

BAFTSS Horror Studies SIG presents

**Learning to Scream:
A Horror Studies Screen Pedagogy Symposium**

Friday 6th January 2023 / Zoom



<https://baftsshorrortudies.weebly.com/pedagogy-symposium.html>

SCHEDULE

TIME (GMT)	
8.45am - 9.00am	Welcome and opening remarks
9.00am - 10.00am	Workshop (Chair: Laura Mee) Running a horror module: Experiences, questions and approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stacey Abbott, City Lit/BFI - Kate Egan, Northumbria University - Lindsay Hallam, University of East London
10.00am - 10.30am	Module Case Study (Chair: Lindsay Hallam) Dark Whispers Vol 1: Australia's first all-female horror anthology feature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briony Kidd, Director & Associate Producer, Dark Whispers / Founder, Stranger With My Face International Film Festival - Megan Riakos, Creator, Director & Producer, Dark Whispers / Founder Hemlock & Cedar Films
10.30am - 10.45am	BREAK
10.45am - 11.45am	Panel (Chair: Kate Egan) Terror tools: Screen horror case studies in HE teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stella Gaynor, Liverpool John Moores University - <i>Scream Queens</i>: Teaching the impact of television's industrial conditions on narrative and form (Lightning talk) • Craig Ian Mann, Sheffield Hallam University - <i>The Stylist</i>: Using horror shorts to illustrate theoretical approaches to film (Lightning talk) • Shellie McMurdo, University of Hertfordshire - <i>The Sacrament</i>: Teaching trauma with Ti West (Lightning talk) • Laura Mee, University of Hertfordshire - <i>Get Out</i>: Teaching popular horror, representation, and genre hybridity (Lightning talk) • Thomas Joseph Watson, Teesside University - <i>The House That Jack Built</i>: Teaching transgression and extremity at the boundaries of popular culture (Lightning talk)
11.45am - 1.15pm	Panel (Chair: Shellie McMurdo) Expanding pedagogic practice: new methods and approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erika Kvistad, University of South-East Norway - Horror and aesthetic learning in EFL teacher education • Catherine Lester, University of Birmingham - 'Students, beware... you're in for a scare!': Teaching children's horror in HE • Sarah Thomas, University of Liverpool - Using horror to teach virtual reality and immersive media • Phil Claydon, University of Hertfordshire – Assessment case study: The Scare Factor (Lightning talk as video) • Dean Lockwood, University of Lincoln - What thinks in me is outside me: Teaching eco-horror with <i>Upstream Color</i>
1.15pm - 2.00pm	LUNCH BREAK

2.00pm - 3.00pm	Roundtable discussion (Chair: Catherine Lester) Horror stands for comfort: Rethinking content warnings in the horror focused classroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nikkita Hamar Patterson, University of Iceland - Ashley R. Smith, Northwestern University - Valeria Villegas Lindvall, University of Gothenburg
3.00pm - 3.20pm	BREAK
3.20pm - 4.45pm	Panel (Chair: Stella Gaynor) Rethinking pedagogic practice in the contemporary cultural moment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ivan Philips, University of Hertfordshire - Fair warning? Shock, horror and the compassionate classroom • Karrá Shimabukuro, Elizabeth City State University - Everyday horror: Teaching a horror themed composition class • Geneveive Newman, University of Pittsburgh - Sexual violence and the university: Trigger warnings, horror screen media, and acknowledging lived experience • Daniel Tilsley, University of East Anglia - Rethinking how we teach the philosophy of the horror film: <i>The Man with the X-Ray Eyes</i> and existentialism
4.45pm - 5.00pm	BREAK
5.00pm - 6.15pm	Panel (Chair: Valeria Villegas Lindvall) Transnational approaches to teaching screen horror <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orquidea Morales, University of Arizona – Horror below the border: Latinx and Latin American horror (Lightning talk) • Steve Marsden, Stephen F. Austin State University - Teaching international remakes and clusters in the horror film classroom • Thomas Britt, George Mason University - Global horror as global understanding • Diana Anselmo, California State University - Better learning through vampires
6.15pm	Closing comments and future plans

Organisers

- Kate Egan, Northumbria University, kate.egan@northumbria.ac.uk
- Shellie McMurdo, University of Hertfordshire, s.mcmurdo2@herts.ac.uk
- Laura Mee, University of Hertfordshire, l.mee2@herts.ac.uk

Co-convenors of the BAFTSS Horror Studies SIG

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Twitter: @BAFTSS_Horror – **join us throughout the day using #horrorpedagogy**

A Zoom link will be sent to all registered participants in advance of the event.

Symposium Etiquette

- Please keep cameras and mics switched off unless you are presenting, part of a panel Q&A, or asking a question during a Q&A.
- Please be aware that the event will be recorded—guests will not appear in videos unless they speak or their camera is on.
- Feel free to use the meeting chat for comments and discussion during panels (not for questions – see point below), but please be respectful of the presenters and their material.
- We ask that you reserve questions until the panel chair invites them—at this point you may either type them in the chat or raise your hand (this function can be found by clicking the ‘Reactions’ button). This makes things easier for our chairs.
- We respectfully request that presenters plan their papers to fit within their allotted time, and stick to this on the day—chairs will ask speakers to wrap up if they run over, and may need to mute speakers who continue to talk after this time. Substantially overrunning presentations disrupt the smooth running of the event and are unfair to other speakers.
- If presenters plan to use clips in their presentations, we strongly recommend that clips are hosted online and a link provided in the chat rather than screenshared to avoid technical issues (sound, lagging, etc.) and to avoid potential issues with copyright recording.
- This symposium is a welcoming and inclusive event for all, and we ask that all attendees are mindful of others in their interactions and responses. Any concerns should be raised with the organisers.

