agency of objects in everyday life; in positioning objects as agents of the supernatural that elicit Gothic affects, these texts speak to a social ambivalence surrounding commercialized materiality.

## LORNA PIATTI-FARNELL

As Raw As Flesh: Consuming Humans in TV Horror

### Abstract

Contemporary TV horror shows a particular penchant for transforming eating into a horror medium. The protean abilities of food, as both a cultural and a representational device, often provide the starting point for constructing the disaffecting frameworks of fear in TV horror, as consumption is de-familiarised and 'tortured'. This defamiliarisation becomes even more conspicuous when, in fact, it is the humans who become food, acting as the favourite prey for all manners of creatures, both alive and un/dead. From *The Walking Dead* to *iZombie*, from *In the Flesh* to *Hannibal* and *Santa Clarita Diet*, contemporary TV horror subverts the humans' position as the dominant species on the planet, and transforms human flesh into a primary consumable. Taking this shifted status of the human 'as food' as a point of departure, this paper explores the different modalities of anthropophagy in contemporary TV horror, especially as related to

images of slaughter, technology, and cultural subversion. As humans are hunted and eaten – by zombies, serial killers, and beyond – the narrative of consumption merges with bodily horror, ultimately providing an array of disturbing and repulsive viewing experiences. In my analysis, I explore how images of the everyday are subverted and destabilised, and unveil how the issue of hunger is problematized in connection to notions of social alienation and loathing.

## Biography

Lorna Piatti-Farnell is Director of the Popular Culture Research Centre at Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. She is the President of the Gothic Association of New Zealand and Australia (GANZA), and Chair of Gothic and Horror for the Popular Culture Association of Australia and New Zealand (PopCAANZ). Her research interests lie at the intersection of contemporary popular media and cultural history, with a focus on Gothic Studies. She has published widely in these areas, and is author of multiple single-authored books, including *The Vampire in Contemporary Popular Literature* (Routledge, 2014) and *Consuming Gothic: Food and Horror in Film* (Palgrave, 2017). Dr Piatti-Farnell is currently working on a new edited collection, entitled *Gothic Afterlives: Remakes of Horror in Contemporary Media* (Rowman & Littlefield, forthcoming 2019).

## HELEN PINSENT

It Takes *The Village*: Paranoia, Nostalgia, and the Terror Tactics of White Supremacy

### Abstract

This paper examines how M. Night Shyamalan's deconstruction of the narratives of American identity in *The Village* gains new relevance amid the recent resurgence of overtly white-supremacist politics. It builds on work that analyses the film as an interrogation of the frontier narrative, in the contexts of both settler colonialism and the self-righteous posturing of the War on Terror (see, e.g., Coats *et al*, Collier, and Däwes); this reading, however, considers the elders' founding of their anachronistic settlement not as a foray but a retreat – a dramatization of what Svetlana Boym terms “restorative nostalgia,” the desire to return and reclaim a past space or era imagined as safer and simpler (*The Future of Nostalgia*, xviii). Treating Covington Woods this way reveals similarities between the “just and right cause” its elders claim and the Make America Great Again movement. Both endeavours are a collective reaction to perceived injustice: the theft of life on one hand and of identity on the other. Furthermore, both are based on an unsustainable view of the past's promise of security, both are only achievable at the expense of the vulnerable, and, most especially, both rely on the creation of artificial threats to unify a community through fear. Viewed through this lens, Those We Don't Speak Of stand in for the manufactured Others Trump can't stop shouting about, and Covington Woods' elders embody the mindset of today's white supremacy, still using manipulation, rationalization, and outright deception to perpetuate a generational cycle of hatred and terror.

## Biography

Helen Pinsent graduated Dalhousie University in 2018 with her MA, specialising in contemporary Speculative Fiction. Before beginning her PhD, she is taking a hiatus year, though she is still waiting for the “hiatus” part. She is currently a full-time Teaching Assistant in Dalhousie's English and Computer Science departments, always making time for independent research and creative writing.

## FRANZ POTTER

Peddling Horror: The Writers of the Gothic Chapbook

### Abstract

Undoubtedly, the most reviled offspring of the literary gothic, chapbooks or bluebook pamphlets are considered by some to be not only 'low quality gothic fiction', but the 'corrupted form' of the gothic', the 'disposable rubbish of a subliterate body of literature' whose 'publication and commercial value stand as an index of the sensation-craze into which the gothic vogue degenerated in its declining years.'

Chapbooks and pamphlets were a whole series of short tales, 36 to 72 pages long, thought to be redacted, plagiarized, abridged, extracted or imitations of popular novels and well-known gothic novels.

This paper will look at two authors of Gothic chapbooks: Sarah Wilkinson and Isaac Crookenden. I will examine the biography of the prolific Sarah Wilkinson, author of over fifty gothic chapbooks and who published with at least twenty-five different publishers, exploring the author's role in the creation of short tales of terror. I'll also look at the biography of Isaac Crookenden, a schoolmaster, who penned numerous chapbooks, and was the publishing rival of Sarah Wilkinson. Crookenden's principal objective in writing was not strictly monetary, but an overwhelmingly moral or pious didacticism. His narratives focused primarily on family secrets and the horrors of incest. Additionally, it considers the author/reader relationship as Crookenden and Wilkinson were both educators who explored and emphasized morality, often using horror in their works.

### Biography

Franz Potter is Associate Professor at National University in Southern California, where he directs the MA in English specialization in Gothic Studies.

## MELISSA MYRANDA POWELL

The Haunting of Edna Pontellier: Sublime Terror, Abjection, and Regression in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*

### Abstract

Many scholars of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* argue that it is a sexual transformation that fuels Edna Pontellier's true self-as-I to abject her false self-as-object. I contend that sublime terror is what awakens Edna. As terror infiltrates her home and familial unit, the home shifts from a familiar safe space to a grotesque form of grandeur. The sublime forces Edna to struggle with a process akin to Arthur Schopenhauer's concept of metaphysical voluntarism, which is the process of successfully elevating oneself above an object of will and into a subject of knowing with representation. Schopenhauer defines "will" in *The World as Will and Representation* as that which is at the forefront of the consciousness yet lacks representation; therefore, in Schopenhauer, the subject and object are not quite distinguishable. The subject only becomes aware of this will by particular acts (§21); for Edna, this act is abjection. Unfortunately, Edna becomes haunted by her abjected false self instead of successfully transitioning from object to subject. Consequently, as the abject presence increases, Edna runs from her false self, repressing her sublime terror rather than achieving sublimation, and *The Awakening* becomes a process of Edna's failed attempts at gaining passage into the world of representation. Desperate for sublimation, Edna's suicide symbolizes the psyche's regression towards Julia Kristeva's pre-Oedipal chora, an existence free of signifiers and self.

### Biography

Melissa Myranda Powell is a second-year PhD student at Ball State University. In 2014, she presented at PCEA's "Oh! The Horror! The Supernatural in Literature, Film, and Pop Culture" on the panel "Mommy,

Where do Vampires Come From?" and in 2017 at MMLA's 59th annual convention on the panel "Women in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Britain." She has also moderated multiple graduate panels for MMLA and maintains a standing invitation as moderator for MMLA's Undergraduate Symposium Panel: "Nineteenth Century Literature." Melissa's research interests include the long nineteenth century, all things gothic and horror, the sublime, transatlantic literature, and psychoanalysis.

## **SATA PRESCOTT**

Why Aren't American Ghosts Real? An Examination of Dime Novel Era Ghost Stories

### **Abstract**

Dime novel writers explored early forms of almost all of modern genres. While the westerns, detective novels, and even sci-fi adventure stories might be more well known, there exist a surprising number of ghost stories in the popular mass literature of the 1830s-1910s. However, one queer quirk of dime novel ghost stories is that the ghost is very rarely a genuinely supernatural element. Far more often, dime novels that feature a ghost element end with the reveal of the "true" nature of the spirit: that it is in fact a mistaken identity, a naturally occurring aspect of nature, a strange person with impressive (but not supernatural) ability, or a malicious action by a villain. In addition to these ghosts "explained" by the laws of nature, however, dime novels, story papers, and weeklies do contain some legitimate supernatural ghosts. What are the tropes and trends of these spook stories, and how do they fit into the overall narrative of American national identity? And, complementary to that, how do American ghosts differ from their English counterparts in Victorian popular writing? This paper will attempt to discuss possible answers to these questions, and will cover the structure of a few specific examples ghost stories from both styles of telling: "real" and "unreal."

### **Biography**

Sata Prescott is the Albert Johanssen Project Director at Northern Illinois University, managing a large scale dime novel digitization project. He has worked in libraries on digital projects, makerspaces, and art, artifact, and textile archives. Independently, he studies queer media and transgender issues in pop culture. He has two cats, one husband, and too many tea cups.

## **DAVID PUNTER**

Reading Degree Zero: Shirley Jackson's Monsters

### **Abstract**

In this paper, I want to talk briefly about four of Shirley Jackson's novels: *Hangsamán* (1951), *The Bird's Nest* (1954), *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959) and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962). I am particularly concerned with the challenges these writings present to the reader, who is forced to cope with various narrative complexities as well as to endure the present absence of narrators and principal characters who possess a peculiar inscrutability, amounting at times to a blankness, a kind of degree zero of affect and sympathy. There are monsters everywhere in Jackson, but they are not monsters of the external world; rather, they are deformities of the interior, a veritable teratology of the psyche.

I am interested in Harold Bloom's pronouncement about Jackson's work, namely that 'her art of narration [stays] on the surface, and could not depict individual identities'. This, I would suggest, is at least in part because her writing floats in a medium that dissolves the artificial construct of 'individual identity', and wrestles with the notion that we can make clear distinctions between surface and depth; to what extent this in turn is a response to specific historical and social circumstances is a topic obviously open to debate.

## Biography

Academic, writer and poet, until recently Professor of Poetry, University of Bristol; author of *The Literature of Terror*, *Gothic Pathologies: The Text, the Body and the Law*, *The Gothic Condition: History, Terror and the Psyche*; and many other works on Gothic, modernity, the literature of the passions and contemporary writing.

