

# ICFA 33: The Monstrous Fantastic

## Conference Paper Abstracts

**Wednesday, March 21, 2012 4:30-6:00 p.m.**

### **1. (SF) The Many Faces of the Black Vampiress: Octavia Butler's *Fledgling***

Pine

Chair: Isiah Lavender, III  
University of Central Arkansas

#### **"Shori Matthews has told us the truth": Unreliable Narration in Octavia Butler's *Fledgling***

Florian Bast  
University of Leipzig, Germany

Octavia Butler, the first black woman to be commercially successful as a science fiction author, is known for her novel's minute dissections of the complexities of power hierarchies and resistance. Her oeuvre has received considerable attention from scholars of the fantastic and of African American women's literature. As such, it is part of a more recent tendency in academia to investigate more closely the dynamic interplay of minority literature and the fantastic in popular culture. Butler's texts' construction of narrative perspective has largely been overlooked in this or, in fact, any context. In creating their narrators as characters at the heart of their fantastic contents, such as time travelers, human-vampire hybrids, or human-alien children of a third sex, Butler's writings invoke postmodern imaginings of the subject to bespeak dynamics of power and oppression created at the intersection of race, gender, and class. As part of a larger scholarly project investigating agency in Butler's oeuvre, my presentation will address one of these constructions critically.

#### **'Unspeakable Desire': Interracial Liaisons in Octavia Butler's *Fledgling***

Marie-Luise Löffler  
University of Leipzig

While Octavia Butler's fiction has generally received a substantial amount of scholarly attention, her latest novel *Fledgling* (2005) – centered around a young African American female vampire – has been largely neglected in most critical discussions of her work. Besides drastically departing from traditional conventions of vampire literature, one of its most striking features centers around the construction of multi-layered interracial bonds throughout its storyline. This paper will focus on the representation of a highly complex interracial sexual relationship between the black female protagonist and a white man in the novel – one of "the most disruptive and transformative articulation[s] of cross-racial contact" (Paulin 5) in African American literature. In contrast to conventional literary depictions that have largely focused on such relationships being of an overall destructive nature, I argue that Butler utilizes the fantastic figure of the female vampire to construct an intimate relationship between a black woman and a white man that profoundly departs from the multiple historically-grounded racial and gendered implications that have not only signified such sexual relationships in American culture and literature in general, but in African American literature in particular.

#### **Monsters and Power: The Construction of Race and Identity in Octavia Butler's *Fledgling***

Thomas Cassidy  
South Carolina State University

In Octavia Butler's final novel, *Fledgling*, Shori Matthews is, like her Shelley-esque predecessor, a creation of modern science whose outward signs of difference indelibly mark her as unnatural. Bioengineered with melanin by a race of fair-skinned vampires to be the first of their kind to endure the sunlight, she is treated by some of her fellow Ina as the racialized creature from James Whales *Frankenstein* movies, when they mount a campaign to burn her alive. When she appeals to a panel of elders to attest to the truth of her unnatural, hybridized identity, what's at stake is her identity as one of the Ina. Like most literary vampires, the Ina are implicitly aristocratic in their dealings among themselves, and with the humans symbionts whose blood they feed off of. Shori's challenge is to insert herself into this discourse in such a way that she does not simply repeat it but also introduces an implicitly racialized difference.

### **2. (VPA) Monstrous Comic Books**

Oak

Chair: Daniel Felts  
University of Memphis

#### **The Darkness in the "Dark Phoenix Saga": Gender, Power, and Identity in the X-Men**

Gregory Cavanaugh  
Rollins College

By examining shifting depictions of the 1980 *X-Men* "Dark Phoenix" narrative, this paper seeks to gain understanding of how changing concerns about gender in the United States inform the depiction of female power and its link to societal order.

### **"It" All Depends: Complicated Monstrosity in *Nightschool: The Weirn Books***

Lynette James  
USM Stonecoast

This paper explores the methods used to complicate the definition of the monstrous in the *Nightschool* graphic novels by Svetlana Chmakova through close readings of the *Nightschool* books through the lenses of rhetorical analysis, cultural studies, and literary theory including such works as *Rhetorics of Fantasy*, *Not Your Mother's Vampire*, *The Uses of Enchantment*, and Scott McCloud's work on comics.

### **Monsters in the Fourth Dimension: The Imaginative Plane of the 3D Comic Book**

David Steiling  
Ringling College of Art and Design

This presentation is a brief examination of the way in which monsters and the monstrous are integrated within the immersive space of the 3D comic book. Examples from the introductory period of the 1950s, along with some other significant experiments with 3D comics will show how the virtual space of 3D sequential art is manipulated to construct atmospherics of horror, the uncanny or the sublime.

### **3. (FTV) Expressive Monsters: Polanski, Aronofsky, and *Soul Eaters***

Cypress

Chair: Mark Bould  
University of the West of England

#### **Dialectical Progression in Roman Polanski's Apartment Trilogy**

Robert Niemi  
St. Michael's College

Roman Polanski's so-called "Apartment Trilogy" consists of three fascinating and powerful horror films: *Repulsion* (1965), *Rosemary's Baby* (1967), and *Le Locataire* [*The Tenant*] (1976). The monstrous events that transpire in *Repulsion* are entirely in the realm of psychological horror, i.e., all of the horrors emanate from the increasingly warped mind of the protagonist, Carol Ledoux (Catherine Deneuve). The second film, *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) is best classified as "supernatural horror"; all of the weirdness can be attributed to the doings of a powerful satanic cult. The final film in the Trilogy, *The Tenant*, represents a kind of dialectical culmination as it combines and melds psychological and supernatural horror elements into a cryptic and truly frightening configuration that surpasses its predecessors in ambiguity, complexity, and dramatic impact. My presentation will trace genre and thematic development in the Apartment Trilogy in dialectical terms (thesis, i.e., psychological horror; antithesis, i.e., supernatural horror; synthesis, i.e., psychological-supernatural horror) and discuss the implications.