Panels, Abstracts, and Speaker Biographies

Listed in running order

Running a horror module: Experiences, questions and approaches

Drawing upon the experiences of running three distinct third year undergraduate horror modules – ‘The Modern Horror Film’, ‘Horror and Science Fiction’, and ‘Screening the Undead and other Monsters’, the presenters, Kate Egan, Lindsay Hallam and Stacey Abbott, will use this 60-minute workshop to open upon a dialogue about the differing approaches to, and experiences and challenges of, writing, structuring, and running a UG horror module. This will encompass considerations around the selection of key texts and critical frameworks, and issues of pitching and addressing the module to different kinds of students. It will reflect on the development of distinct angles on the genre that informs the module’s aims, objectives and learning outcomes [there is no one-way of teaching horror]. It will discuss diverse approaches to assessment, with particular consideration on the place of practical projects and production skills within a film studies module. Through these discussions, the presenters hope to unpack questions around content warnings, managing and exploring sensitive subjects within a horror framework, challenging the canon, and the benefits of interdisciplinarity, as well as the value of reflecting on the impact of personal identity on the teaching of horror. Finally, the workshop will explore how to situate the module within a film degree with consideration for its function and value to students in a changing education landscape, asking the question: why teach horror?

Stacey Abbott is Emerita Professor in Film and Television at the University of Roehampton, where over the past twenty years she has taught different iterations of BA Film modules on horror. She has just completed teaching a module on Screen Horrors – Screen Monsters for City Lit at the BFI Southbank and will be teaching an MA module on horror at Kingston University in Spring 2023. She is the author of many books, articles and chapters on the Gothic and Horror; is co-writing a book on *Women Creators of TV Horror*, with Lorna Jowett; and is researching a new monograph *Horror Animation: History, Aesthetics and Genre*.

Dr Kate Egan is an Assistant Professor in Film and Media and has taught an undergraduate horror module for eleven years at Aberystwyth University and for the last two years at Northumbria University. She is the author of *Trash or Treasure? Censorship and the Changing Meanings of the Video Nasties* (2007) and *Cultographies: The Evil Dead* (2011) and co-author of *Alien Audiences* (2016), and is currently conducting research on horror and performance, and audience memories of horror film and television.

Dr Lindsay Hallam is a Senior Lecturer in Film at the University of East London, where she has taught Horror and Science Fiction for the past nine years. She is the author of *Screening the Marquis de Sade: Pleasure, Pain and the Transgressive Body in Film* (2012), *Devil’s Advocates – Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* (2018), and is currently researching a monograph on revenge in Australian horror cinema.

Dark Whispers Vol 1: Australia’s first all-female horror anthology feature

Dark Whispers – Volume 1 is an independent anthology feature film showcasing 11 diverse female filmmakers from across Australia. Brought together by the project’s creator and lead producer Megan Riakos (*Crushed, Deadhouse Dark*), *Dark Whispers* displays filmmakers with bold visions, who have made their voices heard in a highly competitive field by playing

to their unique strengths. They have succeeded by pushing boundaries, whether thematically, in terms of style or format or even in terms of genre definitions. This session is based on the *Dark Whispers* educational module created for Libraries, Schools and Universities with Screen Studies, Women Studies and Cultural Studies Departments. Key areas of discussion include genre context, themes and influences for each of the films and an overall analysis of female voices in cinema and social commentary hidden in genre from a feminist perspective.

Megan Riakos is a dynamic filmmaker bringing a distinctive lens to the world of genre filmmaking. She is the creator of Australia's first all-female horror anthology *Dark Whispers – Volume 1*, is the writer/director/producer of the suspenseful thriller *Crushed* and follows these up with *No Pain No Gain*, an unnerving episode of the Shudder Original *Deadhouse Dark* horror series. She is also founder of Hemlock & Cedar Films and is based in Sydney, Australia.

Based in Tasmania, Australia, **Briony Kidd** is a film and theatre maker, script editor and creativity coach. She's also the co-founder and director/programmer of Stranger With My Face International Film Festival, an influential event focusing on underrepresented perspectives in horror and related genres.

Terror Tools - Screen Horror Case Studies in HE Teaching

This panel brings together a series of screen horror case studies – TV series, short film and feature film – to explore how horror texts provide ideal examples for teaching broader concepts in Screen Studies. Horror offers many rich examples through which students and teachers at HE level can explore film and television form and aesthetics, theory, representation, and industry and reception contexts, and these collated presentations explore only a handful. Speakers will deliver a 5 minute lightning presentation on a single case study text and its application in HE teaching and learning, followed by discussion between presenters and Q&A from other delegates.