# R

## NATASHA REBRY COULTHARD

Consumption, Horror, and Posthuman Becoming in Lovecraft's "The Color Out of Space"

### Abstract

Recently, posthumanism has become a keen focus of Gothic scholars. This is unsurprising given posthumanism and Gothic's shared challenges to humanism and shared fascination with ontological and epistemological uncertainty, liminal states, hybrid identities, unstable binaries, and monstrous becoming. Known for cosmic horrors showcasing human mental and physical disintegration, H. P. Lovecraft's fiction has become a natural fit for posthuman readings of Gothic monstrosity. Of interest for this paper is Lovecraft's "The Color Out of Space," within which an alien entity comes to Arkham, Massachusetts on a meteorite and contaminates the area around the Gardner farm, creating the "blasted heath." The horrific unknown substance is said to "burn and suck" organic life and thus warp vegetation, animals, and humans into unrecognisable forms. The Gardner family simultaneously consume and are consumed by the shapeless colour, and as it feeds on them "body and mind," the Gardners become something inhuman." In my reading, I contend that Lovecraft's story can help us better theorise both posthumanism, helping us to move past the critical focus on technological-human hybridity, and posthuman gothic, building on the productive work being done by critics with figures like zombies and vampires. I propose that a focus on consumption as a site of becoming—with digestion representing the moment at which the environment fuses with the self—provides a useful way into discussions about consumption's role in identity constitution and the liminality of eating and digestion, offering unique possibilities for conceptions of posthuman identity and Gothic subjectivity.

## Biography

Natasha Rebry Coulthard is an instructor in the Academic Writing Program at The University of Lethbridge. Her dissertation, *Disintegrated Subjects: Gothic Fiction, Mental Science and the fin-de-siècle Discourse of Dissociation*, was nominated for a CAGS/UMI Distinguished Dissertation Award. She has published articles on mesmerism and neurology in late-Victorian gothic fiction. Her current research examines Victorian food writing, especially dietetics, through the combined lenses of posthumanism and critical nutrition studies, with a focus on how Victorian nutritional scientists sought to secure Western assumptions about human ontology and subjectivity through dietary advice, and the ways in which they ultimately undid humanism in the process.

## LEAH RICHARDS

*True Blood's* Hep-V, Race, and Blood-Borne Infections

### Abstract

While inserting itself into the southern gothic tradition, the HBO series *True Blood* brings the monstrous "out of the coffin" to create vampire protagonists who are subjected to threats of body horror that embody uniquely American historical forces. Most significantly, in the series' final seasons, vampires are deliberately infected by a shadowy cabal with Hep-V, a mutation of a naturally occurring virus that rapidly

poisons their blood, causing pain, weakness, and a violent need to feed before visibly spreading through their veins and bringing about the “true death,” complete bodily destruction.

The vampires in *True Blood* represent marginalized groups within America, and the prejudices and mistreatment which they face is clearly a critique of American bigotry: God Hates Fangs, we're told by the religious right, but vampires and their allies argue that they deserve equal rights, including protection from persecution and the freedom to marry. One can certainly read the Hep-V plotline, with its rapid spread through a sexually fluid, seemingly promiscuous, and seductive population under the eyes of a politically- and religiously-motivated organization, as a critique of the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s, a crisis exacerbated by misinformation, misunderstanding, and mainstream fear. However, I argue that the visceral body horror in *True Blood*'s Hep-V narrative, building on earlier seasons' representations of specific types of bodily violence against vampires, is engaging, however inconsistently, with America's history of medical violence against Black bodies, a history in which HIV/AIDS plays only a small part.

## Biography

Leah Richards is Associate Professor of English at LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York, and co-editor of the peer-reviewed journal *Supernatural Studies*. A Victorianist by training, she is now focusing her research on monsters and revenants in popular culture as symbols of oppression, exploitation, and resistance.

## NANCY RITTER

“All Incubi”: An Intersectional Analysis of Sheridan Le Fanu’s “Carmilla”

### Abstract

In Sheridan Le Fanu’s 1872 homoerotic vampire story “Carmilla,” the eponymous vampire arrives on the scene accompanied by a strange figure: “a hideous black woman, with a sort of colored turban on her head...nodding and grinning derisively...with gleaming eyes and large white eyeballs, and her teeth set as if in fury.”

Only the governess observes this woman in the shadows of the overturned carriage. All the other characters (including Laura, the narrator) are absorbed in attending to the swooning Carmilla, who is not yet identified as a vampire and invited to stay at Laura’s home to recover from the accident. The black woman never appears again, and her presence is utterly unexplained.

It is this crucial absence – and the insight of the governess – that this paper will investigate. Through a fusion of the psychoanalytic tradition initiated by Sigmund Freud and intersectionality theory of Kimberle Crenshaw, I argue that Le Fanu creates a symbolic economy in which the governess, the vampire and the black woman serve as Freudian doubles of one another, giving voice to repressed anxiety.

However, far from being a strictly sexual anxiety, Le Fanu’s fears center on race *and* class *and* gender. Stripped of history and individuality, these three figures pose an imagined threat to all three forms of privilege. As such, for Le Fanu, they are interchangeable and expendable. The black woman’s absence is, therefore, not a true absence: when Carmilla returns at the end of the story, she evokes the return of the anxieties that the black woman and the governess represent.

## Biography

Nancy Ritter is a first-year M.A. student at Georgetown University. A graduate of Wheaton College (IL), her interests include Victorian literature, religion, and gender and sexuality studies.

## JACK ROONEY

“What wouldst thou?": Conjunction as the Crisis of Terror and Horror in Three Romantic Poets

### Abstract

In the same volume of *The New Monthly Magazine* containing Ann Radcliffe's posthumously published essay "On the Supernatural in Poetry" (1826), the *locus classicus* for the distinction between terror and horror, appears a short, anonymous note defending Radcliffe against "a rumour (often contradicted) about Mrs. Radcliffe's being haunted by her own horrors." Radcliffe's indignant defender insists that her "works show that, however overpowering the phantoms of her imagination might be to others, they were held by her in entire subjection. . . . [F]or if the magician were not free from the working of his own spells . . . how could he raise, employ, and dismiss them at pleasure?" This essay proposes to read Radcliffe's formative distinction between the obscure anticipation of terror and the positive presence of horror through this analogy of conjuration. It examines scenes of conjuration in Percy Shelley's *Alastor* (1816) and *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), Byron's *Manfred* (1817) and *Cain* (1821), and Thomas Lovell Beddoes's *Death's Jest-Book* (1829). Reading these works alongside accounts of conjuration from nineteenth-century grimoires and folklore, and interrogating Susan J. Wolfson's recent subordination of the conjured specter to specters latent or repressed, this essay argues that conjuration scenes function as the critical site for the division of terror from horror in high Romantic drama. Shelley's sublime conjurers experience Radcliffean "grandeur and obscurity," whereas Byron's malefic conjurations precipitate ruinous horror. Between these two versions of conjuration lies a compound of terror and horror that eschews Radcliffean definition, the unplaceable figure of Beddoes's phantom-wooer.

### Biography

Jack Rooney is a second-year doctoral student in the Department of English of The Ohio State University. He earned his M.A. in English from Case Western Reserve University (C.W.R.U.) in 2017. Before he pursued graduate study in English, he earned his J.D. with health law concentration at C.W.R.U. School of Law in 2014 and his B.A. in English at C.W.R.U. in 2011. His research has focused on Gothic, fantastic, and phantasmatic subjectivity in long-nineteenth-century British fiction and poetry and specifically on the ways in which literary writers incorporated insights from contemporary discourses in philosophy, psychology, and occultism into their fashioning (and dis-fashioning) of a viable subject. His other major research interests include Romantic and Victorian poetics and theories of prosody. He has a forthcoming article, "'Words of Healing': The Literature of Automatic Writing as Treatment and Prescription in the Victorian Age," on the intersection of automatic writing and Spasmodic poetry in discourses of alternative health and wellness in Victorian Britain. He has recently presented papers at the annual conferences of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism and the Midwest Victorian Studies Association.

## SUZANNE ROSZAK

Transnational Terror: Teaching the Feminist Gothic in the Americas

### Abstract

Apart from courses focused exclusively on the Gothic, one of the most exciting venues that I've found for teaching Gothic texts is the feminist literature course. In both my interdisciplinary first-year writing seminars and my more specialized English courses with feminist themes, I incorporate short fiction and novels with Gothic elements and invite students to consider the possible functions of the Gothic in relation to social protest across geographic and temporal boundaries. Whether I am teaching a small seminar at a liberal arts college like Scripps or a lecture course at a large public university like California State University, San Bernardino, I find that my students respond most enthusiastically to the Gothic when they find it in texts that they may not previously have interpreted as such, and when they are able to re-envision the genre of the Gothic itself as one that has an urgent relevance to historical and contemporary issues ranging from postpartum depression and "women's work" to class-based pressures on women to marry and intersectional problems of racial prejudice and gender non-conformity. With this in mind, I

teach stories like Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wall-Paper" and novels like Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* with special attention to how Gothic elements from decaying houses and hauntings to interior currents of emotional distress enhance their intervention in these conversations from the US to the Caribbean and beyond. The success of my students' writing about the Gothic in the Americas and intersectional feminism speaks to the generative nature of this approach.

## Biography

Suzanne Manizza Roszak holds a PhD in comparative literature from Yale University and is a lecturer of English at California State University, San Bernardino. Her articles on modern and contemporary transnational American literature have appeared in *Arizona Quarterly*, *Comparative Literature*, and *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, among others.

## MICHELLE RUSHEFSKY

Horror Capriccios; (Re)Imagining British Nineteenth-Century Fiction through the Veil of American Horror

### Abstract

In 2009, Seth Grahame-Smith published *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2009), a horrified twist on Jane Austen's enduring love story *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Monster mashup sub-genre flourished from 2009 to 2012, with some titles still produced in the last few years. These texts, which I have labeled as neo-nineteenth-century horror capriccios reveal how monstrosity and neo-Victorian fiction blend together creating an interesting representation of American horror authors' current status.

Using neo-Victorian criticism and American horror experts such as Stephen King and Xavier Reyes, I will define these titles as neo-nineteenth-century horror genre. Through Stephen King's *Danse Macabre* (1981) and other American horror scholars, I will introduce these neo-nineteenth-century horror capriccios as a burgeoning cultish subgenre that provides insight into the American horror genre and how the genre accommodates twenty-first century readers. As Jeffery Cohen argues, the monster is consistently repositioned according to collective hear. Echoed by Stephen King and Xavier Aldana Reyes explored monstrosity reveal is contemporary western cultural fear. Knowing American horror as a genre's status will expose what society currently fears. I argue that texts like *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* connote a kind of cultural breakdown, a method to suggest fear of modernity combined with a call to a seemingly simpler time. These two separate and opposing spheres, when combined, allows for a dismissed subgenre to be studied within the American horror discourse.