#### ***Soul Eater* and the Monsters of Expressionism**

Janine Villot  
University of South Florida

In the Japanese anime *Soul Eater*, monsters permeate the story, which takes place in a fantastical version of our world. *Soul Eater's* horror setting and visual style utilize the same methods of expression found in German Expressionistic films such as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* spoke to the heart of Germany's issues at the time, and *Soul Eater*, with its secondhand German Expressionistic influence, updates the themes. Both works focus on the debilitating effects of trauma, but for *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, trauma arises from post-World War I issues, while *Soul Eater* locates trauma in psychological conditions. Using *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* as comparison allows the understanding that *Soul Eater's* outward manifestation of monstrosity acts as both an expression and a distortion of the monstrous within. Two kinds of monstrosity dominate *Soul Eater*: the born monster and the created monster. Both can be found in the ranks of *Soul Eater's* villains: born monsters in the animalistic witches, and created monsters in the murderous people whose evil souls have mutated their forms. However, the true issue of monstrosity lies in two of the more complex characters whose madness leads them to straddle the line between antagonist and protagonist: Dr. Franken Stein, a born psychopath based on both Mary Shelley's (in)famous doctor and his monster, and Crona, a mass murderer created by his mother. The paper first examines the issue of the monstrous in *Soul Eater*, particularly in their unique transformational qualities. The paper then compares and contrasts *Soul Eater's* presentation of the monstrous to that of the German Expressionistic film, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. The paper concludes that comparing *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* to *Soul Eater* allows a deeper understanding of how this fantastical anime addresses contemporary psychological concerns based on reality.

#### **The Insane Quest for Perfection: Identity and Otherness in Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan***

Patricia Williamson  
Central Michigan University

Director Darren Aronofsky's dark exploration of the creative process and its toll on the artist received critical acclaim and numerous award nominations upon its 2010 release. The film focuses on the trials and tribulations of Nina, a meek, hard-working ballerina who must transform herself into the perfect Swan Queen by confronting a darker side of her identity. Aronofsky revisits many of the same tropes and themes he has used in his past films, including an exploration of internal and external validation, shifting identities, entertainment as artistic endeavor, otherness, and jealousy. This examination of the film will delve into the depiction of the creative process as a form of transformation through mental disintegration. Special attention will be paid to the use of doubles and doppelgangers throughout the film, as well as the use of color to delineate good and evil or control and release. The film will be analyzed along with Aronofsky's earlier work in order to identify the director's own artistic vision and directorial transformation.

#### 4. (SF/F) China Miéville's Monstrous Bodies and Landscapes

Captiva A

Chair: Joan Gordon  
Nassau Community College

##### **"Decentralized Fear" – Abjection and Binaries in *Perdido Street Station***

Justin Cosner  
University of Iowa

In Istvan Csicsery-Ronay's groundbreaking study *The Seven Beauties of Science Fiction*, Csicsery-Ronay locates two of the fundamental formulations of cognitive estrangement the genre has to offer in the Science-Fictional Grotesque and the Science-Fictional Sublime. The binary between the two arises as the supreme all-encompassing consciousness in opposition to the intensely visceral, the overwhelmingly bodily; "the sublime has to do with the mind reflecting on its own power or lack..." whereas the "grotesque brings the sublime to earth... forcing attention back to the body." (182) China Miéville disrupts this binary understanding in the novel *Perdido Street Station* with the antagonistic slake moths, monsters who exist both physically and ephemerally and who deconstruct the metaphysical boundary between the mental and physical. The slake moth crisis arises as a fundamentally abject threat, in terms of Julia Kristeva's psychological work, as that which disrupts such boundaries, disturbs "identity, systems, order," (Creed 8) and as "the place where meaning collapses." (Creed 9) In this manner, Miéville seems at first to recapitulate a concretized binaries of mind/body, thinking/feeling but then dismantles them showing their continuance on a spectrum, their overlap and contradictions.

##### **Renegade Chimeras/Every Bloody Word: China Miéville's Xenoscapes**

Sandy Rankin  
University of Arkansas

With China Miéville, nothing can always-already be taken for granted, except for the *contingency* of fractures, grief underneath, and through the fractures, the emerging of displaced, marginalized, alienated, or half-forgotten forces, i.e., what Fredric Jameson, borrowing from Ernst Bloch, calls the expression of "the irrepressible revolutionary wish" (*Marxism and Form*), evoking what Miéville might call *permanent revolution*. Because he engages in a fight with the English language (every bloody word), via chimeric language itself, to undermine and wrest control from white, imperialist, patriarchal, bourgeois-capitalist privilege and systematic practices, Miéville imbues his fictional landscapes (such as an empty milk carton, Curdle, in *Un Lun Dun*, the sea in *Kraken*, language-addicted buildings in *Embassytown*) with a doubled-voiced consciousness, one real, one not real, both defiantly fantastic: "Redefine the 'impossible,' and you're changing the categories within the not-real . . . . Change the not-real and that allows you differently to think the potentialities in the real," Miéville says ("Fantasy and Revolution"; emphasizes original), and "our consciousness of the not-real is not simply a function of immediate physical productive activities. The defiantly fantastic—the never-possible—will not go away" ("Editorial Introduction" 45). Slightly altering Miéville's articulation "We need fantasy to think the world, and to change it" ("Editorial Introduction" 48), I argue that "We need Miéville's renegade chimeras/every bloody word, Miéville's real/not real xenoscapes, to think the world, and to change it," to cognitively and emotionally nourish our fantastic defiance, our electrified and electrifying charge: demand the never-possible!

##### **In It for the Monsters: China Miéville, Disability Theory, and the Problem of the Monstrous**

Robert L. Spirko  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

A fascination with the grotesque and the monstrous runs throughout China Miéville's work. Indeed, such a fascination is common among much weird fiction. However, the grotesque or monstrous body presents an interesting challenge for a reader familiar with disability studies. These are the "extraordinary bodies" that Rosemarie Garland Thomson called attention to in her groundbreaking study; they represent the kind of "disability aesthetic" that Tobin Siebers discusses in his book of the same name. Is this fascination with the grotesque merely a recapitulation of the gaze of the audience in the freak show? What does it mean for someone with an unusual body if their closest analogues in fiction are sources of fear and loathing? Miéville seems to grapple with these questions in interesting ways: this paper will examine the role of the monstrous in his work through the lens of disability studies. I will update an argument I made in a paper delivered at the 2006 MLA conference, in which I trace the evolving attitudes towards the grotesque Remade in the Bas-Lag novels. In *Perdido Street Station*, they exist primarily as freaks, while in the later novels, *The Scar* and *Iron Council*, they move to being point-of-view characters, more valorized in the text and more fully realized as individuals. Then, the paper will examine Miéville's more recent work, in which he tends to eschew the near-human uncanny body for more alien forms. This work can serve as an example for how to reconcile the social justice demands of disability studies with the avowed passion for monsters that animates Miéville's writing in particular and the "new weird" aesthetic in general.