***Scream Queens*: Teaching the impact of television's industrial conditions on narrative and form**

Advertiser supported network television has complex constraints when developing new programming, having to meet the needs of the network, the advertisers, and to attract and maintain the required viewing demographics. The slasher in FOX series *Scream Queens* and its development for long form serialization, is a rich and valuable tool to demonstrate the conditions of US television, the economic drives of an advertiser supported network, and the impact this has on horror serialization from production, promotion, and extension and interruption of the slasher narrative form. This presentation will cover how horror is a useful tool to teach the conditions of the US television industry in a core Media Institutions module.

Dr Stella Gaynor is Senior Lecturer in media culture and communication at Liverpool John Moores. She is the author of *Rethinking horror in the new economies of television*, and has published works exploring the global spread of the walking dead, serial killer narratives on contemporary television, and true crime documentary and podcasting.

***The Stylist*: Using Horror Shorts to Illustrate Theoretical Approaches to Film**

This talk will discuss a seminar session designed for production students learning film theory and analysis in their first year of undergraduate study. This seminar centres on Jill Gevorgian's short horror film *The Stylist* (2016), in which a hair stylist scalps her client in

order to crudely assume her identity. It is intended for a class divided into four groups, and requires each group to analyse the film through one of four prominent film theories: formalism, feminism, marxism and affect. This task is designed to allow production students to practise interpreting films through specific theoretical approaches and to illustrate plurality of interpretation.

Dr Craig Ian Mann is lecturer in film and media at Sheffield Hallam University, where he teaches on undergraduate degrees in media studies and film production. His current research focuses on anti-capitalist themes in American horror. He is co-convenor of the Fear 2000 conference series and co-editor of the 21st Century Horror book series at Edinburgh University Press.

The Sacrament: Teaching Trauma with Ti West

Whether thinking through representational limitations, discussing how to balance viewpoints on what traumas should or should not be seen on screen, or debating issues around potential accusations of exploitation and the responsibility of filmmakers - horror can be used as a powerful teaching tool. This presentation focuses on my use of *The Sacrament* (Ti West, 2013) as part of an optional specialist module on trauma studies for film production students.

Dr Shellie McMurdo is a Lecturer in Film and Television at the University of Hertfordshire, the co-editor of Liverpool University Press series Hidden Horror Histories, and the co-founder and co-convenor of the BAFTSS Horror Studies SIG. She is the author of forthcoming books *Pet Sematary* (Liverpool University Press) and *Blood on the Lens: Trauma and Anxiety in American Found Footage Horror Cinema* (Edinburgh University Press).

Get Out: Teaching Popular Horror, Representation, and Genre Hybridity

The new ubiquity of *Get Out* (Jordan Peele, 2017) as a case study on film studies courses is unsurprising due to its popularity with students, but as a teaching tool it offers multiple purposes. It is a rich example by which to explore cultural concerns of gender, class, race and racism (and as a result is an ideal case study of representation), but it also offers an especially interesting way to look at genre, the hybridity of horror, sci fi and comedy, and the ways this impacted its reception. This presentation covers these approaches to the film explored on a core Introduction to Film and TV module.

Dr Laura Mee is a Senior Lecturer in Film and Television at the University of Hertfordshire, whose research focuses on horror, adaptation and seriality. She is the author of *Reanimated: The Contemporary American Horror Remake* (2022) and *Devil's Advocates' The Shining* (2017). Laura is the co-editor of Liverpool University Press series Hidden Horror Histories, and the co-founder and co-convenor of the BAFTSS Horror Studies SIG.

The House That Jack Built: Teaching Transgression and Extremity at the Boundaries of Popular Culture

Situated in the Level 5 critical theory module Popular Culture in Context, this seminar is designed to challenge preconceived notions of cultural value and worth via the examination of texts that are considered culturally extreme or, transgressive. Lars von Trier's *The House That Jack Built* (2018) is used as a case study in these sessions as a means to analyse representations of extreme human behaviour, but also examples of extreme representation. As Jack (Matt Dillon), acting as a cypher for von Trier asserts: "Some people claim that the atrocities we commit in our fiction are those inner desires which we cannot commit in our controlled civilization, so they're expressed instead through our art." Students are asked to

debate the boundaries of representation, the nature of transgression and if we can ever consider examples of cinema to be “too much”.

Dr Tom Watson is Senior Lecturer in Transmedia/ Research at Teesside University. His current research is focused on the confluence between music subcultures and genre cinema. He is the Co-editor of the 21st Century Horror book series published by Edinburgh University Press.

Expanding pedagogic practice: new methods and approaches

Horror and aesthetic learning in EFL teacher education

This paper is about an uneasy fit: horror in teacher education. Earlier research has explored the role of horror in pre-tertiary education, often focusing on how students choose to engage with horror media: “Without encouragement from adults and sometimes against adult directives, children actively seek out stories that chill and thrill them” (Richards et al., 1999; see also Wilhelm, 2016 and Henward and McGillivray, 2014). But what kind of role might horror media play in the education of teacher students themselves? I teach English as part of a primary and lower secondary teacher education programme in Norway; most of my students are future English teachers whose first language is Norwegian. As best we can, we balance teaching disciplinary knowledge (how do you understand a literary text?) with subject-specific pedagogy (how do you get a seven-year-old, or a fifteen-year-old, to understand it in a foreign language?). In a programme with so many competing demands, it can be especially hard to create the time, space and opportunity to engage deeply and critically with fiction.

