

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

FILM 305.18 L01
Topic in Film Genre: The Horror Film

Winter 2019

Jan 10– April 11 (excluding Feb. 19th and Feb. 21st)

Tuesday 9:30AM - 12:15PM
Thursday 10:30AM - 12:20PM

Instructor: Dr. Mohsen Nasrin
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Web page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-1:30 or by Appointment

Course Description

Although having a disreputable status that has endured to the present day, horror has long been one of the most popular genres in the history of film. On the surface, horror cinema seems to appeal only to sick and twisted minds or to those in search of cheap thrills. Despite this harsh objection to it, cultural theorists from a variety of fields have recognized that the horror film provides a complicated but popular forum in which social tensions may be questioned and analysed.

The objective of this course is to look at various approaches to this genre in an attempt to delineate these modes of address and explain the peculiar fascination of horror films. This course functions as an introduction to the study of horror cinema by emphasizing key theoretical approaches to the genre. Main topics to be discussed this term include genre, gender, psychoanalysis, censorship, culture, history, and various cognitive responses.

Objectives of the Course

- Students will learn to critically examine claims made by film historians and film theorists regarding various cultural theories in relation to horror studies
- They will learn to articulate an awareness of the constraints and possibilities of genre studies as a research method in film studies.
- They will learn to synthesize and evaluate major trends in the study of film genres in general, and horror films in particular.
- They will learn to comparatively assess the strengths and limitations of various theoretical approaches to horror films.
- They will learn to express a critical familiarity with a wide variety of horror films.

Textbooks and Readings

No required textbook

All readings will be made available through Desire2Learn

Internet and electronic communication device information

Cell phones should be placed on silent during class time. Laptops may be used for the purpose of note-taking during lecture, but must be closed during screenings.

Assignments and Evaluation

Reading Responses (3) (45%) Due Dates: Feb 5/ March 12/ April 9

Film Introduction (20%)

Final Exam-Take Home (35%) Due Date: April 16

Reading Responses (3):

Summarise the main arguments of the assigned reading in 1 or 2 paragraphs. Identify 2 or 3 aspects of the reading which were the most interesting and helpful to you and your interests in the context of this course. Identify 2 or 3 aspects of the reading with which you had the most difficulty, either of comprehension or agreement. Prepare a **4-page typed double-space report** of all of the above to be handed to the instructor. It is recommended to explain and support your points of interests and difficulties with making references to examples from movies not discussed in the article.

Be sure to proof-read your reading report and watch out for mistakes of spelling, grammar, usage, format and punctuation.

Do not just regenerate what has already been discussed in the class or has been argued in the reading. Put in more independent thought and elaborate on your points.

Film Introduction:

For this project, you will collaborate with your group (4-5 people) and on each Wednesday there will be a group presentation on a film related to the topic of the week. Each group has 20-30 minutes to introduce a movie that can be analyzed in relation with the reading and the topic of the week. Following that each group has to create a single document – a production folder – that will be submitted together. This document will analyze a single film from different angles, and will evaluate the film as an aesthetic and cultural artifact. Each member of your group will select a different approach (such as national, historical, theoretical, auteurs, ideological and formal).

Grading will consist of two parts:

- Each individual presenter's contribution to the project, including depth of analysis, integration of appropriate scholarly sources, and structure of a presentation. (10%)
- An overall grade for collaboration, focusing on the ability of each section to build upon one another; introductory and concluding elements; and the ability of your group to work together and equitably divide labor (10%)

Keep in mind that this assignment is collaborative. It is as important that you individually construct a well-argued, detailed, and relevant presentation as it is that your partners do so as well. (The detail of the assignment will be discussed further in class)

Final Exam (Take Home):

There will be four clips and you will answer questions about them in a short essay format. You will have 2 days (48 hours) to submit your answers.

* It will cover all of the readings, films and lectures.

* The study-guide for the exam will be posted in D2L.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

You do not need to complete all assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Submission of Assignments: Please hand in your essays directly to the instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

- Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
- When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
- For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the *University Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film

Final grades are reported as letter grades. Assignments in this course will be graded using letter grades. The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* *
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good--clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	0-49.99%	0%

* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

** These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people’s words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging 	403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	<p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</p> <p>If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</p>
<p>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	<p>http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</p> <p>403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca</p>
<p>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	<p>http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</p>
<p>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	<p>https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</p>
<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings on next page

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Jan 10: Course Overview and Introduction

No Screening or Reading Assigned

Jan 15/17 Introduction

American Psycho (Mary Harron, 2000)

Reading: Deborah Knight and George McKnight, "American Psycho: Horror, Satire, Aesthetics, and Identification," in *Dark Thoughts Philosophic Reflections on Cinematic Horror*. Scarecrow Pres, Lanham. 2003.

Jan 22/24 Return of the Repressed

Night of the Living Dead (George Romero 1968, USA)

Wood, Robin. "Return of the Repressed." Film Comment. 14. July/August 1978

Jan 29/31 The Monstrous Feminine

The Brood (David Cronenberg, 1979)

Creed, Barbara. "Women as Monstrous Womb: *The Brood*" in *The Monstrous Feminine: Film, Feminism and Psychoanalysis*. Routledge. New York. 1993.

Feb 5/7 The Final Girl.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre – Remake (Marcus Nispel, 2003)

Reading: Carol Clover, "Her Body, himself: Gender in the Slasher film," in *Horror, the Film Reader*, ed. Mark Jancovich (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 77-89 Feb 12

Feb 12/14: Revisionist Horror

Martin (George Romero, 1977)

Abbott, Stacy. "George Romero's *Martin*: An American Vampire" in *Celluloid Vampires: Life after Death in the Modern World*. University of Texas Press. Austin. 2007.

Feb 19/21 (Reading Week)

Feb 26/28: Queer Horror

The Bride of Frankenstein (1935)

Benshoff, Harry. "Defining the Monster Queer in the Classical Horror Film." *Monsters in the Closet: Homosexuality and the Horror Film*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997. 1-30.

March 5/7: New Trend of Horror Films Directed by Women

Jennifer's Body (Diablo Cody, 2009)

Reading: Paszkiewicz, Katarzyna. "When the Woman Directs (a Horror Film)" in *Women Do Genre in Film and Television*. Routledge, London. 2017

March 12/14: The Cinematic Body

Audition (Takashi Miike, 1999)

Hantke, Steffen. "Japanese Horror under Western Eyes" in McRoy, Jay. *Japanese Horror Cinema*. Edinburg University Press. Edinburg. 2005.

March 19/21 Horror and Temporality

La Casa Muda (Gustavo Hernandez, 2010)

Reading: Powell, Anna. "Horror Time" in *Deleuze and Horror Film*. University of Edinburg. 2005.

March 26/28: New Media

Diary of the Dead (George A Romero, USA, 2007)

Cameron, Allan. "Zombie Media: Transition, Reproduction, and the Digital Dead" in *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Fall 2012), pp. 66-89.

April 2/4 Kids as Monsters in Horror Films

The Bad Seed (Mervyn LeRoy, 1956)

Lennard, Dominic. "Reaching the Age of Anxiety: The 1950s and the Horror Youth" in *Bad Seeds and Holy Terrors The Child Villains of Horror Film*. University of New York, 2014.

April 9/11 Religion and Horror

A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night (Ana Lilly Amirpour)

Abdi, Shadee ; Calafell, Bernadette Marie. "Queer utopias and a (Feminist) Iranian vampire: a critical analysis of resistive monstrosity in *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* " in *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 08 August 2017, Vol.34(4), p.358-370