## Biography

Michelle Rushefsky is a PhD student at the University of Surrey. Her research focuses on neo-nineteenth-century novels with horrified and monstrous tropes with the intention of doing a literary, cultural and historical comparison between the long nineteenth-century and the twenty-first century literary texts.

## S

## ANTHONY SALAZAR

Cannibals, Demons, and AIDS: An Exploration on Monsters in Barker's *Sacrament* and Brite's *Exquisite Corpse*

### Abstract

As Eve Sedgwick notes, studying Gothic literature—and by extension, horror and other abnormal genres—leads to "an exploration of 'the perverse'" (90). The perverse that Sedgwick alludes to incorporates challenging themes that expose the sociopolitical aspects of said culture. To exemplify such claims, this presentation examines the representation of the AIDS crisis featured in Clive Barker's

*Sacrament* and Poppy Z. Brite's *Exquisite Corpse*. While scholars such as Judith Pastor and John Clum note various representations of the disease in literature, they ignore delving into specific genres and instead focus solely on generalized assumptions across all forms of fiction.

By studying these texts and theories, I first analyze the impact the horror genre plays within the literature of AIDS. From incorporating theories by Jeffrey Cohen, Stephen Asma, and Noel Carroll, I then argue that AIDS, the disease, can be viewed as the overarching monster in these novels. Though the characters in Barker's *Sacrament* and Brite's *Exquisite Corpse* are noted for their horrific and perverse actions, they still pose as vulnerable victims of the disease. I ultimately argue a need for community growth as a method of combating the monster. Will, a character in Barker's *Sacrament*, notes, "I don't think queers are very good to one another and we should be. But fuck, the way you hear people talk in a bar I think: Well fuck, the *whole world* hates us" (Barker 236). Thus, by merging queer theory and monster theory within Barker's and Brite's novels, I argue that both fiction writers utilize the horror genre as a way of confronting the need for unity rather than separation during the AIDS crisis.

## Biography

Anthony Salazar is a first-year Ph.D. student at Northern Illinois University, studying twentieth-century American literature with an emphasis in queer theory. By exploring the representation of queer characters, I strive to merge theory and practice together. To accomplish this, I incorporate both cultural and sociopolitical issues from recent genres—such as children's literature, horror, and science fiction—in hopes that the literary criticism I present and publish encourages action and change.

## DAVID SCHAUER

Kit Reed's Contemporary Female Gothic

### Abstract

Kit Reed's *Mormama* (2017) is the latest installment from American writers into the category of the Female Gothic. Since the concept was conceived in Ellen Moers' *Literary Women* (1976), it has become more flexible over time and has started to encompass a variety of viewpoints surrounding contemporary feminism. Female Gothic literature encompasses the representations of romance and love, patriarchal culture, and, most centrally, domestic entrapment, all of which are fully on display in Reed's final novel. By using a handful of female characters, Reed is able to encompass the tone of the American southern gothic and the ghostly haunted house, while still maintaining the path laid by previous Female Gothic writers. Reed specifically uses her haunted family home to construct the entrapments of domesticity and the search for an individual identity. Reed parallels Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959) in the construction of a female-centered plot entrapped in a home supernaturally bent on keeping her confined. While Jackson is credited with creating the modern model of the "haunted house novel," Reed is the focus of the continued tradition of combining spectral horror and feminism. By placing the two pivotal novels side-by-side and keeping Moer's definitions and constructs in mind, we are able to view the path of the Female gothic novel from its origins to current times. This path becomes even more visionary when placed alongside the track of the Southern Gothic genre and the history of the American South, where all of these values converge.

### Biography

David Schauer is currently a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Southeast Missouri State University, working on his Master's Degree in English Studies. His research and current work focuses on looking at the trope of the haunted house in contemporary Southern Gothic literature and the reflection of Southern Gothic self-identity. He earned my Bachelor's Degree in English from Illinois State University.

## SUSANNE SCHWERTFEGER

Who's Afraid of Emily St. Aubert? How Gothic Illustrations Provided the Visual Endorsement or Rejection of the Curious Female

Although the term “damsel in distress” was coined through the gothic heroine facing terror and horror, the female protagonists are most often the active part in moving the narrative by exploring their strength and pushing their limits. While in the “masquerade of playing the role of the overly feminine gothic victim” (Hoeveler 1998), their most frequently applied mean is curiosity – an attribute not accepted for women by society in the 18th and 19th century. This longing for knowledge, let alone the idea of exploring and utilizing its effects, was considered indecent and “[a]t the turn of the century, curiosity appears as a tyrannical desire to control others that creates monsters” (Benedict 2001). Nevertheless, the adventures and gruesome encounters resulting from a curious female in the gothic novel where the selling point for its audience and made it self-evident motifs for the respective illustrations.

In my paper, I will examine the depiction of the inquisitive heroine and more important the implied consequences of her actions to disclose substantial differences in the judgement over what was considered a suitable behavior for women. After a close reading of images from three editions of Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* published in England (Robinson 1799, and Longman, Hurst, Rees & Orme 1830) and France (Maradan 1798) I will discuss the correlation between the editors, their clientele, and country-specific history of ideas (in particular Godwin and Rousseau). I will show, how the discourse on “ideal womanhood” found a playing field in the gothic illustrations and the curious woman was addressed in the medium.

### Biography

Susanne Schwertfeger currently works as a research associate and lecturer at the department of Art History at the CAU Kiel, mainly teaching 20th- and 21st-century art, after previously studying History of Art, pre- and early history, classical archeology and ancient history at the university. In her postdoctoral thesis (“Habilitation”) project, she is investigating visualization concepts of the Gothic Novel. Her other main areas of interest include post-1945 art, contemporary ceramics, photography and illustration.

## SHANNON SCOTT

Body Horror through Body Appropriation: The Bloody Chambers of Stepford and the Armitage Estate

### Abstract

This paper looks at the horror of domestic violence, specifically how folkloric aspects of Charles Perrault's “Bluebeard” (1697) manifest in *The Stepford Wives*, both Ira Levin's 1972 novel and Bryan Forbe's 1975 film, and *Get Out* (2017), directed and written by Jordan Peele. In both films, the murder of a lover or spouse is central to the “terror,” a plotted but possibly escapable situation. In contrast, the “horror” comes from the motive, which is not to simply murder the lover but to appropriate their body, to remove their soul/self and replace it with another.

Both protagonists, Joanna Eberhart (Katharine Ross) and Chris Washington (Daniel Kaluuya) are preyed upon by their partners, who are aided by communities or families. For Joanna, her husband, in conjunction with the Men's Association, ultimately want their wives to remain eternally youthful, but also temperamentally docile. To this end, Joanna is to become essentially a robot. For Chris, his girlfriend and her family similarly wish to appropriate his body, while his consciousness remains subdued, for the use of physically-failing white people. Chris and Joanna are valued as “trophies” due to their attractiveness and talent, yet both are considered troublesome for their intelligence and curiosity—two traits that help save Bluebeard's young wife from the chopping block. Here, the horror comes not just from a bloody chamber or a basement with “black mould” or a “creepy” men's club, but from those who wish to separate what they deem a valuable body from a consciousness/identity that is superfluous or a nuisance.

## Biography

Shannon Scott is Professor of English at the University of St. Thomas and Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota. She has published articles and book reviews in various academic publications and newspapers. Her most recent essay, "Wild Sanctuary: Running into the Forest in Russian Fairy Tales," will appear in *The Company of Wolves* Collection, published by Manchester UP in 2019.

## DANIEL SERRAVALLE DE SÁ

Walter Hugo Khouri and José Mojica Marins: Terror and Horror in Brazilian Cinema

### Abstract

This work aims at discussing the concepts of terror and horror, as proposed by Ann Radcliffe (*On the Supernatural in Poetry*, 1826), in two Brazilian films: Walter Hugo Khouri's *O Anjo da Noite* (Night Angel, 1974) and José Mojica Marins' *Ideologia* (Ideology, 1968). The objective here is to connect films which are representative of Brazilian culture to a broader notion of Gothic, discussing how the concept manifests itself in the national context and in what ways the Khouri and Mojica's films can be considered expressions of a Brazilian Gothic or Tropical Gothic. At first glance, this idea seems to be oxymoronic (sunniness and gloominess alongside Gothic motifs), however, in spite of the apparent contradiction, there are a number of points of contact capable of bridging these supposedly irreconcilable ideas closer. This Gothic reading of Brazilian films departs from elements that have its origins in Anglo-American culture, highlighting the different meanings that such elements gain in the tropical context. Trapped somewhere between repetition and difference, to interpret Brazilian films, in the light of the Gothic means to address the issue of "construction of meaning" in the history of Brazil, since the Gothic has the potential to revive old traumas and generate discussions about social contexts.

## Biography

Daniel Serravalle de Sá is Senior Lecturer at Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC). His research interests incorporate the study of popular culture and the relationship between literature, cinema and other arts. In recent years, Daniel has written about the Gothic and its manifestations in different cultural contexts. He is the author of the book *Gótico Tropical: o sublime e o demoníaco em O Guarani* (Edufba, 2010) and has published chapters in the books *World Film Locations: São Paulo* (Intellect, 2013) *Tropical Gothic in Literature and Culture: The Americas* (Routledge, 2016). *Latin American Gothic in Literature and Culture: Transposition, Hybridization, Tropicalization* (Routledge, 2018) and, *B-Movie Gothic* (Edinburgh University Press, 2018).

## ANNA SHAJIRAT

Female Gothic Horror: Maturation, Trauma, and Sexual Violence

### Abstract

This paper examines the female gothic tradition of the long eighteenth century and its presentation of female maturation as a process of trauma and loss marked and marred by threats of sexual violence. The female gothic locates horror not in supernatural monsters and spectacularized violence as does its male counterpart, but in the mundane realities that women must learn about their subjugation in worlds dominated by men. Taken as exemplary texts of the gendered genre, Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and Regina Maria Roche's *Clermont* (1798) structure female development in terms of irrevocable disruption in the dangers they experience from the world of reality, from men in positions of power who perpetually threaten their autonomy and integrity with sexual violence. In this sense, the female gothic is the true horror genre. Further, this gendered genre of horror exposes the reality of maturity for eighteenth-century women who were subject to literal and figurative forms of violence from both private and public spheres, from intimate relationships and the law. In its redistribution of horror into

the realm of reality, the female gothic gives voice to the exceptionally unexceptional disempowerment women experienced at the hands of loved ones and the law alike in the long eighteenth century.