In this paper, I discuss my own use of horror media, primarily digital horror like creepypasta and interactive horror fiction, to create opportunities for deeper engagement with fiction in the teacher education classroom. Glenna Sloan argues in her work on children’s literacy development (1975, 1991) that responding affectively and aesthetically to a fictional text is the necessary first step to critical reading. Here, I suggest that horror media, a source of strong feelings, can open a pathway to this kind of affective and aesthetic response, creating a space for aesthetic experience and learning within a professional study programme.

Erika Kvistad is associate professor of English at the University of South-East Norway, where she teaches English. Her Ph.D. is on sexual power dynamics in Charlotte Brontë, and she has previously published on sexual consent negotiation as a textual and cultural phenomenon, domestic spaces in Victorian horror, and the idea of the monstrous in university pedagogy. Her current work is on digital haunted houses.

‘Students, beware... you’re in for a scare!’: Teaching children’s horror in HE

The study of children’s horror has been gaining academic attention within horror studies in recent years (e.g. Antunes 2020, Lester 2021) but it - and children’s film generally - remains quite a niche and understudied category within horror and film studies more broadly. This is despite the well-documented fact that many peoples’ first encounters with the horror genre occur during childhood, whether through children’s texts like Disney animation or from early exposure to ‘adult’ horror (Cherry 1999, Egan 2021). This paper will offer some reflections on including children’s horror in a higher education curriculum. I have taught single weeks on children’s horror in a number of contexts, including as part of a dedicated horror module and as part of a children’s film and television module. I will discuss my experiences of teaching

children's horror in these contexts, what adaptations I had to make to the material to fit each module, and activities, case studies and readings I have found useful. In reflecting on my pedagogy I aim to outline the benefits of using children's horror as part of a university curriculum with the hope of encouraging more in the academy to include this formative and understudied part of the horror genre in their teaching.

Dr Catherine Lester is a lecturer in film and television at the University of Birmingham whose research centres on the intersections of the horror genre and children's culture. She is the author of *Horror Films for Children: Fear and Pleasure in American Cinema* (Bloomsbury, 2021) and editor of the forthcoming collection *Watership Down: Perspectives on and Beyond Animated Violence* (Bloomsbury, 2023). She has also published shorter pieces on topics including children's horror television and Disney princess films.

Using horror to teach virtual reality and immersive media

This paper will explore my experience of using horror to introduce students to immersive media, specifically the virtual reality platform. I draw on three years of teaching sessions and materials where I partly use the horror genre to locate and explicate the platform specificity of virtual reality for second year students on a BA Communication and Media degree, and reflect on how they have engaged with this intersection of genre and platform in their own learning and assessments.

I will outline the different methods used in my teaching and how they relate to the module's wider remit of examining 'immersive media and virtual worlds', away from horror and related sensation. We look at how horror has been remediated into the VR format and what the experience is like for screen audiences. Horror is particularly effective at communicating the new medium to unfamiliar audiences, and we look at the performativity of horror VR users as well as think about this at a purely textual level. I will also explore how the sense of 'the scary' and 'the horrific' changes in a VR format, and reflect on my own students' experiences of using VR headsets and what 'terrifying' effects ostensibly non-horror texts had on their sense of immersion and sensation as they become more familiar with this emergent platform and its experimental media production. I will also discuss the different class formats that students engaged with during their exploration of VR and how we integrated the horror genre into this – ranging from field trips to VR arcades, online sessions, and to group presentation assignments.

Sarah Thomas is Senior Lecturer in Communication and Media at the University of Liverpool. She researches screen performance and industrial approaches to stardom, with a current focus on digital and immersive media and franchise production. She is the author of the monographs *Peter Lorre – Face Maker* (Berghahn 2012) and *James Mason* (BFI Bloomsbury 2018), and co-editor with Kate Egan of *Cult Film Stardom* (Palgrave 2013).

Assessment case study: The Scare Factor

I will illustrate my approach to practice based horror teaching with implementing a formative assessment on my Level 5 Film Production module called The Scare Factor. This practical filmmaking assessment is designed to give the students a direct understanding of the film grammar and visual language needed in composition, editing and sound to manipulate and impart a physical and emotional response from the intended audience. This is an extremely useful exercise in understanding the mechanics and craft needed for the intended purpose of filmmakers as storytellers in the screen industries. I will present a 5 minute film that illustrates The Scare Factor assessment and how its practice based teaching in making a 3

minute 'jump scare horror film' will benefit the film students' understanding of the relationship between filmmaker and the audience.

Phil Claydon is a film director, screenwriter and Senior Lecturer in Film Production at the University of Hertfordshire. He directed the genre films *ALONE*, *LESBIAN VAMPIRE KILLERS* and *WITHIN*. His teen horror screenplay *OAK* is in post-production directed by Kevin Lewis (*Willy's Wonderland*, *The Accused*) and his screenplay *TOXIC* is a Screencraft horror finalist. He is currently in development with XYZ Films on teen sci-fi comedy *LUST*.