## 5. (F) Wondrous Bodies of the Gendered *Monstrum* in Fairy Tales and Fantasy

Captiva B

Chair: Cristina Bacchilega  
University of Hawai'i-Mānoa

### Monstrous Masculinity in Fairy Tales

Jeana Jorgensen  
Indiana University

Manhood and masculinity have been analyzed less (and only in recent years) than femininity, due in large part to the invisibility of masculinity as the norm in patriarchal cultures (discussed in Gardiner). In fairy-tale scholarship, too, masculinity has often been treated as an after-thought, something to discuss once all the interesting things have been said about women's roles in fairy tales, or something to present in contrast to women's bodies. In this paper, I examine how masculinity is constructed in fairy tales as both normal and normalizing, whereby the monstrosity of many male characters' actions is obscured by the fantastic conventions of the fairy-tale genre. Empirical analysis of men's bodies in fairy tales in my dissertation has shown that men are overwhelmingly described in terms of their strength, size, and age, compared to an emphasis on beauty and appearance for women (see also Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz). However, even where fairy-tale men are acknowledged to be monstrous, as with the villain Bluebeard, the focus is shifted away from the monstrosity of their actions, and onto other aspects of the narrative. In "Bluebeard," both critics of the tale (such as Bettelheim) and writers of certain versions of the tale (especially Perrault) shift the focus to judging the heroine's actions, namely her curiosity in violating the interdiction to open the forbidden chamber, resulting in what Cristina Bacchilega calls "an explicit condemnation of the heroine's curiosity, but total silence on the ethics of the husband's serial murders" (*Postmodern Fairy Tales* 106). In many versions of "Bluebeard" and the accompanying criticism, there are thus both textual and metatextual strategies for displacing the husband's transgressive behavior onto the wife, downplaying the threatening consequences of his masculinity. However, the phenomenon of shifting the focus away from male bodies and male power also extends to tales with male characters that are less obviously monstrous. I will discuss examples of both obvious and subtle constructions of the monstrous masculine, employing feminist and queer theory to disentangle the question of how monstrosity is narrated onto bodies in fairy tales and fantasy.

### Gracious Corporeality: Carol Emshwiller's Feminist Caresses of Heteropatriarchal Monstrosity

Ida Yoshinaga  
University of Hawai'i-Mānoa

I will examine experimental author Carol Emshwiller's stories, including "The Library," "Boys," "Abominable," and "All of Us Can Almost....," to enumerate her clear-eyed, cold, yet compassionate methodology for illustrating gender relations through spiritual, if capably clever, storytelling. Emshwiller's narrative style skirts around—even eviscerates—generic boundaries separating sf, horror, and fantasy. Her postmodern feminist approach to story conventions of the fantastic, transports stock characters of genre fiction—generals, thieves, angels, and superheroes—into familiar diegetic premises—creature confronting maker, pacifist defying soldier, stalker hunting prey—but presents these tales with an avant-garde wink. Emshwiller's key surrealistic technique is an allegorical depiction of corporeality, marked by distanced, vague narration that resists the linear, literal, totalizing descriptive tricks of realist writing. Her cartoon-like narration deploys satire to draw reader interest towards monstrous bodies produced by heteropatriarchal societies and towards violences generated on/by/beyond such bodies. But it sketches these monstrous figures (and their harms) in Zen-like dotted lines, shielding the reader's body from absorbing the spiritual damage of entering into textual modes of violence generated by masculinist, militaristic story genres. Emshwiller's sexism-corrective plots place the most grotesque male figures, about to commit the cruelest masculinist actions, into situations reducing their physical power, such as being dwarfed within natural landscapes (harsh snowscapes/mountaintops), or into corporeally vulnerable positions alongside stronger females (nurturers, thinkers, or hags protecting the men whose strength fails), thus re-contextualizing male embodiment as small, f(l)ailing, ultimately, ridiculous. Lest Emshwiller's light touch mislead the reader into minimizing the weight of issues at hand, her narratives offer as their prime target, the brutality engendered upon male and female bodies by military-industrial complexes and patriarchal orders. If a tale's narration reveals its grand worldview, then Emshwiller's Story Goddess is in turns gracious, knowing, withholding, and merciless.

### Ambiguous Monstrosity in Kelly Link's "The Cinderella Game"

Christy Williams  
Hawai'i Pacific University

In the author's note to her short story "The Cinderella Game," Kelly Link says that "everyone in it could be a villain. It just depends on which fairy tale you think you're reading" (200). The ambiguity of the villain is created in part by slippage between the concepts of *villain* and *monster*. The two are interchangeable in this story. Every character is painted with monstrous imagery, invoking werewolves and zombies, and both children play at being evil in their game of "Cinderella." Peter and his younger stepsister Darcy argue over who gets to be Cinderella and who is the evil stepsister. Peter claims the role of Cinderella and immediately turns her "evil," transforming the traditional heroine into another villain. Allowing Cinderella to be played by a boy—thereby not matching character gender to biological sex—completely changes her role in the story of "Cinderella," and the fairy tale falls apart. The "new, improved version" of "Cinderella" Peter imagines contains no heroes, princes, nor magical helpers (191). Undoing the gender-sex pairing allows the story to unravel. Disrupting the male/female binary also disrupts the good/evil one. And once everyone can be "evil," the fairy-tale conventions break down, and the game the children play slips into the horrific. My paper will examine how the fairy-tale conventions invoked in Link's "The Cinderella Game" are disrupted and transformed by questioning both the concepts of gender and evil, and by suggesting that one is constructed as monstrous by others. I argue that the slippage between *villain* and *monster* is an effect from blending fairy-tale and horror genres and referencing monstrous fairy-tale villains. As such, *villain* becomes a relational term: who the villain is depends on from whose point of view one is seeing the story.