### **Biography**

Anna Shajirat is Assistant Professor of English at Quincy University, where she teaches eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature. Her research focuses on gender and race in gothic literature of the long eighteenth century. Her work on the female gothic is forthcoming from *Studies in Romanticism, Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, and *Women's Authorship and the Early Gothic*, edited by Kathleen Reeves.

### **MATTHEW SIVILS**

The African American Ecogothic of E. Levi Brown's "At the Hermitage" (1893)

#### **Abstract**

Advertisements for the August 1893 Harper's New Monthly Magazine noted that the issue included work by an otherwise unknown author, one E. Levi Brown who had contributed a compelling southern gothic story called "At the Hermitage." The advertisements made as much of the author's identity as they did of the story itself, describing Brown as "the wife of a colored minister in the South" who had "constructed a tale of unusual power out of the superstitions of her race."

Set in a plantation community in the reconstruction South, "At the Hermitage" relates the plight of a young African American sharecropper named Religion, who must employ the services of a conjurer to free her sister from an insidious curse. The story contains a sophisticated indictment of racial oppression, and it delivers this criticism in a narrative ripe with elements of what we now call the ecogothic. Concerned with the cultural portrayal of the intersection between human fear and the natural world, the ecogothic addresses, in part, how "the contours of the body are mapped, contours that increasingly stray beyond the bounds of what might be considered properly 'human.'"

In this paper—the first study of Brown's story—I contend that just such an ecogothic violation of boundaries serves as a central component of "At the Hermitage," a tale that deftly pushes the margins between the human and the nonhuman. Ultimately, Brown paints the postbellum South as a haunted house, one in which the specters of slavery and racial oppression cohabit with a supernatural evil that threatens the very humanity of its victims.

### **Biography**

Matthew Wynn Sivils is Professor of American literature in the Department of English at Iowa State University. His most recent publications include the critical anthology, *Ecogothic in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (with Dawn Keetley, Routledge, 2017), a scholarly edition of Paul L. Errington's *Of Wilderness and Wolves* (University of Iowa Press, 2015), and a monograph, *American Environmental Fiction, 1782–1847* (Ashgate/Routledge, 2014).

### **PHILIP SORENSON (with Olivia Cronk)**

Terror in Quotation: *TerrorVision*, Trash, and Flow

#### **Abstract**

*TerrorVision* (1986) is very much a product of 1980s low-budget horror. It was filmed in a single, simple set, with garish colors and absurd costuming, and emits the mood of pornography. Made by the same studio that produced such iconic horror films as *Re-Animator* (1985) and *From Beyond* (1986), *TerrorVision* explores the relationship between social decay and garbage culture in a domestic context. Yet, the film advances its critique of low culture through the lowest of cultures: cheaply made monster

cinema. It does so in a way that seems self-aware (an Elvira-like character arrives on scene, constant allusions to other low-rent productions are made); and it raises many critiques made by social conservatives while reflecting critiques of those critiques by thinkers such as Raymond Williams. This film places terror in quotation marks, much in the hyperbolic mode of the monster movie, while presenting its abject content. And in this space between terror and horror, it advances a muddled but ultimately compelling portrait of social attitudes around and about the advancing satellite-television era.

## Biography

Philip Sorenson is a poet and lecturer at Loyola University Chicago. His poems and reviews have appeared in numerous online and print journals. His first full-length collection, *Of Embodies* (Rescue Press), appeared in 2012; his second, *Solar Trauma* (Rescue Press), appeared in 2018. He co-edits *The Journal Petra* with Olivia Cronk.

## CATHERINE SPOONER

Unwrapping the Mummy's Bandages: Whiteness, Fabric and Horror in Imperial Gothic Fictions

### Abstract

In H. Rider Haggard's imperial Gothic novel *She* (1886), the white African queen Ayesha disrobes before the British explorer Holly, calling attention to 'the gleam of the pink flesh' beneath the 'soft white, gauzy material' clinging to her 'swathed mummy-like form'. In Bram Stoker's *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903), the mummified Egyptian Queen Tera's body is similarly unwrapped to reveal the 'white wonder' of her 'beautiful form' beneath 'a profusely full robe of white linen'. The act of disrobing in these texts, as Rebecca Stott has established, recalls strip tease scenes in Victorian pornography (1992). It is also, however, directly inspired by the Victorian fad for mummy unwrapping demonstrations. In these novels, the mummy's white wrappings substitute for skin in ways that are simultaneously eroticised and deathly.

While racialised whiteness is a standard preoccupation of imperial Gothic scholarship, the properties of textiles in mediating and constructing this whiteness has been given less attention. This paper draws on and extends Richard Dyer's argument in *White* (1997) that images of the 'white woman as the idealised creature of light' underpin the cultural dominance of racial whiteness and reinforce a heterosexual matrix. The paper identifies in the act of unwrapping a slippage between luxury fabric, skin, veil and grave clothes that simultaneously supports and contests this cultural dominance. It argues, therefore, that the white dress is both a fundamental prop to ideologies of whiteness and ineluctably reveals the horrors at their heart.

## Biography

Catherine Spooner is Professor of Literature and Culture at Lancaster University, UK. She has published widely on Gothic in literature, fashion, film, television and popular culture, including the books *Fashioning Gothic Bodies*, *Contemporary Gothic* and *Post-millennial Gothic: Comedy, Romance and the Rise of Happy Gothic*. She has also co-edited *The Routledge Companion to Gothic* (with Emma McEvoy), *Monstrous Media/Spectral Subjects: Imaging Gothic from the Nineteenth Century to the Present* (with Fred Botting) and *Return to Twin Peaks: New Approaches to Materiality, Theory and Genre on Television* (with Jeffrey Weinstock). She was co-president of the International Gothic Association 2013-17.

## EVAN STEUBER

The Gothic Novel's Commitment to Form: Wherever You Go, There You Are

### Abstract

According to theorists such as M.M. Bakhtin and Ian Watt, the novel's beginnings are both a continuance and rejection of the great epics. Whereas the epic hero had a predetermined destiny (and one

representative of the larger community's past, present, and future), the novel hero was meant to represent "becoming-man," an individual whose destiny was not pre-written. And yet the nature of the novel's predestined ending (as with all art forms) works as a formal stricture that cannot be escaped. This is echoed in 18<sup>th</sup> century novels like Defoe's (plodding works that seem destined to continue forever and so by ending break dramatically with the structured whole) and Sterne's (the complex procedure of detailing real-time events and of properly contextualizing anything in its entirety). This is not to mention post-modernism's more recent engagement. However, while these pieces formally face these challenges, early Gothic novels take these problems into the heart of their plotted events. The idea of being haunted by the past (like the haunting of the "uncanny" familiar) is a perfect analogical exemplar of the formal restraints of the novel—these characters cannot completely define themselves or the future, because the past refuses to let them go. Gothic novels are honest about the human dilemma that haunts the form that makes them possible. Works like *Jane Eyre* and *Great Expectations* (a novel thoroughly haunted by Gothic elements) exemplify the human and formal struggle to become.

## **Abstract**

## **Biography**

Evan Steuber recently received their PhD in the Program for Writers at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Their research and teaching interests center on creative writing, gender and stand-up comedy, British literature, the history the novel, and the history of aesthetics. Evan's creative work has appeared or is forthcoming in journals such as *LUMINA*, *Apofenie*, *Crack the Spine*, and *The Gravity of the Thing*.

## **OLIVIA STOWELL**

Performing Father-Motherhood: Frankenstein as Maternal Creator, the Creature as Feminized Creation, and the Gendered Horror of the Birth-Myth in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

## **Abstract**

Within the birth myth of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, both father-mother-creator and child-creation function as male actors who occupy feminine positions or roles, and these internal frictions of gender create conflicts both external and internal. This paper traces the ways that Frankenstein and the Creature are presented as male, yet identify with symbolic constructions identified as female, such as "mother" and "Eve." Arguing that Frankenstein seeks both to destroy motherhood and claim it for himself by attempting to acquire the capacity for childbearing, "Performing Father-Motherhood" explores the simultaneous desire to possess and annihilate the feminine within its supposedly male characters. Within the mental landscapes of its two central characters, the moment of horror lies in the moment of discovery that they occupy positions in the world aligned with femininity, and both of their destructive projects function as attempts to achieve power and a masculinity performed through a "ruling-over" of others. The complicated gendered nature of the lives of the two central male characters in Shelley's narrative suggest that while the text is about men, it is also deeply concerned with femininity and motherhood, and in particular the ways in which that which is horrific is also that which defies neat and binary gender categorization, and that the deepest, underlying monstrous horror may come from the internal collision and conflict of masculine and feminine.

## **Biography**

Olivia Stowell is an undergraduate student at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, CA pursuing a dual degree in English Literature and Theatre Arts. Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in the *Eunoia Review*, *Glass Mountain*, and Westmont College's literary magazine *The Phoenix*.

## ZACHARY SUETTA

“Can You Direct the Confused Suggestions of My Brain?": Passion and Reason in Dacre's *Zofloya*

### Abstract

Using Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or The Moor* (1806) as the framework for my study, I argue that the gothic motif of the Doppelgänger illustrates through the obscure and often deleterious relationship between the original and the double the genesis of a misjudgment that occurs during a fit of passion. The demonic Zofloya simultaneously exists within and without Victoria di Loredani, resembling the exteriority of the passion and the interiority of reason found within Hume's model of human behavior. His opaque, fluid nature mirrors Hume's description of volition caused by a violent passion that seemingly creates a "false supposition" independent of the sufferer's preexisting judgment. Indeed, Zofloya embodies both elements of the double-relation: his nightmarish appearance during a fit of rage suggests a connection to Victoria's anger, but in his mortal form, Zofloya demonstrates composure more synonymous with calm reasoning. Dacre obfuscates Zofloya's exact level of influence by having Victoria actively contribute to her downfall through her natural predisposition to anger and pride, thereby emphasizing the necessary interdependence of the two wicked characters. Zofloya primarily acts as an ancillary to Victoria, enticing her to finally realize her original immoral fantasies. Unlike a passion which only stimulates volition, however, Zofloya corrupts Victoria's thoughts so that they will an action contrary to her own good. At the height of her irrationality, Victoria believes that the only way for the reluctant Henriquez to return her love is to become her hated rival Lilla, a decision which indicates that the advantages remain inaccessible to her own self. Dacre's ambiguous ending, which wavers in attributing Victoria's ruin to either an "innate love for evil" or an external "infernal influence" (268), reiterates her confusion toward the exact limits of self-governance, suggesting that perhaps no amount of mental fortitude can fully oppose a passion at its greatest intensity.