What thinks in me is outside me: Teaching eco-horror with *Upstream Color*

My postgraduate module, *Human and Inhuman in the 21st Century*, deals with the media and culture of the Anthropocene, the age of Man after the dismantling of Man, an age which demands acute reflection on the human in relation to the nonhuman and the inhuman. Students are invited to consider the complexity of the human in all its entangled, prosthetic and ecological – and invariably, horrific – materiality. The module presents students with a series of provocations to which they must respond experimentally, through developing their own theoretical fictions, either written or involving various forms of media practice. One such provocation entails responding to the enigmatic and hallucinatory film, *Upstream Color* (Shane Carruth, 2013). This film, which I characterize in terms of what I call the 'radiant weird', resists linear narrative and places great emphasis upon the sonic dimension of the cinematic experience as much as the visual. It is curiously structured around the life cycle of a bizarre organism which brings the organism into entangled relations with rivers, plants, pigs and people. The film – remarkable in its approach to narrative, character and soundscape – is an instance of an eerie body and identity horror which can be used for the pedagogical aim of inculcating an ecological sensibility and a grasp of the profound significance of human-nonhuman assemblages in the Anthropocene and their ethical implications, as well as the challenge of mediating and making sense of these phenomena. In my paper, I will discuss the film, its role in relation to the module's themes, and how students have responded by means of producing narrative treatments, modified film sequences, trailers, reimagined posters and other promotional materials.

Dean Lockwood is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Film, Media and Journalism at the University of Lincoln, UK. He authored (with Rob Coley) the books, *Cloud Time* (Zero, 2012) and *Photography in the Middle: Dispatches on Media Ecologies and Aesthetics* (Punctum, 2016). He is currently working on a monograph on weird fiction in relation to media theory for the University of Wales Press's Horror Studies series. He runs undergraduate modules which deal with issues relevant to horror studies, including the modules *Horror in Popular Culture* and *Eco-Media*, as well as the postgraduate module which forms part of the focus of his proposal.

Horror stands for comfort: Rethinking content warnings in the horror focused classroom

Trigger warnings have developed over the last decade as content warnings to alert readers/viewers with post-traumatic stress disorder of themes that can "trigger" stressful symptoms of their PTSD including panic attacks, flashbacks, or the impulse to self-harm. On the surface, trigger warnings suggest a movement of awareness and respect towards mental health. In practice within academia, trigger warnings have led to hostile debates between students, teachers and institutions regarding the limits of what can be taught, how, and the

boundaries and politics of decency. The effectiveness of trigger warnings remains inconclusive to either side's claims, but one thing is clear: both students and teachers feel incredibly vulnerable. Such vulnerability can also be, in turn, understood as a territory of political significance (Koivunen, Kyrölä & Ryberg, 2018), which puts forward the potential for both liberatory and stifling practices within the classroom. How can we look towards a comprehensive set of reimagined practices towards liberation (Hooks, 1994) while navigating the incorporation of sensitive content warnings in teaching horror theory?

This panel sets out to explore individual experiences in the HE classroom, teaching sensitive and challenging content with or without catering to the trigger warning expectation. Considering the inherent nature of the horror genre, we intend to illustrate how horror theory has helped not only structure concepts and films within its genre, but also to contain the analysis of other demanding and potentially shocking genres not inherently distinguished as horror.

Ashley R. Smith is an advanced doctoral candidate at Northwestern University whose work focuses on the poignant (and often uncomfortable) intersections between horror cinema, critical race theory, and cultural studies. Her dissertation examines the emergence of whiteness as a destabilized and "Othered" identity in post-1960s American horror cinema, and the political and cultural changes that occurred alongside this representational shift. She teaches courses on film history, horror, and diversity and inclusion at DePaul University and the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. She also currently serves as a co-chair for the Horror Studies Scholarly Interest Group in the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. Her most recent publication, "Dropping the Mask of Sanity: How *Mindhunter* Deconstructs the Profiling Procedural," is out now in the edited collection, *Serial Killers in Contemporary Television* from Routledge.

Nikkita Hamar Patterson is an Icelandic-American doctoral student in English at the University of Iceland. Her background includes a BFA in Film and Video from the University of the Arts, Philadelphia (USA) and an MA in Literature, Culture and Media from UoI. Her research focuses on the politics of taste, the dynamics between high/low art, extreme cinema and the work of Gaspar Noé. Nikkita teaches in both English and film studies at the University of Iceland including independently developed courses/units on Hollywood, auteurism, adaptation and extreme cinema. Other interests include film production, performance studies, cult film and the performance of audiences.

Dr. Valeria Villegas Lindvall is a Senior Lecturer in Film at the University of Gothenburg (Sweden) and specializes in Latin American horror film with a feminist and decolonial focus. She is also Reviews Editor for MAI: Feminism and Visual Culture and of the advisory board of MAI Imprint at Punctum Books. Her doctoral dissertation, *Wicked Women & Witches. Subversive readings of the female monster in Mexican and Argentinian Horror Film* (2021) takes to task the figures of La Llorona and the bruja (witch) as monstrous bastions of resistance in visual culture. She has collaborated in several publications, most prominently as a co-editor, writer and translator at Rolling Stone Mexico, as well as *Women Make Horror: Filmmaking, Feminism and Genre* (ed. Alison Peirse, 2020) and *The Body Onscreen in the Digital Age: Essays on Voyeurism, Violence and Power* (ed. Susan Flynn, 2021).