## 7. (IF) Alien and Indigenous Encounters in the Americas

Vista B

Chair: Andrew Aberdein  
Florida Institute of Technology

### Dictatorship, Trauma and the Monstrous Fantastic In the Brazilian Amazon

M. Elizabeth Ginway  
University of Florida

In this paper I will examine the monstrous fantastic in three science fiction and fantasy texts set in the Amazon. I argue that the region represents the country's collective unconscious, placing the trauma of the dictatorship and forced economic development far from Brazil's main population centers, in a metaphorical "heart of darkness." As works of genre literature, two of the three novels, Marcio Souza's 1983 *The Order of the Day* and Ivanir Calado's *Mãe do sonho* [Mother of Dreams] (1990) have conventional narrative closure and resolution. The third, Roberto de Sousa Causo's *O Par* [The Partner] (2001) is a more open-ended text suggestive of the ambivalent discourse of trauma studies. While these works of Brazilian science fiction and fantasy offer a powerful means of conveying trauma caused by monstrous or alien life, they also explore encounters among indigenous and Western cultures and a new spectrum of identity and gender roles, both suggestive of the unsettling nature of trauma. In most cases, the images of territorial and bodily invasion symbolize the trauma of modernization, which remains long after the monsters have disappeared.

### Second Contact: The First Contact Story in Latin American Science Fiction

Rachel Haywood Ferreira  
Iowa State University

The historical first contact between the explorers and conquistadors from Spain or Portugal and the original inhabitants of Central and South America is the subtext for a wide range of science-fictional works written in Latin America. Indeed Latin American stories of first contact might better be described as stories of second contact due to the degree to which the original historical circumstances and the colonial legacy inform content and perspective. This paper explores the effects of the Columbian first contact and its aftermath on Latin American works such as "The Falsifier" (José Adolph, Peru, 1971) and "When Pilate Said No" (Hugo Correa, Chile, c.1960) (both of these texts have been translated into English in the *Cosmos Latinos* anthology).

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**Thursday, March 22, 2012 8:30-10:00 a.m.**

## 8. (IF/VPA/FTV) Consumption and Flesh in the Japanese Fantastic

Pine

Chair: Hiroko Chiba  
DePauw University

### Weaponized Flesh: The Echoes of World War II in *Akira* and *Mother 3*

Concetta Bommarito  
University of Central Florida

The cultural scars of fascism in Japan have not healed in part because there is still a cultural taboo against discussing World War II. Censorship during and after US occupation made direct discussion of the war near-impossible, and cultural taboos about the war prevent changes to the now self-censorship regulations. Instead, the Japanese have had to devise a coded system to understand a history that is not taught to them in schools or public discourses. Serious criticism of the technology-driven military industrial complex that led to Japan's fascist regime is almost entirely found in popular culture because of these taboos. This paper will seek to demonstrate the ways in which critiques of Emperor Hirohito's indoctrination of young soldiers have overlapped with Japan's technology driven militarism in Katsuhiro Otomo's manga *Akira* and Shigesato Itoi's video game *Mother 3*. *Akira* refuses any optimism for the use of technology to rebuild the country and challenges the notion of the Japanese as victims of corruption. Otomo's characters do not thrive, but are time and again made to fight against their oppressors only to face disfigurement, death, and an uncertain future. In *Mother 3*, Itoi shows a more cautious optimism in which characters face down adversity as a trial rather than a continuous struggle. Though technology disfigures and kills them, the characters of *Mother 3* ultimately embrace technology as their means of existence, becoming self-aware as characters in a game and passing their experiences to the player in hopes of sharing a message of compassion. These two works will be analyzed to demonstrate the progression of attitudes during and after the technology-driven economic boom of the 90s and will be viewed through Takashi Murakami's Superflat movement and the Otaku (dedicated popular culture fan) as Hiroki Azuma's database animals.

### **Fantastic Suicide: Reading the Uncanny in Shion Sono's *Suicide Club*, Human Bodies as Corpses and Meat**

Kathryn Dunlap  
University of Central Florida

The issue of suicide in Japan is a complex one with a long history and a variety of cultural associations that are often overly simplified in Western examinations of the issue. Recent trends in the phenomena and the rapid increase in the rate of Japanese suicide starting in the 90s and continuing into the 2000s has led to growing public concern and an increase in social and governmental intervention on the issue. Despite preventative steps, Japan still has the highest suicide rate of any G8 nation and there is a growing trend of Internet suicide pacts among the youth of Japan. This paper will examine Shion Sono's award winning film *Suicide Club* as a surrealist horror genre commentary on the cultural unease of the Japanese and how the sudden increase in suicide rates has impacted Japanese culture by introducing elements of Freud's uncanny into the narrative. The fear of suspected suicide pacts creates an uneasy distinction between those who are alive and those who, having already made a pact, are only animate corpses. In addition, several key elements blur the distinction between human flesh and meat creating cognitive dissonance in the uncomfortable familiar. This paper will also examine the ways in which Kristeva's abjection operates on the suicides within the film both before and after their deaths. Japan's current suicide crisis is linked significantly with Japan's disaffected youth, who experience abjection from a more traditional Japanese culture and after their deaths, their bodies become abject within the culture that views them as uncanny objects.