### Biography

Zachary Suetta is Visiting Instructor of Business Communication at Cleveland State University and a PhD candidate at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. His ongoing dissertation examines the external and internal dynamics of anger at play within the writings of subaltern artists such as women, political dissenters, and those of the laboring class of the Romantic era, arguing that these marginalized individuals view the passion as essential in understanding the nature of subjectivity and the self but often struggle in its artistic execution because of societal expectations and the volatile nature of the passion itself. He can be contacted at [zsuetta@gmail.com](mailto:zsuetta@gmail.com).

## ELOISE SUREAU

Gothic *Maldoror*

### Abstract

Published in 1869 in Belgium to evade French censorship, the eponymous novel *Maldoror* is a hodgepodge of themes, styles and voices. Presenting the shifty Maldoror as an aberrant individual who tenaciously and persistently attacks both mankind and morality, this strange text is greatly influenced by Gothic works of fiction. The Count of Lautréamont, Isidore Ducasse's penname, purposefully mentions a few chosen early Gothic novelists in his *Poésies*, published after *Maldoror*, if for no other reason than to criticize their work in defining his own method, branding Ann Radcliffe a "cracked-specter" for instance. There is however a great deal of Gothic inspiration in *Maldoror*. Lautréamont borrows from early Gothic writings but goes further, creating a new genre, the Gothic-plus, more Gothic than Gothic, combining terror and horror.

This essay will examine a few chosen images as well as a few selected stylistic motifs in *Maldoror* in light of Ann Radcliffe's and Matthew Lewis' works, from whom Lautréamont copiously borrows. By examining how *Maldoror* usurps elements from *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Monk*, we will see how and why *Maldoror* creates a new genre. In fact Lautréamont does not choose between high and low, between terror

and horror, or between sublime and grotesque. He combines them all, joins opposites and embraces dichotomies to create a new, arguably better or at least unique Gothic genre.

## Biography

Eloise Sureau is Associate Professor of French at Butler University. Her publications include "Parodies and Perversions: A Study of the Various Forms of Transgression in *Maldoror*" in *Sin's Multifaceted Aspects in Literary Texts*, and "Gothic Film in the Classroom: Exploring Examples of British, German, French and American Gothic Literature with Filmic Springboard" (with Fred Yaniga) in *Films with Legs: Crossing Borders with Foreign Language Films*.

# T

## JOEL T. TERRANOVA

Gothic Dice: The Atmospheric Experience of Terror and Horror in *Dungeon & Dragons' Ravenloft*

### Abstract

Written and published by Tracy and Laura Hickman in 1983 as a product for TSR Hobbies' *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons (AD&D)* game system, the adventure module *Ravenloft* marked the first union between the then new hobby of pen-and-pencil role-playing games and classical gothic fiction. Indeed, at its core *Ravenloft* is an exploration of an archetypical gothic castle ruled over by the vampire Strahd von Zarovich, a late twentieth-century American reworking of Count Dracula, by a group of unsuspecting players. Over the course of a game session, players find themselves in nightmarish situations eerily similar to those experienced by characters like Emily St. Aubert and Mina Harker, plunging through a "long labyrinth of darkness" before finally confronting Strahd. *Ravenloft* would prove immensely popular and was a success for TSR, so much that it has been followed by numerous *Ravenloft*-branded products, the most recent published in 2016.

At the center of any *AD&D* game is the atmosphere created by the adventure that causes players to psychologically respond to various obstacles encountered. This paper plans to explore how *Ravenloft* uses the devices of terror and horror to create a classical gothic experience within a modern role-playing game adventure that positions players not as observant readers, but as invested participants whose in-game survival is not guaranteed by the shared narrative. Attention will also be given to game mechanics, player-created situations, and the overall psychological framework used by *Ravenloft* to achieve this gothic narrative that actively and directly exposes players to horror and terror.

## Biography

Joel T. Terranova is an Instructor of English at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. His primary area of focus is gothic fiction of the late eighteenth century. He has had recent articles appearing in *Gothic Studies* and *Mallorn*, and has made contributions to the upcoming *The Cambridge Guide to the Eighteenth-Century Novel, 1660-1820* and *Horror Literature through History: An Encyclopedia of the Stories that Speak to Our Deepest Fears*. In 2013, he prepared a critical edition of John Palmer Jun.'s *The Haunted Cavern* (1795) for Valancourt Books. He has been a member of the IGA since 2007 and has served as book review editor of *Studies in Gothic Fiction* since 2015.

## DIPSIKHA THAKUR

“To Set the Watch”: Border-crossing and Gothic Time in Helen Oyeyemi’s *White is For Witching* (2009)

### Abstract

This paper analyses the work of what Richard S. Albright has called the “aporetics of time” (2009, 23) in the formation of the Gothic in Helen Oyeyemi’s 2009 novel *White is For Witching*. The novel pivots around its young female protagonist Miranda Silver, who lives in a house haunted by the malevolent spirit of her great-grandmother, Anna, in Dover. Miranda is relatively unaffected by this until her mother, Lily, dies while working in Haiti. Upon her mother’s passing, Miranda begins to wear her watch, ‘a brass body with thin leather arms, ticking away Haitian time, five hours behind ours’ (5).

This watch animates a conflict with the white nationalist spirit of the Silver House which manifests in Miranda’s somnambular stabbings of immigrants in Dover under its influence, her self-recognition as “Anna”, a girl identical to Miranda but “perfect” and her vampirism towards her girlfriend Ore, whose Yoruba ancestry causes the House to hate her.

Examining the ways in which the contemporary conflicts of nationhood, ethnicity and migration ultimately retrace older orderings of the globalized world through the adoption of the GMT/UTC as the foundation of time standardization in the 1884 Prime Meridian Conference, this paper interrogates the ways in which the focus of the Gothic on generational time has been replaced by questions of conflict between national time and global time—over the idea of “Englishness” embodied in the white, British body of Miranda.

### Biography

Dipsikha Thakur, a third-year PhD candidate at the University of Virginia, is working on contemporary global anglophone novels and the idea of the “transnational Gothic.”

## CHRISTY TIDWELL

Haunted Suburbs, Dutch Elm Disease, and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*

### Abstract

Wes Craven’s *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) is not typically considered an eco-Gothic film, despite its titular focus on elm trees. To be fair, trees do not feature prominently in the film, much of which takes place indoors and underground. However, the title resonates with a specific environmental issue: Dutch elm disease and the devastation of elm populations across the U.S. in the 20th century. By the 1980s, more than 77 million elms had died from the disease, and the trees that “defined one of America’s most storied and archetypal places—Elm Street” (Campanella 1)—were largely gone. The film’s title, read across the Gothic form of the film, reflects anxiety about this loss.

The Suburban Gothic is perhaps a more obvious categorization for the film. Bernice M. Murphy argues that the subgenre “invariably begins at home” and builds upon an “uneasy fascination with the connection between living environment and psychology” (2). *A Nightmare on Elm Street* certainly illustrates and critiques nostalgic notions of the American home, but it is not only the home as social construct that is an artifact of American nostalgia; elms were planted across the central and western U.S. out of nostalgia for homes back East, and by 1984 the name Elm Street was itself a monument to a species that had once flourished. The film is haunted not just by Freddy Krueger but by elm trees, raising the specter of the American elm while also suppressing the knowledge of their loss.

### Biography

Christy Tidwell is Associate Professor of English and Humanities at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. She serves as co-leader of the Ecomedia Special Interest Group for The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) and was one of the organizers of *A Clockwork Green*:

Ecomedia in the Anthropocene (ASLE's first Nearly Carbon Neutral virtual symposium). She is co-editor of and contributor to *Gender and Environment in Science Fiction* (Lexington Books, 2018) and has also published in *ISLE* and *Extrapolation* as well as multiple edited collections. She is currently developing a book-length project examining dinosaurs and prehistoric creatures in speculative fiction and co-editing a book on ecohorror with Carter Soles.

## TRAE TOLER

"Kill Her Mommy, Kill Her!": Final Girls and Maternal Influences in 70s and 80s Slasher Cinema

### Abstract

After all of her friends have been slaughtered, their blood staining her clothes, the Final Girl stands eye-to-eye with evil. In slasher films, this figure is the character who overcomes all encounters with the crazed killer. In her collection, *Men, Women, and Chainsaws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film*, Carol Clover explores the prevalence of the Final Girl in slasher films through the use of psychoanalytic-feminist film theory. Clover describes the Final Girl as the survivor who, "looks death in the face, but...also finds the strength to either stay [with] the killer long enough to be rescued, or to kill him herself" (35). Her theory is groundbreaking because she challenges the previously held notion of slasher cinema as being misogynistic, however; many scholars have taken issue with various aspects of her argument. One controversial piece of Clover's argument is the idea that, in the final moment of the film, the gender of the slasher and Final Girl switch. In other words, symbolically, the slasher becomes female, and the Final Girl is depicted as male.

In this paper, I analyze the depiction of the Oedipus complex, phallic imagery, and castration anxiety as a means to explore and continue the discussion surrounding Carol Clover's notion of the "Final Girl." Unlike Clover, I argue that gender is not traded between the killer and survivor; instead, the survivor becomes a phallicized female—still embodying femininity—and the killer becomes a castrated male. Specifically in my project, I will be looking at the films *Halloween*, *Friday the 13th Part 2*, and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*. Ultimately, this project seeks to shed light on the neglected influence of maternal sources in relation to the Final Girl as a means to focus on the lack of a shift in gender.

### Biography

Trae Toler has received his MA from the University of North Carolina Wilmington in English Literature, and a certificate in Women and Gender Studies. Through the lens of literary criticism and psychoanalysis, Trae navigates the realms of the uncanny in slasher cinema, gothic literature, romantic literature, and gender studies.