Rethinking pedagogic practice in the contemporary cultural moment

Shock, horror and the compassionate classroom

'Within the terrain of horror,' writes Stephen Prince in the introduction to his edited collection *The Horror Film* (2004), 'the state of being human is fundamentally uncertain'. (2) He goes on to claim that 'only horror [among film genres] goes straight to the deepest unease at the core of human existence'. (3) More recently, Becky Millar and Jonny Lee have noted the way in which 'horror often concerns itself with the fears, anxieties, and traumas, real or perceived, that assail ordinary human existence'. (2021: 171) This paper asks whether such fundamental uncertainty, such deep unease, such assaults on supposed human ordinariness, extend to the conditions in which the subject itself is taught? Specifically, it considers whether any tension between intrinsically unsettling material and the assured emotional safety of educational spaces should be reduced through the routine use of content or 'trigger' warnings. If, as Millar and Lee recognize, 'horror is suited to exploring unpleasant things', does a compassionate pedagogical practice require the teacher to undermine one of the key characteristics of the genre: its power to shock, unsettle and even disgust – its power, in other words, to horrify.

In theoretical terms, warning students about a moment of potentially traumatising cinematic shock – the eye-slitting scene in *Un Chien Andalou* (1929), say – might vitally diminish the powers of horror so influentially outlined in Julia Kristeva's essay on abjection (1982). On the other hand, refusing to provide such warnings might inadvertently align the teacher with an ascendant form of ideological reaction which is anathema to the disrupting and subversive visions of so much horror. Tellingly, on the day this abstract is written, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Skills, Further and Higher Education, Andrea Jenkyns, has used a fringe meeting at the Conservative Party conference in Birmingham, to deliver an attack on what she characterises as the 'left-wing agendas' of universities in the UK. One defining feature of these alleged agendas is the 'use of trigger warnings'. While acknowledging that such an attack is scarcely a 'fringe' tendency within the current British government – the main candidates in the 2022 Tory leadership contest all proclaimed a 'war on woke' – its appeal to the populist zeitgeist suggests the importance of reflecting carefully on our approaches to the educational presentation of scenes that some viewers may find disturbing.

Dr Ivan Phillips is Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) in the School of Creative Arts, University of Hertfordshire. He has experience of teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students on practice-based courses, specialising in Animation, Games Art, VFX, SFX, Model Making, Character Creation, Interactive Media and Screen Cultures. Ivan is the author of *Once Upon a Time Lord: The Myths and Stories of Doctor Who* (Bloomsbury, 2020), and has published widely on popular culture, art and literature, with a particular interest in science fiction and the Gothic.

Everyday horror: Teaching a horror themed composition class

In the spring of 2022 I taught a Composition I class, at an HBCU, themed around horror. The class was divided into different modules: analysis, argument, narrative. Students read and responded to horror short stories and poems including "The Forbidden," "Danger Word," and "The Monkey's Paw." We also watched and discussed *Candyman* (1992), *Candyman* (2021), *Horror Noire* (2019), "Danger Word" (2014), and *The Cabin in the Woods* (2011). We had conversations on real-life horrors like Lake Norman and Lake Lanier and what is, or should be, out of bounds as fodder for horror, how it matters who makes it, and who gets to

tell those stories. These texts were the models and basis for their infographics on horror tropes and statistics, their movie reviews, analysis papers, and horror narratives of their own.

In this individual paper I will argue for the benefit of theming composition classes, and share the materials I created and student comments/reflections, while also addressing some of the challenges and pitfalls and what revisions I made for next time, as I've now made this my default for spring Composition where students are often repeating. I'll also argue for the important role horror, specifically Black horror, has in addressing our current historical and cultural moment.

Dr. Karrá Shimabukuro's research focuses on what horrifies us and why, building on their experience with the devil in pre and early modern English literature to analyze how we create bogeymen, what their function is, and how they are a reflection of our historical and cultural moment. They are currently co-editing a collection, *The Horror That Haunts Us: Nostalgia, Revisionism, and Trauma in Contemporary American Horror* (under review with Auteur Press with Dr. Wickham Clayton). Other recent work includes a chapter titled "Priests, Secrets, and Holy Water: All I Ever Learned About Catholicism I Learned from Horror Films" in *Theology and Horror: Explorations of the Dark Religious Imagination* (2021), an analysis of the devil in the culture wars in *The Last Temptation of Christ* and *The Passion of the Christ* in "The Devil and The Culture Wars: Demonizing Controversy in *The Last Temptation of Christ* and *The Passion of the Christ*" in *The Bible Onscreen in the New Millennium* (2020).

Sexual violence and the university: Trigger warnings, horror screen media, and acknowledging lived experience

In order for students to engage critically with the material presenting in the classroom, they first need to be safe doing so. A student encountering triggering material, completely unprepared, is not safe. Content and trigger warnings allow students the time and space that they need to engage with difficult material using their existing coping skills. Students are not devoid of personal experiences and lives. This is important to recognize on many pedagogical levels; this talk focuses on how the core concept that students are people first, and that accessibility in the horror classroom relies on content and trigger warnings. While I base the concept for this talk on pedagogical experience with teaching media that engages intimate partner violence and sexual violence, this presentation is designed as a fifteen-minute research presentation based on definitions and literature in the fields of pedagogy and women and gender studies as ways to approach teaching violent and disturbing screen material. This presentation will explore the intricacies and problematics of providing specific and/or blanket content and trigger warnings in classrooms where extreme depictions of violence, trauma, abuse, and social and political oppression will be engaged. My argument encompasses radical pedagogy in order to account for both academic rigor and human compassion. If the goal of teaching horror is for students to critically engage with the most violent, disturbing, but viscerally-human elements of cultural production, it is vital to acknowledge their humanity in that endeavor.