### ***Tabehodai* (All You Can Eat): *Kuchisake Onna* and the Female Maw in Japanese Folk Culture**

Nicholas Ware  
University of Central Florida

Japan is a country with a rich history of folklore *yokai* (monsters). *Yokai* take numerous forms and exist in all contexts--rural and urban, ancient and modern, friend and foe--but no *yokai* has been as prominent in the last 30 years as *kuchisake onna* (slit-mouthed woman). This urban legend has its roots in the late 1970s, and tellings vary. The salient details always include a beautiful, fit woman whose mouth is covered (often with a surgical mask). After asking her victim, "Am I pretty?" the cover comes off, revealing an ear-to-ear mouth that contains numerous razor-sharp teeth. The *kuchisake onna* is the most popular and recent example of a Japanese folk monster whose femininity is weaponized through consumption. It can be linked to other examples of female Japanese monsters (*onibaba*, the *Dojoji* snake woman, and *futakuchi onna*), all of whom are notable for their unique habits of consumption or their gaping maws. These monsters stretch back into Japan's past, but their emergence in post-war Japanese popular culture (chiefly *manga* and film) show their continued connection with multiple anxieties of Japanese living, such as feminist revenge on the patriarchy, contagion, urban alienation, and the beauty myth. These anxieties will be analyzed through a careful study of these monsters, both in their folkloric form and their popular culture form. The popular texts that this paper will focus on are the films *Carved* (2007), *Onibaba* (1964), and *The Slit-Mouthed Woman* (2005) as well as the manga *Hanako to Guuwa no Tera* (2004) and *GeGeGe no Kitaro* (1959 – 1969). The scholarship will be situated chiefly through the work of Michael Dylan Foster, Barbara Creed, Adam Lowenstein, and Kazuhiko Komatsu. Through textual and cultural analysis, this paper will set up *kuchisake onna* as the totem creature of post-war patriarchal-industrial culture in Japan.

## **9. (SF) Gender and Feminism in Science Fiction**

*Oak*

Chair: Kathryn Allan  
Independent Scholar

### **Narrative Structure in (Some) Feminist SF**

Ritch Calvin  
SUNY, Stony Brook

Perhaps because it has often been said that science fiction as literature is a medium of escape, a type of narrative that lends itself to the representation of ideas, science fiction novels have often taken the form of straight-forward, linear narratives. For the purposes of this essay, I propose to examine Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976), Margaret Atwood's *Handmaid's Tale* (1986), and Laura Bynum's *Veracity* (2010). In each of these novels, the first-person narrative unfolds in a manner that calls into question the reliability of the narrator—and, thereby, the veracity of the events themselves—and the position of the reader as knower. Because of the fragmented, fragmentary, and non-linear structures of the novels, the reader, as the women in the novels themselves, are placed in a position of epistemological uncertainty. Furthermore, the first two novels, by means of their codices, further undermine any epistemological certainty the reader might expect from a science fiction novel.

### **"It's Not That Straightforward": Ambivalent Feminism in Lesley Hauge's *Nomansland***

Aubri Plourde  
Hollins University

It seems painfully obvious to discuss gender in a text written about a post-disaster, all-female community like the one presented in Lesley Hauge's *Nomansland*. Nonetheless, despite the book's domination by female characters all living in uniformed synchronicity, it presents several different presentations of femininity. At first, the text seems to present the dangers of both adolescence and feminism gone wrong. In fact, in a review of *Nomansland*, Kate Quealy-Gainer claims, "the story's underlying assumptions about female-ness and its necessary attachment to beauty tempers its feminist punch" (435). However, a reading of the underlying implications represented by the polarity of Laing and Ms. Windsor and the resulting variations in female characters makes the story's linking of female-ness and beauty only a single facet in a more complex structure. In *Nomansland*, Laing and Ms. Windsor act as foils competing for Keller's attention, both of which present damaging images of feminism. However, Keller's ambivalence toward both leaders coupled with the remaining community of individualized women between the

poles of Ms. Windsor and Laing abjures traditional or simple feminist readings. Instead, the neo-archetypes of the women in the wake of Laing and Ms. Windsor's tension create a more nuanced and complex view of womanhood.

### **Love (or Not) in Androgynous Spaces: Binaries and Identities in "Day Million," "Closer," and "Androgynous"**

Mary Long  
Florida Atlantic University

Strict binary systems don't just maintain the separation between mind/body, male/female, and natural/technical; strict binaries confuse the process of identity construction because identities are more complex than opposing sets of 1s and 0s or XXs and XYs. Identities are as performative as Judith Butler says gender is. In "Closer," by Greg Egan, and "Day Million," by Frederik Pohl, strict binaries reinforce traditional male/female performances, even though some traditional boundary lines have been blurred. In the song "Androgynous," by The Replacements, androgyny is positioned as a space to refute the male/female binary. Out of these works, the most successful relationship is the one based on symbiotic identity constructions that work together to challenge an oppressive dominant binary system. Using gender theory by Judith Butler and touching on transgender findings by Dr. Az Hakeem, the relationships between: Sian and Michael of "Closer"; Don and Dora of "Day Million"; and Dick and Jane of "Androgynous" can be analyzed in lieu of their attempts at deconstructing gender binaries and constructing relationships based on non-traditional gender identities. Androgyny, while not a perfect solution to a binary gender system, offers a way to play with identity and reorder potentially limiting relationship roles. In "Day Million" and "Closer," couples are offered technological innovations that allow extremely androgynous behavior; however, this behavior is not necessarily successful in refuting binary coercion due to the relocation of gender from body to mind in each work. Ultimately, the kinds of repetitions enacted in a song like "Androgynous" and the exploration of the short-comings of gender reconfigurations that are located in body only like those in "Closer" and "Day Million" add to the ways in which we see how binary gender systems can negatively impact identity and relationship constructions.

## **11. (FTV) Posthumanism and Monstrosity**

*Palm*

Chair: Susan A. George  
University of California, Merced

### **It's Not the Monsters Who Scare Us Anymore: Stitching and Cutting to Posthumanism in *Martyrs* and *The Human Centipede* (First Sequence)**

Tiffany Frost  
Florida Atlantic University

The incorporation of medical discourse into horror films often functions to relocate healing, sickness, and death to a space that is subverted to focus on mutilating, infecting, and playing with the borders of human and nonhuman existence. In two popular horror films, Tom Six's *The Human Centipede* and Pascal Laugier's *Martyrs*, the lead characters are subjected to surgical mutilation by a character who has the cultural power and physical environment to create a living experiment as a testament to humanity's intelligence and possible metaphysical transcendence. In both films, the objects of vivisection are young people who appear as relatively average. One way to approach the monstrous Human Centipede that is made by sewing three bodies together and connecting the mouth to the anus of the person in front of them would be to dismiss this film as unnecessarily violent, gratuitous, and, thus, filth. And one way to consider a film like *Martyrs* might be to engage in how demeaning the film is to the female human body. Another avenue that is worth exploring is how coprophagia, physical torture, and the subversion of medical procedures are situated in these films as tools of the ideology of monstrous humanism that has been so vehemently challenged by the scholarship of Jacques Derrida, Donna Haraway, and Cary Wolfe. This essay considers how these films negotiate the borders of humanity, animality, and monstrosity by the silencing of the human voice, the consumption of feces, victim suicide, and the distortion of nonhuman animal voices and bodies within the scope of posthumanism.