## LUKE TURLEY

"Who doesn't enjoy a good scare?": Liberal Horror in Netflix's *Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* (2018)

### Abstract

Laura Mulvey in 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' (1975), argued for a dualistic male gaze which, from behind the camera, subjugated its female subjects in two specific ways: voyeurism, which saw the punishment of women through pain, be it emotional or physical; and scopophilia, in which women were eroticised to fulfil the fantasies and desires of male spectators. Now nearly 45 years later, I argue that with the move towards an increasingly liberal society we have seen the creation of a liberalised gaze, which in contrast to the gaze that subjugates women, targets the prejudiced and discriminatory. *Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* (2018), an adaptation of the long running Sabrina comic book series by Archie Comics, uses tropes and motifs of both the Gothic and Fantasy to create this liberal gaze at numerous points within the first part of season one. This gaze is two-fold and presents us with two narratives: an exile narrative (which corresponds to voyeurism) where the intolerant are identified, punished and then either silenced or removed from society in some way; and a redemption narrative (which corresponds to idolism) where the intolerant become tolerant (normally reserved for parents or friends of LGBTQ

individuals). Specifically, a gothic example such as *Chilling Adventures* uses depictions of horror and terror to create this gaze in the form of curses and hexes being used upon those deemed guilty.

## Biography

Luke Turley is a first-year PhD student at Lancaster University. His thesis focuses on magic and 21st Century politics in Contemporary Fantasy and he is currently writing a chapter which considers the representation of Feminism in Fantasy and the impact of magical systems on patriarchal structures. His wider research interest includes Fantasy, Science Fiction and the Gothic across a variety of media.

Title

## ELIZABETH TURNER

The Gothic Housewife Heroine in Ira Levin

### Abstract

This paper discusses and analyzes the emergence and proliferation of the 1950s ideal, the “happy housewife heroine,” as it haunts the pages of two mid-to-late-twentieth century modern Gothic novels: Ira Levin’s *Rosemary’s Baby* (1967) and *The Stepford Wives* (1972). As I argue, each of these selected novels explores, in different ways, the experiences of women who become Gothicized in their contemporary environments as well as, through implication, castigating the oppressive gender constructs imposed by modern and contemporary American culture. In *Rosemary’s Baby*, Levin introduces us to a caricature of traditional femininity. Rosemary Woodhouse, an attractive, young housewife, has recently signed a lease at a trendy New York City apartment. Positioned alongside her actor-husband, Guy, the Woodhouses mirror more traditional 1950s gender roles than their 1960s setting initially suggests. While the surface of the narrative provides a horrific account of secret covens and satanic worship, Levin seems to suggest that the real horror of the story lies in the subjugation of women. While postwar culture demonized women for breaking free of their traditional roles, in Levin’s novel it is the happy housewife who is punished for relinquishing her agency. Elaborating upon this reading, *The Stepford Wives* critiques the supposed gender progress made during the women’s liberation movement. In this story, Walter and Joanna Eberhart move their family away from the dangerous urban landscape (and the equally dangerous feminists) to the picturesque town of Stepford. It is here, under the guises of familial perfection, that husbands can seek retribution against their liberated feminist wives, by replacing them with robots. The result is yet another caricature of femininity. Stripped of their power and identity, the women of Stepford have been reduced to products—pretty dolls—manufactured for the sole purpose of serving men. To frame my argument, I adopted a historicized approach, drawing specifically from Betty Friedan’s sociological study *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). I will argue that the iconography of the Gothic provides a series of metaphors for exploring and challenging these oppressive constructs that support the proliferation of the happy housewife ideal. Furthermore, I will explore how the Gothic provides an effective counternarrative, which enables writers to address and transgress the ideologies that entrap them.

## Biography

Elizabeth Turner is an Adjunct English Instructor at Lehigh Carbon Community College in Schnecksville, PA. She teaches a range of courses, including Research and Composition, Introduction to Literature, and American Literature. She has an MLitt (with distinction) in the Gothic Imagination from the University of Stirling in Stirling, Scotland.

# U

## JAMES UDEN

Gothic Horror in Eighteenth-Century Women's Travel Writing: the Strange Case of Eliza Fay

### Abstract

In December 1779, the rebel forces of Hyder Ali, Sultan of Mysore in south-western India, kidnapped Eliza Fay and her husband. Imprisoned in a tiny room full of rats, they found a trapdoor leading into a cramped attic space. They clambered up. But then they faced a terrifying night together, fending off the attacks of mysterious creatures beating wings against their faces – ‘evil spirits’, said Mr. Fay. When day broke, the truth was revealed. No evil spirits but ‘poor harmless bats’ had molested them, and the pair were ‘laughing very heartily at it ourselves now’. Unfortunately they were still imprisoned by anti-colonialist insurgents in India. Catherine Morland never had it so bad.

Fay's anecdote has all the hallmarks of a Gothic narrative, complete with an ending typical of the Radcliffean ‘explained supernatural’. Yet Fay's Gothic self-dramatization in *Original Letters from India*, published posthumously in 1816, raises a number of questions. First, if Fay had in fact written this account in 1779, it would give her relatively unknown work an important place in the history of the eighteenth-century Gothic, since so many familiar Gothic tropes already seem in place. Second, her use of the Gothic is different from that of other travel writers like Radcliffe and Piozzi, since it forms part of a global encounter with a culture well off the map of the genre as it was then conceived. This paper will introduce Fay's work and suggest what place it might have in a revised historiography of Gothic literary history.

### Biography

James Uden is an associate professor of Classical Studies at Boston University. He is the author of books and articles on Greek, Latin and English language and literature.

## CHRISTOPHER URBAN

Imag(ined) Critter: Perspective, Art, and the *Other* in Marsh's *The Beetle*

### Abstract

Richard Marsh's *The Beetle* challenges social considerations of gender and authority in the late Victorian era, and in our own time. The text is notable in Marsh's employment of intersectional narration; he maintains focus on the transformative experiences of his narrators as catalyzed by an unnamed, unvoiced, ambiguously sexed, foreign, and thoroughly curated villain. In this process, the text erodes boundaries between conceptions of victimhood, agency, and subject/object position. Scholars have impressively wrestled with the novel's ensuing social and political issues, cataloging, as Vuohelainen notes—its central position in the gothic revival of the *fin de siècle*, as an “ambivalent, even counter hegemonic” exploration of race, gender, degeneration, and empire. Issues relating to the roles and representations of art in the text, however, merit further attention.

Marsh's novel is saturated with images of beetles: in photographs and woven into rugs, through latticework and as embodied creatures. These images and the mesmeric capital they project play on ekphrastic limitations and subject/object confusion, in order to establish subaltern agency within the novel and through it. By extension, and in keeping with this conference's theme, these images establish distinctions between the horror experienced by the Beetle's victims, and the terror experienced by Marsh's readers. My project traces constructions of *otherness* and representation to argue that artistic objects in *The Beetle* disrupt *fin de siècle* London's male-oriented, imperial hegemony—underscoring and

resisting gendered and colonial anxieties of the period, and implicating contemporary readers in the construction of modern *otherness*.

## Biography

Christopher Urban is a doctoral candidate at West Virginia University, where he focuses his studies on the long nineteenth century in British literature. His research interests include Theory of the Sublime, Interart Poetics, the Gothic, and Transnational Romanticism.

# V

## ALEXANDRA VALINT

The Permeable Frame: The Terror of Narrative Collaboration in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*

### Abstract

From its ostensible beginnings with Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, the gothic genre has long used multiple narrators, as critics Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Peter Garrett have discussed. Through an analysis of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), I argue that the gothic novel often uses multiple narrators to stage the gothicization of the narrative itself. Generally, scholars have interpreted *Wuthering Heights*' two narrators—tenant Lockwood and servant Nelly Dean—as conventional witnesses to, rather than participants in, the gothic energy at the novel's core. I argue, however, that Lockwood and Nelly do not stand outside the gothic; rather, through what I call the novel's "permeable frame," the boundaries between Nelly and Lockwood threaten to dissolve, just as they do between Catherine and Heathcliff. Boundaries—either unnaturally crossed or imposed—are central to many theories of the gothic. As Eugenia DeLamotte writes in *Perils of the Night*, "Gothic terror has its primary source in an anxiety about boundaries." Driven by fear, Nelly and Lockwood attempt to enforce boundaries—physical, psychological, emotional, and intellectual—between themselves and the destabilizing chaos of the Catherine-Heathcliff relationship, as well as between each other. Such attempts, however, usually falter or fail. In particular, Lockwood and Nelly unexpectedly bond through their storytelling sessions, resulting in a closeness that Lockwood literally flees from at the close of the novel. And most significantly, the narratorial handoffs between Nelly and Lockwood—frequent, ambiguous, and subtle—further erode the boundaries between the two narrators in a way that resembles Catherine and Heathcliff's boundary-defying relationship. In short, my interpretation fuses narrative theory and gothic theory to illuminate how much of the novel's simmering terror comes from its unique deployment of the frame structure.

## Biography

Alexandra Valint is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Southern Mississippi, where she teaches Victorian literature, gothic literature, children's/young-adult literature, and narrative theory. She has published articles in *Dickens Studies Annual*, *Victorian Literature and Culture*, *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, and *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, as well as a chapter in *New Directions in Children's Gothic: Debatable Lands*. Her book manuscript, *Narrative Bonds: The Victorian Multi-Narrator Novel*, explores Victorian novels that use multiple narrators, including several Victorian gothic novels.

## NICHOLAS VAN DER WAARD

Always More: A History of Gothic Motion from the Metroidvania Speedrunner

### Abstract

Speedrunning is to play videogames as fast as possible, through a process of recorded motion. This paper explores speedruns in relation to Metroidvania, a videogame subgenre.

Metroidvania games are not simply Gothic in visual terms. Trauma and death are codified inside their space to build or affect narratives of motion, to which speedrunning is simply another form. In Metroidvania, motion is always Gothic (of terror and horror): it cannot exist in isolation from Gothic structures that represent constant temporal exchange. For the speedrunner, motion equates to gained time. They strive to avoid not just death, but losing time through failure. They fashion rules relative to a tyrannical space they hope to master. Through their own history as a group, speedrunners historicize Metroidvania's Gothic themes through a structure that exerts continual dominance over them. Their records of motion remain Gothic in form and function, through kaleidoscopically variable routes that encourage the highly-repetitive motion of speedrunning.

Charles Pratt amends that "spoil-sports" (defined by Johan Huizinga as "persons who do not acknowledge or respect the jurisdiction of a game's ruleset") are generative and destructive. Unlike Pratt, this paper categorizes speedrunners as striving to play Metroidvania as intended, "taken off the shelf and put into a machine." These activities serve as "a social confluence of motivations and practices" that accumulate within Metroidvania as Gothic chronotopes: corpses, statues, and effigies. Speedrunning is symbolized inside the game—as a historical event, and part of a flexible ruleset extolled by Metroidvania developers in favor of Gothic motion.