Genevieve Newman is a PhD candidate at the University of Pittsburgh in Film and Media Studies and English. Her dissertation work focuses on the rape victim-survivor as the audience for depictions of rape across mediums including film, poetry, television, and documentary. She has taught courses in community college, public university, and private university settings in the United States. She is currently serving a two-year term as Graduate Pedagogy Mentor for the Film and Media Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh, and is the Graduate Student Representative for the Society of Media and Cultural Studies Horror Scholarly Interest Group.

Rethinking how we teach the philosophy of the horror film: *The Man with the X-Ray Eyes* and existentialism

“Film-and-philosophy” is a popular topic for students in Higher Education, particularly for those interested in horror films. However, a lot of teaching (and key texts) in this area takes the approach of establishing a set of abstract philosophical ideas (often formed by White men) and mapping them onto a film text, quite often ignoring the range of industrial, social, and cultural factors that regulate the possible meanings of film. As a result, a lot of students are unaware of the rich connections between horror film and philosophy made possible when these contexts are considered.

My approach to teaching and supervising projects on film-and-philosophy draws on my research into existential thought and debates in 1950s and '60s America, particularly among teenagers and students, and how those ideas often regulated the meanings of the lowbrow horror films that were specifically targeted at these groups. This paper, through the case study of Roger Corman's *The Man with the X-Ray Eyes* (1963), will demonstrate how these films can be read as existentialist precisely because they were aligned through mediation with contemporary existential ideas that circulated in contemporary cultural and youth discourse, such as the absurd, intersubjectivity, the Outsider, and freedom. Moreover, their existential meanings were regulated by intertextual and intermedial references, such as to Albert Camus and Aldous Huxley, and Frantz Fanon and the Civil Rights Movement. This paper will outline this fresh approach to the teaching of the philosophy of horror films that draws on ideas on cultural studies and encourages students interested in horror and philosophy to engage with a range of broader ideas and disciplines and strengthen their research, whilst also demonstrating the value of philosophy in understanding the meanings and reception of horror for horror scholars.

Daniel Tilsley is a 3rd year PhD candidate in Film Studies at the University of East Anglia (UEA). He is interested in the relationship between philosophy and popular horror films from a cultural studies angle. His research focuses on American horror films of the Fifties and Sixties and their mediations on contemporary existential thought. He has published on the “cult” films of William Castle and Phil Tucker, with a recent article on *Robot Monster*. He also teaches on the history of Hollywood at UEA and has an interest supporting disadvantaged children in Secondary Education.

Transnational approaches to teaching screen horror

Horror below the border: Latinx and Latin American horror

A 2015 episode of NPR's *All Things Considered* correspondent Vanessa Rancano asked the question, why do Latina/os love horror films? This question is one that puzzles filmmakers, studios, scholars and fans. We might not know why Latina/os love horror, but statistics do show that Latina/os and Latin Americans have had a long relationship with the genre. In this presentation, I will discuss the necessity to center voices of color in horror studies course thereby destabilizing the traditional canon. In this lightning talk, I discuss my course *Horror Below the Border: Latinx and Latin American horror*, where I began to bridge these two filmic histories. In this course we studied Latin American horror film from its roots in conquest and colonization to the current transnational moment. Through an analysis of feature films, documentaries, theoretical texts, and literature, students learned the genre's growth and promulgation across Latin America and the U.S. Works covered will include those that show

how film has represented cultural fears and anxieties throughout the ages by focusing on the use of monsters, myths, and national identity.

Dr. Orquidea Morales is an assistant professor in the School of Theatre, Film, and Television at the University of Arizona. Her work on border violence, Latinx media, and horror has been published in journals such as *Film Quarterly* and *Flow*. Her work looks at the intersection of Latinx Studies and Horror Studies and she is currently working on a manuscript that traces the movement of La Llorona in Mexican and U.S. film.

Teaching international remakes and clusters in the horror film classroom

In several courses (International Gothic Cinema, Supernatural Horror Film, and Film Adaptation), I have offered clusters of intimately related films. As Joseph E Champoux argued in "Film Remakes as a Comparative View of Time," remakes and adaptations serve as a good way of developing analytical skills in classrooms. Offering several horror films with the same source material or films that are versions, remakes, or meta commentary allows easy analysis of cultural and historical specifics as well as technical and budgetary differences. Likewise, the approaches of specific directors are thrown into stark contrast as students quickly compare differing approaches to the creation of fear. Teaching with international contemporary versions, like the Japanese *Ringu* (Hideo Nakata, 1998), the Korean *The Ring Virus* (Kim Dong-Bin, 1999), *The Ring* (Gore Verbinski, 2002) can show differences in gender norms, fears clustering around children and parenting, as well as technical approaches towards evoking anxiety and fear. Likewise, the cluster of *Nosferatu* (F. W. Murnau, 1922), the bleak existentialist homage *Nosferatu the Vampyre* (Werner Herzog, 1979) and the black comedy meta-commentary on film, *Shadow of the Vampire* (E. Elias Merhige, 2000) (to be augmented with the upcoming David Lee Fisher *Nosferatu* in future offerings) lets students compare eras of filmmaking and differing notions of intertextuality--adaptation, homage, and meta-commentary: unlike the *Ring* sequence, these films build on each other's reputation and reception in particularly rich ways.