### **You're So Cute, You Could Just Eat Me Up: Cuteness, Monstrosity and Posthuman Subjectivity**

Aaron Kashtan  
Georgia Tech

This paper examines the parallel operation of cuteness and monstrosity in contemporary American and Japanese popular culture, using Hayao Miyazaki's *My Neighbor Totoro* (1989) and *Spirited Away* (2001) and Pete Docter's *Monsters, Inc.* as case studies. For Sianne Ngai, the cute object evokes destructive impulses: "the cute object is as often intended to excite a consumer's sadistic desires for mastery and control as much as his or her desire to cuddle." This suggests that monsters can't be cute (their threatening, destructive impulses are directed toward us rather than vice versa) and that cute objects can't be monstrous (they lack the necessary threateningness). Yet Ngai observes that "it is possible for cute objects to look *helpless and aggressive at the same time*." Conversely, cute creatures labeled as monsters appear with surprising frequency in popular culture. In this paper I attempt a preliminary explanation of these paradoxes by observing that cute things and monsters both occupy a position of alterity relative to the human subject. The cute object affects us by its position of inferiority and vulnerability relative to ourselves; the more an object resembles the adult, rational human subject, the less cute it gets. Similarly, the monster affects us by its difference from the human. The figure of the cute monster is therefore a natural combination of two categories that are defined by their disturbing difference from the human. This makes the cute monster an intriguing figure for the posthuman subject – that which we recognize as having subjective interiority, but which we cannot reduce to a human subject position. While Pixar's film tries to defuse the subversive potential of the cute monster, Miyazaki's films embrace the power of the cute monster to question the traditional understanding of the human as the privileged form of subjectivity.

### **Viral Posthumanism: Boundaries and Biopolitics in Edward Gareth's *Monsters***

Sherryl Vint

Brock University

As Priscilla Wald outlines in her book *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers and Outbreak Narratives*, there is a long history of medicalized discourse of contagion becoming attached to racialized discourse regarding immigration. Outbreak narratives might thus be understood as the paradigm which informs recent images of the abject posthuman, in which humanity becomes split between surviving “real” humans and infected, dangerous posthumans, a literalization of what Foucault has termed the racism of modern biopolitical governance. Viruses are an apt image for the abject posthuman, another kind of living dead/infected living. Yet as Wald points out, the image of contagion does not have only pejorative associations: viruses are not inherently about killing but about changing, and the metaphor of contagion serves equally to mark the boundary between “good” self and abject “infected” and to establish the scope of spreading community through the bond of shared immunity. My paper will explore the potential for a politically enabling myth of posthuman contagion in Gareth Edwards’ film *Monsters*. The film conflates anxieties about policing borders from racial others with those about quarantining infectious zones in its image of invading alien “monsters” who threaten the status quo as both invaders and sites of infection. The film interrogates and satires a security-state discourse of biopolitics that conflates different national subjects with both literal aliens and with discourses of infectious, transformative and dangerous – to existing power relations – ideas.

### **12. (VPA) Staging Monstrosity**

*Magnolia*

Chair: Don Riggs

Drexel University

### **Science Fiction, Science Fantastical: Staging the Human Condition in *Fahrenheit 451* and *Red Rovers***

Carrie J. Cole

University of Arizona

This paper explores how two theatre productions – *Fahrenheit 451* at Round House Theatre in Washington, DC and *Red Rovers*, staged by the Philadelphia-based ensemble Headlong Dance Theatre – thematically focus on humanity’s isolation either to reinforce or negate this theme through the technological aesthetic of live performance.

### **The Opera *Death and the Powers* and Technologic *Wunderkammers***

Jen Gunnels

*New York Review of Science Fiction*

This paper will examine *Death and the Powers* (2011), an opera by Tod Machover, by utilizing the model of the *Wunderkammer* presented in the work of Horst Bredekamp and Anna Munster.

### **The Doubly-Cheesy Heterotopia of Drive-In Theater Design for *Bat Boy: The Musical***

Jane Barnette

Kennesaw State University

This paper examines the use of the drive-in motif in the design concept of the 2010 Kennesaw State University produced *Bat Boy: The Musical* to support a kind of ironic nostalgia: a degree of parody that “critically renders specific historical norms obsolete.”

### **13. (IF) Global Monsters Old and New**

*Dogwood*

Chair: Dale Knickerbocker

East Carolina University

### **The Theban Sphinx as Serial Killer**

Debbie Felton

University of Massachusetts Amherst

One current theory regarding the cultural realization of monsters argues that some creatures of myth and folklore, such as werewolves and vampires, may have originated as a way of explaining outrages so hideous that no one wanted to believe they could have been committed by human beings (DOUGLAS, 18). Folk tales, such as those of the Brothers Grimm, reflected social realities of their times, and their often-gruesome content suggests that serial killing was recognized in pre-modern Europe (SCHECHTER, 123-25). So, although mythological monsters can symbolize the chaos and destructiveness of the natural world that “civilizing” man tries to control, some may also have had a basis in real life. One such monster may be the Theban Sphinx. The Theban Sphinx is best known today for her famous riddle, solved by the hero Oedipus. But the Sphinx was a late addition to the Oedipus story: long before the Sphinx arrived to kill Thebans, Oedipus was already infamous for parricide and incest. The Sphinx’s late appearance in the Oedipus story is less puzzling when we remember that in antiquity she was associated not primarily with her riddle but with the deaths of young men, as depicted on many Greek vase paintings from the fifth-century BCE. Pausanias (second century CE) suggests that the legend of the Sphinx was based on the true story of a female bandit who terrorized the area (*Description of Greece*, 9.27). According to Pausanias, this woman killed not mainly for profit, but because she enjoyed mutilating her victims—one of the primary characteristics of a serial killer. Even in the cultural context of ancient Greece mutilation murders were abhorred, and details of the Theban Sphinx’s story help to support the theory that some monsters were culturally constructed to express highly disturbing realities such as the existence of serial killers.