## Biography

Nicholas Van Der Waard studied English literature at Eastern Michigan University and graduated from there, in 2016. From September 2017 to September 2018, he attended Manchester Metropolitan University, enrolling in their MA program, English Studies: the Gothic. He wrote my master's thesis, "Lost in Necropolis," on Metroidvania and castle-narrative. For his PhD, he wishes to continue examining Metroidvania as Gothic texts, wherein the speedrunning of them amounts to Gothic interpretation.

## CAITLIN VANCE

Gothic Body Horror as Feminist Tool in Carmen Maria Machado's "The Husband Stitch"

### Abstract

According to the traditional but unstable binaries, the female gothic is supposed to gravitate towards Radcliffean terror, and the male gothic towards Lewisite horror. However, some recent female gothic writers have employed horror, especially body horror, to produce sophisticated feminist insights rather than cheap thrills. In her feminist gothic story "The Husband Stitch," contemporary American fiction writer Carmen Maria Machado address sexual, physical, and emotional violence against women, especially in the context of their romantic relationships with men. For women, these types of violence are often intertwined. Sexual assault, for example, typically produces both immediate pain and body horror as well as pervasive psychological terror related to violation and lack of control.

After Machado's unnamed protagonist gives birth, she is given drugs to knock her out so that the doctor can stitch her up. When the men think she's already unconscious, she overhears her husband asking the male doctor to put an extra stitch in so that her vagina can be like a virgin's. Male control of women's bodies has implications beyond just physical violence or pain; this scene points to institutionalized misogyny that degrades and devalues women, in which women's bodies are often used as a means to further oppress their minds and spirits. The protagonist also wears a ribbon around her neck, but won't let her husband touch the ribbon or tell him what it's for. His constant pestering eventually breaks the protagonist down and she allows him to untie the ribbon, which makes her head fall off, but her reaction to this is one of emotional pain (loneliness) rather than physical pain. As a decidedly feminist writer of the contemporary gothic, Machado further breaks down the unstable binaries between mind and body, masculine and feminine, terror and horror.

## Biography

Caitlin Vance is a PhD student studying Literature & Creative Writing at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She received an MFA in Creative Writing from Syracuse University. Her poems and short stories have appeared in *Tin House*, *The Southern Review*, *The Collagist*, *ZYZZYVA*, *The Literary Review*, *Washington Square Review*, and other magazines. Her poetry book, *Think of the World as a Mirror Maze*, was published by Stubborn Mule Press in June 2019, and her poetry chapbook, *The Little Cloud*, was published by dancing girl press in 2018. Besides creative writing, her academic interests include gothic literature, speculative fiction, feminist theory & criticism, and children's & YA literature.

## JOSHUA VAUDRIN-MCLEAN

Archaisms and Intertextuality; or, Translating the Spanish Gothic of Pascual Pérez y Rodríguez

### Abstract

Having originated from a pseudo-translation (i.e., Walpole's *Otranto*), the Gothic has fittingly enjoyed a close, fruitful relationship with translation overall. The 1790s saw "a spirited exchange" of manifold translated Gothic novels between Britain, France, and Germany. Spain, however, then culturally insular and under strict censorship laws, was largely excluded, at least until the 1810s, when Spanish translations of Radcliffe first appeared. Yet, the first major flowering of Spanish Gothic originals in the 1830s yielded no translations into English or any other language during the authors' lifetimes (or even the century to follow).

This paper discusses my deeply archaizing and intertextual approach to translating Pascual Pérez y Rodríguez's Radcliffean masterpiece, *La urna sangrienta, ó, El panteon de Scianella* [The Bloody Urn; or, The Vault of Scianella] (1834). It further outlines the innovative use of a specially prepared searchable English Gothic corpus to facilitate genre- and period-appropriate solutions, and argues for my approach's unique suitability for this work and Gothic works in general, while also confronting limitations and challenges. The resulting translation is intended to exhibit its source text's intricate intertextual links to its British and French inspirations and embody "the pastness of the past" at the heart of the Gothic. Finally, this paper also aims for a broader, interdisciplinary discussion about how translators interested in Gothic literature might specially adapt translation theory and practice for Gothic texts and, perhaps most importantly, encourages them to translate other forgotten works worth reading and studying to stimulate a new spirited exchange.

## Biography

Born and raised in the Seattle area and based in Mexico City since 2011, Joshua Vaudrin-McLean is a freelance Spanish-to-English translator who has harbored a special interest in the Gothic since he happened upon *The Italian* and *The Monk* in high school. He is currently working to complete his translation of *La urna sangrienta, ó, El panteon de Scianella* (1834) by Pascual Pérez y Rodríguez, which he intends to be his first of a series of translations of unjustly forgotten Spanish Gothic works. He holds a BA in History with a Medieval Studies Minor (Seattle University) and recently earned an MA in Translation with Distinction (University of Bristol).

## W

## ALEX WAGSTAFFE

Eco-horror in Romantic Gothic Works

### Abstract

This paper will examine the works "The Haunted Beach" by Mary Robinson and "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, comparing the eco-horror in both. In these poems, nature is a

source of fear as well as punishment. Haunted nature traps the male characters these poems depict for a perceived breach of morality. In Coleridge's "Rime," the cruel and senseless murder of the albatross causes supernatural nature to punish the male characters. Nature exacts its own form of justice by trapping the male characters in a haunted liminal space which nature controls. In "The Haunted Beach," by Robinson, nature punishes a male character in response to a crime the character committed against his fellow man. Like the characters in "Rime," this character cannot leave the space nature created for his prison. The male characters in these poems have committed an immoral act, and Gothic nature acts as judge. The horror of these poems is that it is not entirely fear which immobilizes these characters, but dark nature. In Radcliffe's definition of terror and horror, terror enables action and horror disables action. The characters in these poems are in stasis: their actions are meaningless in this space. However, the poems differ in their resolution. The male character in "Rime" partially redeems himself by an act of selfless love towards nature, and although nature still haunts him, he is free to leave his prison. Robinson's "Beach" does not allow the same redemption for the fisherman, and he remains on the haunted beach. This paper will explore the reasoning behind why the endings are different. Coleridge allowed his character redemption whereas Robinson did not. I suggest that their perceptions of immorality and redemption differ, and that gender plays a role in Robinson's decision.

### **Biography**

Alex Wagstaffe is a Romantic Gothic scholar from Prince George, Canada. They graduated in May, 2019 with an MA in English from the University of Northern British Columbia.

### **BENJAMIN WALLIN**

To What Has No Name: Confronting Childhood Trauma in Netflix's *The Haunting of Hill House*

### **Abstract**

From the brides' consumption of the "half-smothered child" in *Dracula* to Jack Torence's bruising and breaking of his son in *The Shining*, the Gothic has what Punter and Byron deem a "history of abuse" specifically towards children. Where the Nell of Dickens' *The Old Curiosity Shop* ends with an adolescent death, the Nell of Michael Flannigan's reimagined *The Haunting of Hill House* must confront the trauma endured in childhood as an adult.

This presentation will illustrate the Gothic of Netflix's *Hill House* in two ways. First, the narrative structure of the series takes on a Gothic form of narrative assemblage deemed by Maggie Kilgour as using "bits and pieces of the past." Flannigan choice of two timelines and employing the story of the Crains instead of Dr. Montague's research team is a choice of Gothic creation as a "power of combination." Second, the series builds upon the Gothic trope of child trauma by not merely showing the trauma, but illustrating the effects of childhood trauma upon the adult. Flannigan's exploration of childhood trauma enters into a realm of Gothic terror which carries a particular relevancy in current trauma studies. The series, whether intentionally or not, will be shown to reflect the growing awareness among researchers and educators of the long-term effects of childhood trauma.

### **Biography**

Benjamin Wallin is a 6th grade math and science teacher on Chicago's West Side. He is certified in trauma-informed education through Mindful Practices and has earned his MAT at the University of Chicago. He is a current participant of the teacher mentorship program at the Urban Education Institute at the University of Chicago.

## LIANG WANG

"Liminal space between vision and blindness": Exploration of the Monstrous Other in Barriers to Low Vision Rehabilitation

### Abstract

Depictions of impaired or obscured vision have long been a trope in the Gothic genre: from the Creature's request that Victor Frankenstein's eyes be covered as he listens to his tale to Edgar Allan Poe's preoccupation with "luminous orbs," both seeing and unseeing. Impaired vision is also, of course, a very real medical condition, one that has been written about first-hand by patients in memoirs such as Stephen Kuusisto's *Planet of the Blind* (1998) and Kleege Georgina's *Sight Unseen* (1999) -- memoirs that, curiously, rely on Gothic conventions to convey both the phenomenological experience of vision loss and the difficult navigation in the journey to acceptance. In this paper, I will examine how gothic discourse can explain patients' reluctance to pursue Low Vision Rehabilitation (LVR). Even after eliminating quantifiable variables, many studies have shown that only half of the eligible patients have utilized LVR after referral. In response to the rise of reductive discourse, strict categorization, and medicalization of the body during the Enlightenment, the Gothic has ventured into the in-between, unknowable, and liminal spaces of what defines a human, as well as explored and subverted the often-exclusionary categories of the normative subject by acknowledging and sympathizing with the monstrous, social other. It is, thus, a particularly fruitful lens through which to consider narratives such as Kuusisto's and Georgina's -- narratives that depict the terror of discovering the uncannily familiar in grotesque caricatures of blindness, the resulting abjection of the visually impaired identity, yet ultimately the triumph of self-acceptance and rehabilitation.

### Biography

Liang Wang is a final-year undergraduate at Johns Hopkins University. She studied American Gothic literature in the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences under Dr. Amanda Zecca and received a Dean's Undergraduate Research Award for the project "Uncanny Shadow of Modernity: Impact of Gothic Fiction on the development of Medical Practices."