Steve Marsden is a Professor of American Literature at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. He has published on the portrayal of ghost hunting in versions of *The Haunting of Hill House*, the racialized use of ghost stories by Thomas Nelson Page and Paul Dunbar, and written and presented on the ghost stories of Ambrose Bierce. His most recent conference presentations featured found audio podcast narratology and horror takes on *The Breakfast Club*. He teaches (among other things) American Gothic literature, horror short story, horror film, and film adaptation.

Global horror as global understanding

At George Mason University, Global Understanding is one of the subject areas required of all students taking general education courses. Learning outcomes for Global Understanding courses include understanding the processes of globalization, understanding intercultural competencies, and "exploring individual and collective responsibilities within a global society through analytical, practical, or creative responses to problems or issues, using resources appropriate to the field".

My paper will relate to the university's popular Global Horror Film course that is included in the Global Understanding curriculum. A decade ago, I submitted a proposal for a course featuring international horror films to the university's general education committee. The initial

proposal was rejected as the committee did not think that examining horror texts was a sufficient way of meeting the required learning outcomes.

My revised proposal emphasized how horror films were indicators of global issues, reflecting economic tensions, class differences, war, terrorism, health crises, and other global concerns. The modification highlighted the many international issues students could learn about through horror texts, rather than the texts as ends to themselves, and the new proposal was received successfully by the committee. Hundreds of students from a wide variety of degree programs now take the course yearly.

Thomas Britt is a Professor of Film and Video Studies at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. He is the head of the screenwriting concentration and creator of several classes, including Ethics of Film and Video, Global Horror Film, and Advanced Visual Storytelling. He has received both the Teacher of Distinction award and the Teaching Excellence Award from the University's Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning. Recent publications include 'Death in Modern Film'; from *The Routledge History of Death since 1800* and 'Came Back Haunted'; from *The Streaming of Hill House: Essays on the Haunting Netflix Adaptation*.

Better learning through vampires

In this paper, I discuss experiences regarding the university teaching of film history from a cultural studies perspective centered in the analysis of vampire films. Drawing examples from transnational cinema, I suggest that studying various periods of film history through productions like critically acclaimed *Nosferatu* (Germany 1922), the marginal *Coffin Joe* (Brazil 1964), and the mainstream *Twilight* (US 2008) allows students at all levels of advancement to broach difficult topics.

A genre known for its ambiguous relationship with everyday life, vampire films simultaneously invite spectatorial identification and distancing. Both seductive and monstrous, antiheroes and villains, the ambidextrous history of cinematic vampires thus affords an entryway into unpacking violent lineages of misogyny, racism, ableism, and homophobia that other more conventional film genres tend to stall. Exceedingly promiscuous, horror also marries humor and gore, literary adaptation and porn, resulting in diverse vampire characterizations that reveal anxieties specific to the time and place in which they were produced.

Diana W. Anselmo is a feminist film historian and queer immigrant. In addition to various articles on female audiences, she is the author of *A Queer Way of Feeling: Girl Fans and Personal Archives of Early Hollywood* (University of California Press, 2023) and an assistant professor in film at California State University, Long Beach.

Affiliated with the BAFTSS Horror Studies Special Interest Group, **Hidden Horror Histories** is a new series from Liverpool University Press focusing on underexplored areas of screen horror, and the contributions of creative individuals in horror screen media. The series places particular emphasis on aspects of the genre and its creative personnel which have not been covered extensively in scholarship to date. Hidden Horror Histories aims to build and expand substantially upon the limited work in this area, to bring new genre histories to light and to consider key figures' creativity in the context of developments in the horror screen industries. Titles contracted for the series to date include a monograph on women creatives in TV horror, and a collection on Nigel Kneale's horror work across screen media.



We welcome proposals on any under-explored area of screen horror, and on key creative individuals or collectives/groups within horror screen media, past or present. This could include (but is not limited to): trans/national screen horror media and practices; horror media from under-explored areas and eras; and/or studies of directors, stars, actors, composers/sound designers, screenwriters, video game designers, special effects and make-up artists, costume designers, production designers, cinematographers, producers or editors. Books for the series can be monographs (c. 90,000 words) or edited collections (e.g 12 x 7,000 word chapters + introduction).

A key aim of the series is to commission and publish scholarly work which explores creativity in relation to identity and intersectionality and how they relate to the shifting structures and opportunities of the industry. As such, while we are interested in titles on all kinds of under-considered creative contributions to horror, the series particularly welcomes studies of under-represented groups in horror studies – so for example Black creatives in horror, women horror producers, queer genre filmmakers, or horror production practices in nations and diaspora currently under-researched in horror studies. In line with the objectives of the BAFTSS Horror Studies SIG, the series aims for an inclusive approach to scholarship which is responsive to the dynamic, evolving nature of the field. This includes encouraging proposals from emerging early career researchers or independent scholars, interested scholars from outside the discipline, academic practitioners, collaborative ventures, and scholars from under-represented or marginalised groups.



If you are interested in contributing to Hidden Horror Histories, please contact the series editors for an initial discussion of your ideas:

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