### **From Kiev's Witches to Kievitsas: The Emergence of New Literary Monsters**

Larisa Fialkova  
The University of Haifa

The witches in Russian tradition are somehow linked with Kiev. According to the legends, they gather in Kiev on the so called Lysaia gora (Bald Mountain) for their Sabbath. With Kiev they are linked in Pushkin's ballad "Hussar" and in Somov's short stories "Kiev's witches". Gogol labeled all the women on Kiev's market as witches at the end of his "Vii". Gumiliev in one of his poems addressed his young wife, a poetess Anna Akhmatova, as a witch from Kiev. Bulgakov, Kiev-born writer, equated the Bald Mountain with Golgotha, connecting Kiev's witches with the Satan's ball in Moscow and with the Yeshua Ha-Notsri's (Jesus') execution in Yerushalaim (Jerusalem). The paper will address the series of novels written by the young Kiev writer Lada Luzina (pen-name of Vladislava Kucheroва) under the common title "Kievskie ved'my" (Kiev's Witches). Each novel has its subtitle: "Vystrel v opere" (The Shot in the Opera), *Mech i Krest* (The Sword and the Cross) and "Retsept Mastera" (Master's Prescription). In her trilogy Luzina has created the new type of a witch, namely *kievitsa*, who is responsible for the well-being of Kiev. The plot starts at the beginning of the 21st century, when three Kiev's wenches, Katia, Dasha and Masha accidentally eye witnessed the death of kievitsa Kylyna, thus becoming recipients of her power. Yet, this power can be implemented only by all the three together. Luzina consciously constructs her monsters as the continuation of Russian tradition, using both fiction and research on Kiev monsters as her "bricks". The trilogy is deeply rooted in the cityscape and is connected to different historical times. It can be analyzed on the crossroad of three frameworks, namely monsters, space and revolution. The latter framework is possible, because kievitsas are able to travel in time and to prevent the Revolution of 1917.

### **Poor, Pitiful Monsters from Homer to Borges**

Robin McAllister  
Sacred Heart University

A review of famous monsters who reveal a hidden humanity or affinity with the hero that elicits our compassion or emphasizes their bestiality in surprising ways. I shall begin with Homer's portrait of Polyphemus, the Cyclops, and the ironic scene with his old ram, continue through Grendel's Mother and the Dragon in *Beowulf*, to culminate with Borges's Minotaur in "La Casa de Asterion." A monster depends on the eye of the beholder. Homer's Polyphemus, the first monster in Western literature, establishes certain traits that persist throughout literature. Odysseus describes him as lawless, lacking the technologies that set civilized men apart, agriculture and the building of ships, a cannibal. His size, like a shaggy mountain, is monstrous in itself. Odysseus's attitude toward him resembles a colonist's from a conquering people describing indigenous people, who neither recognize the rich resources of their land nor have the technology to exploit them, an attitude we later encounter toward another monster on an island, Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The Cyclops lives up to Odysseus words, refusing to acknowledge Zeus and the gods, and observing the law of hospitality, sacred to Zeus, by smashing the heads of Odysseus' men on the ground, killing them like puppies, and offering as his "guest gift" to Odysseus' skin of wine to eat Odysseus last of his men. And yet Homer shows us that the Cyclops has another side to his personality which is more appealing. He may not like men, but he loves his old ram, the leader of the herd, perhaps Homer's way of emphasizing Polyphemus' bestial, subhuman nature. The words of affection and empathy the Cyclops utters to the ram are rendered almost comical by the ironic of his situation. Odysseus at that very moment is clinging to the belly of the ram to escape from the cave. Although the poet of *Beowulf* was unfamiliar with Homer, his description of the three monsters Beowulf encounters, Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon that guards a burial chamber, share the monstrosity of size and the disdain for the laws of men as the Cyclops. Grendel and Grendel's mother too are cannibals, yet their shapes are ambiguous, sometimes more human than animal. They exhibit a certain longing for the company of men and resemble exiles from a tribe, the tribe of Cain, the first murderer and exile in Biblical history. The dragon Beowulf dies slaying is not just a scaly flying serpent, but clearly associated with the vengeful soul of the warrior buried there, whose tomb has been looted. Beowulf himself will soon join the Last Survivor and perhaps be metamorphosed into a guardian dragon. Jorge Luis Borges writes as if he conceived many of his stories as carrying on a dialogue with departed predecessors in the Western literary tradition, like Homer ("The Immortal"), Dante ("The Aleph"), and Cervantes ("Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote"), as if they were his contemporaries sharing a continuous tradition. In "The House of Asterion" the Minotaur is both the monster and the hero, like many other protagonists in Borges' fiction. Asterion, the Minotaur, shares their role as dreamers of metaphysical speculation lost or trapped in a labyrinth of human fate, a literal labyrinth in the Minotaur's case. As Asterion narrates his quest journey, we can perceive the inhuman aspect of his dual nature as bull and man only intermittently in the tale he tells. He rejects writing and reading both as human activities too limited for his "generous impatience." In my conclusion I will speculate about whether monsters are even possible in our post-modern sensibility.

## 14. (SF) Nature, Humanity, and Alterity in the Fiction of Philip K. Dick

Captiva A

Chair: Douglas R. Fisher  
Auburn University

### Electric Nature: Constructing Wilderness in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Aaron Cloyd  
University of Kentucky

This paper seeks to approach Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* as a work contextualized by the wilderness movement in the late 1960s. Published in 1968, against a background of the burgeoning counter-cultural movement, Dick's novel reflects multiple expressions of the anti-bureaucratic, anti-establishment milieu of its time. One such movement was the emerging environmental movement, specifically the shifting perspective on wilderness areas. As Roderick Nash observes in *Wilderness and the American Mind*, throughout the 1960s wilderness came to represent the antithesis to the controlled and created structures of corporate America. As opposed to sites of the establishment, wilderness was interpreted as a natural locale, as a place purified from the trappings of civilization, as a way to redeem society and locate a fresh re-beginning to the world. By attending to Dick's complex portrayal of wilderness, this essay aims to posit *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* as a critical text in the wilderness debate, one that reveals the often unexamined assumptions of nature and the constructed.