## CHRISTOPHER WEIMER

The Shadow of *Don Quixote*: Walpole, Cervantes, and *The Castle of Otranto*

### Abstract

No Spanish novel was more popular in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England than *Don Quixote*, elements of which were intertextually deployed by numerous authors in a range of British works that we now categorize as Gothic, including Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*. The European reception and interpretation of Cervantes's novel during the development of Gothic fiction was neither constant nor consistent, however. For a reader of Walpole's era, *Don Quixote* was not yet the heroic idealist beloved by the Romantics for his valiant struggle to restore nobility to a mundane, fallen world. Enlightenment readers instead viewed the novel through a primarily comic lens, and Walpole himself lamented in a 1774 letter that he was "sorry Cervantes laughed chivalry out of fashion." It is this ambivalence -- Walpole's understanding of *Don Quixote* as, in Anthony Close's phrase, a "funny book," mixed with his sentimental regret at the success of its satire -- which can provide one key to *Otranto*'s generic instabilities and incongruities. As commentators such as George Haggerty, Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, and Ahmet Süner (not to mention Clara Reeve) have pointed out, there is a great deal of comedy in this "Gothic Story," though it is far more often discussed in terms of the terror it allegedly elicits. The present study will explore the intertextual relationship between *Don Quixote* and *Otranto* and consider the significance of the Spanish novel's Enlightenment reception to the British work so commonly considered a foundational Gothic text.

## Biography

Christopher Weimer is Professor of Spanish at Oklahoma State University, where he teaches Spanish literature and language as well as interdisciplinary humanities. He has edited two critical anthologies devoted to *Siglo de Oro* Spanish literature, co-founded the online journal *Laberinto*, and published articles in numerous journals and essay collections.

## BRANDYN WHITAKER

The Bewildering Wilderness: Becoming Lost in American Horror Films

### Abstract

There are many dangerous threats that inhabit the literary and cinematic portrayals of the North American forest. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that the forest itself has persistently been portrayed as a dangerous location not just because of its inhabitants, but for its own inherently disorienting nature. This is not just a fear of getting lost within the forest physically, but of losing one's own identity. Yi-Fu Tuan aptly notes that, "The forest is a maze through which wayfarers venture at risk. Wayfarers can literally lose their way, but lostness also carries the sense of moral disorientation and of disorderly conduct" (*Landscapes of Fear* 81). The disorienting nature of the forest can be separated into three distinct concepts: spatial disorientation, physically becoming lost; moral disorientation, a loss of faith or beliefs; and social disorientation, losing one's place in society or becoming wild. For my paper I will explore how *The Blair Witch Project*, *The Witch*, and *Antichrist* are continuations of this disorienting North American wilderness through focusing on how these films portray the forest as a spatially, morally, or socially disorienting location. By understanding how film utilizes the forest as a horror setting, it grants greater insight as to why the North American forest remains a relevant and frightening setting.

### Biography

Brandyn Whitaker is completing graduate work at Middle Tennessee State University. His research interests include ecocriticism, gothic, and film studies. He is currently working on a study of the American wilderness as portrayed within horror films.

## REBECCA WIGGINTON

"Jamaica...under a devil's ordinance": The Caribbean Ecogothic and Horror of the Land

### Abstract

In this essay I use the theories of ecocriticism to argue for an understanding of the horror of nineteenth-century colonial accounts of Jamaica, and argue that we can gain a clearer understanding of the ambivalent resolution to Brontë's *Jane Eyre* if we place it within a nineteenth-century genealogy of ecogothic horror about the Jamaican landscape. The depiction of the West Indian geography as demonic appears throughout nineteenth-century British accounts of the region, but most notably in relation to the island of Jamaica. In England's late nineteenth-century efforts to entice new settlers to the West Indies, Jamaica and its nightmarish history were seen as the largest obstacle (along with such literary creations as Brontë's Bertha Mason Rochester). Peter Hulme has noted that in government literature, the appeal of other West Indian islands was sometimes framed in relation to how *not* like Jamaica they were. Travelogues, novels, and histories alike reiterate the island colony's landscape as simultaneously overly, destructively fertile and disturbingly hellish, drawing from the language of a rich gothic tradition. In the nineteenth-century Anglophone Caribbean, Jamaica is arguably the most turbulent site of political and social change and upheaval; although it was once the largest and most productive of the British West Indian islands, the early and mid-nineteenth century saw Jamaica's sugar production drastically reduced and the plantation economy replaced by one of small farmers. I argue that a tendency to use gothic metaphor to describe Jamaica was the result of the fears and tensions produced by these changes, and was particularly tied to the land itself, the specific commodity so often the basis for Jamaican conflict and despair.

Although Thomas Carlyle (in essays such as his 1849 “An Occasional Discourse”) presents a more diffused Caribbean gothic, these images of horror often center on the landscape of Jamaica, nicely summarized in Anthony Trollope’s travelogue denouncement that “Jamaica, as it now exists, is still under a devil’s ordinance”. In arguing for recognition of a persistently gothic nineteenth-century representation of Jamaica, I situate my larger argument within the young field of ecogothic studies, which enacts ecocritical theories to better analyze the gothic’s deconstruction of the relationship between the human and the natural world. I draw on Simon Estok’s discussion of “ecophobia,” defined as “an irrational and boundless hatred of the natural world,” which is proliferated by—and in turn proliferates—“representations of nature as an opponent that hurts, hinders, threatens, and kills us,” and consider how the “ecohorror” of the 19th century still informs our relationship to “hostile” landscapes.

## Biography

Rebecca Wigginton’s research focuses on Victorian psychiatry and notions of selfhood in the nineteenth-century novel; gothic studies and ecogothic literature; science fiction; young adult literature; and interdisciplinary approaches to first-year writing pedagogy. Her current book project is a pre-history of neural science that explores the Victorian sleepwalker as a visible and sensational embodiment of a multivalent model of consciousness that was gradually accepted in nineteenth century medical, literary, and judicial circles. She has also published on religious syncretism in contemporary young adult gothic fiction, and have forthcoming work on ecogothic landscapes in nineteenth-century travelogues and literature. She received her PhD in Cultural and Critical Studies from the University of Pittsburgh.

## SHELBY WILSON

Blood Doubles: Sheridan le Fanu’s *Carmilla* on Film

### Abstract

Sheridan le Fanu’s 1872 lesbian vampire novella *Carmilla* has attracted so much scholarly attention that it comes as something of a surprise that the numerous film adaptations of the tale have received little to none. In fact, barring the odd throw-away reference—often critical—*Carmilla* on film is largely considered unworthy of literary scholarship. Generally, these exiled films fall under the umbrella of European horror (Euro horror), a fluid filmic category that spans horror, (s)exploitation, trash cinema, and even softcore porn. As a genre that is considered too “low” for academia, I ask whether *Carmilla*-inspired Euro horror / sexploitation films can be reconsidered and recuperated as sites that not only “queer” traditional cinematic narrative but also the story they all claim as their origin. Rather than read *Carmilla* adaptations as simply exacerbating the ‘problems’ some critics find embedded in le Fanu’s novella—voyeurism demonization of homosexuality, pandering to notions of female hysteria—I reconsider Euro horror adaptations of *Carmilla* as not only productive sites for feminist recuperation but also as valuable contributors to the *Carmilla* narrative, one that, like its titular character, refuses to die. I ask not why *Carmilla* films either do or do not manage to accurately reproduce what some positive feminist critics perceive as the ‘original spirit’ of le Fanu’s novella, but why they continue to be made at all. What is it about the character of the queer female vampire that necessitates a cultural repetition compulsion which demands her presence on the silver screen again and again?

### Biography

Shelby Wilson is a doctoral student at the University of Santa Cruz and earned her MA in Literature from the same institution in 2013. Her research interests include late-19th- and 20th-century fantastic and supernatural fiction, psychoanalysis, and the horror film.

## KAREN WINSTEAD

*The Shinings* of Stephen King and Stanley Kubrick: Terrorizing Horror

### Abstract

“What’s basically wrong with Kubrick’s version of *The Shining*,” Stephen King complained, “is that it’s a film by a man who thinks too much and feels too little; and that’s why ... it never gets you by the throat and hangs on the way real horror should.” King’s novel and Kubrick’s film would seem to embody the difference between horror and terror: one visceral, the other cerebral, both flamboyantly Gothic. In this talk I will put these manifestations of American Gothic in conversation with each other, exploring the means by which Kubrick “terrorized” King’s horror novel. What makes *The Shinings* such an interesting pairing is that horror and terror respectively are conveyed through so many of the same elements—corridors and mirrors, for example, and references to American Indians. In his “terrorizing” of King’s novel Kubrick is engaging in what I call “rogue adaptation,” deviating deviously and self-consciously from his original to convey his own vision of American, circa 1980, a terrifying vision, but one that is *also* more horrifying than King admits. In “terrorizing” King’s horror, Kubrick’s *Shining* ultimately challenges us to think more deeply about how these components of the Gothic both relate to each other and move their consumers.

### Biography

Karen Winstead is Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of English at The Ohio State University. Her research interests include medieval literature and popular culture, life-writing, gender and sexuality issues, medievalism and Arthuriana. She has published three monographs, *The Oxford History of Life-Writing, Volume 1: The Middle Ages, John Capgrave's Fifteenth Century*, and *Virgin Martyrs: Legends of Sainthood in Late Medieval England*, as well as translations and editions of medieval saints' lives. A fourth monograph, *Fifteenth-Century Lives*, is forthcoming from the University of Notre Dame Press. Her publications also include essays on Geoffrey Chaucer, Margery Kempe, and appropriations of the Middle Ages in film and contemporary novels.

## KIMBERLY YOSKO

Green with Envy

### Abstract

Gregory Maguire’s *Wicked* can be placed in the genre of Gothic literature since the novel has many different features that other Gothic novels have. Loosely based on L. Frank Baum’s *The Wizard of Oz*, *Wicked* is told from the Wicked Witch of the West’s perspective. Most of this novel takes place before Dorothy arrives from Kansas, finds new friends, and travels to the Emerald City to find the Wizard so she can go home. The Wicked Witch of the West, who is given the name of Elphaba in this novel, plays the role of the outsider, since her skin is green instead, and Galinda, who, later on, turns into Glinda the Good Witch, believes Elphaba to be evil. Elphaba wonders what life would be like if she was considered to be evil. However, Elphaba is not completely evil, because, throughout the novel, she tries to help different friends, some of which are talking animals that are trying to gain justice in Oz. They are seen like outsiders, just like Elphaba. Besides being green, Elphaba also has many issues in her life, some of which happened before she was born. In the final scenes of the novel, Dorothy arrives in the Land of Oz, which leads us to where Baum’s novel started. Maguire continues to give us Elphaba’s perspective of how she is defeated by Dorothy, even though he explains Dorothy does not want to hurt her, but help her instead. Ethical issues and the grotesque are main points of *Wicked*.

## **Biography**

Kimberly Yosko is currently studying for her Master's in Creative Writing and Social Justice at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, TX, and she has a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from the same university.