

ENGL 330: “One Hundred Years of Horror”

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Course description:

Does what we fear and abhor tell us who we are? As films like “Get Out” and “A Quiet Place,” and series like “Stranger Things” and “Black Mirror,” receive accolades, cultural critics suggest that we are in the midst of a horror renaissance that extends and disrupts the traditional gothic roots of horror. Why are such works proliferating? Do they speak to present anxieties in ways few other works can? Reflect changing views of the stimulation we seek in works of art? We will try to answer such questions by looking at works of horror from the last hundred years. Our goal is to trace a line from classics by writers like Stoker and Lovecraft, and filmmakers like Murnau and Browning, to the new landscape of horror and to consider why spectacles of horror continue to attract us.

Proposed assignments:

Review of a literary work, 500-750 words, 20%

Review of a visual work, 500-750 words, 20%

Essay, 1500-2000 words, that discusses links between older and newer iterations of horror, 35%

Final Exam, 25%

Proposed reading list:

We will study 6-8 short narratives, and an equal number of films and series episodes, with the final selection to be determined in consultation with the class. Among the works we might consider:

Text: Poe, "Mask of the Red Death"; Stoker, "Dracula's Guest"; Blackwood, "The Willows"; Lovecraft, "Shadow Over Innsmouth"; Smith, "Double Shadow"; Robert Bloch, "Black Bargain"; Jackson, "The Lottery"; Russell, "Sardonicus"; Ligotti, "Vastarien"; King, *Night Shift* (selections); Barker, *Books of Blood* (selections).

Film: Murnau, *Nosferatu*; Browning, *Freaks*; Hitchcock, *Psycho*; Polanski, *Rosemary's Baby*; Romero, *Night of the Living Dead*; Hooper, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*; Cronenberg, *Shivers*; Raimi, *Evil Dead*; Del Toro, *Cronos*; Nakata, *Ring*; Boyle, *28 Days Later*; Yeon, *Train to Busan*; Eggers, *The Witch*; Peele, *Get Out*; Krasinski, *A Quiet Place*; Matt and Ross Duffer, *Stranger Things* (selections); Charlie Brooker, *Black Mirror* (selections)