### "And are we not men?" – The Monstrous Symmetries of *Do Android's Dream of Electric Sheep* and *Thirteen*

Maura Heaphy  
The Ohio State University

There are so many points of contact between Richard K. Morgan's 2007 novel *Thirteen* (UK: *Black Man*) and Philip K. Dick's *Do Android's Dream of Electric Sheep*, that it is possible to read it as a variation on the themes raised in Dick's classic work. In *Thirteen*, a morally-conflicted bounty-hunter is forced to track down enhanced humanoids – Type Thirteens (or "twists") – who have escaped to Earth from enforced exile on Mars, leaving a trail of death and mayhem in their wake. In the course of his investigation, bounty-hunter Carl Marsalis (just like Rick Deckard, before him) encounters "regular" humans who fear and loathe Thirteens, who are sexually attracted to them, who exploit them and kill them without a second thought, because they are not "really human." Like Dick before him (and like H.G. Wells before that), in *Thirteen* Richard K. Morgan addresses important issues about what it means to be human. Investigating the echoes of *Do Androids Dream ....* and *Blade Runner* in his novel will provide interesting new insights into Dick's classic, and fresh evidence of Morgan's importance as a new voice in SF.

### The Three Alterities of Palmer Eldritch

Richard Viskovic  
The University of Auckland

When Philip K. Dick wrote *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, he was inspired by the waking nightmare. A vision of a "vast visage of perfect evil" watched him from the sky when he walked to and from his secluded study; "it had empty slots for eyes -- it was metal and cruel and, worst of all, it was God" (Sutin 127). The fantastic vision was clearly the stimulus for the monstrous character Palmer Eldritch, about whom the novel revolves. The novel, in one account, can be viewed as an attempt to exorcise this vision that had such terrible fascination and power over the author. N. Katherine Hayles describes the entire narrative as a series of strategies designed to mitigate the horror of the vision, which ultimately fail because they must do justice to the vision's power (Hayles 74). This paper unpacks the fears Eldritch represents. Beginning with the idea that Eldritch embodies a radical form of alterity caused by a triple taint of alien, machine and God, and exploring the fear such alterity can inspire, the paper moves on to identify the real locus of dread, not in the alterity itself, but in Eldritch's seemingly contradictory power to enter an individual's *idios kosmos* and become as familiar as one's own thoughts.

## 15. (F) Influences, Divided Souls, and Truly Scary Monsters

Captiva B

Chair: Stefan Ekman  
Lund University

### The Magician's Nephews: Grossman, Pullman, and the Anxiety of Influence

Leah Zander  
Bennington College

In *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, Harold Bloom declares, "Influence is...a disease of self-consciousness". While Bloom was speaking specifically of poetry, his theory of the anxiety of influence has implications for the study of novels of the fantastic as well. Modern fantasists seem to be acute sufferers of the "disease of self-consciousness". Lev Grossman's *The Magicians* name-checks *Harry Potter* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* in-text. Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series has been acknowledged by the author to be a critical response to the works of C.S. Lewis, whom Pullman has been quite open about disliking. Indeed, it seems that both *The Magicians* and *His Dark Materials* can be most completely understood only within the context of their relationship to their shared antecedent—and it is a highly antagonistic relationship at that. Grossman dismantles Lewis's notion of the fantasy world as escape, while Pullman's trilogy aggressively rejects Lewis's Christian theology, even going so far as to have his pubescent protagonists kill God. Here we see a clear connection to Bloom's theory: both Pullman and Grossman must, like Oedipus, kill their literary forbearer in order to assuage their anxiety of influence and create an original work. However, this theory, while useful, has limited application within the context of Pullman and Grossman. After all, by so explicitly acknowledging their influence and dealing so directly with its conventions, they have tied themselves inextricably to the legacy of Lewis. If Lewis does 'die' in this process it is only to haunt these works like a Shakespearean ghost, becoming an even more potent force than he was in 'life'. After all, can we really consider a work original if it depends upon such a complex web of intertextual associations in order to be successful?

### **The Concept of Soul Divisibility in Myth and Fantasy: An Archetypal Event**

Ben Melnyk

Vancouver Island University

This paper argues that the occurrence of either a division or joining of souls is a common enough event within myth and fantasy that it should be considered an archetypal event related to, yet separate from, Carl Jung's concept of the Shadow Self. To this effect, it explores the writings of Aristotle, specifically his concept of the "wax soul" as being inseparable from and having a direct impact on the nature of the body, and Jung, with a focus on his ideas of the Collective Unconscious and the cross-cultural development of the Universal Archetypes, particularly the Shadow. The paper also draws examples of the above theory from the belief systems of Christianity, Islam, and Taoism. Respectively these include: the account of Jesus at The Last Supper and his subsequent crucifixion; an exploration of the Sufist branch of Islam and its concept of unifying five souls; and Taoism's focus on the importance of balance vs. the dangers of imbalance. These examples are then compared to a range of fantasy authors including J.R.R. Tolkien, Ursula K. Le Guin, and J.K. Rowling, among others. Using examples of Sauron's relationship to the One Ring in *The Lord of the Rings*, Ged's split from and reunification with his Shadow in *A Wizard of Earthsea*, and the dramatic effects resulting from Voldemort's creation of the horcruxes in the *Harry Potter* series, along with several others, this paper argues the ubiquitous presence of the idea of the divisible soul and its central importance to fantasy literature.

### **Monsters and the Monstrous in Gene Wolfe's *The Wizard Knight***

Edgar L. Chapman

Bradley University

Fantasy is a realm where the imagination should have license to create any manner of monsters, and as J. R. R. Tolkien argued in his famous essay on *Beowulf*, "The Monsters and the Critics," scholars have often displayed a tendency to ignore monsters that are vividly placed before them. This tendency can also apply to the general reader of fantasy, who often seems to wish to evade the presence of moral evil in both the characters and the grotesque of fantasy. There is a place for fantasy like *Winnie the Pooh* and *The Wind in the Willows*, set in worlds of nearly pure innocence; but epic fantasy or "high fantasy," whether it's *Paradise Lost* or *The Well at the World's End* should and must occur in a realm which is in some respects an analogue to our world and it should project images and symbols of evil that arouse serious contemplation. Unfortunately, much contemporary fantasy seems to take a different approach. Dragons become friendly airborne steeds, or even chatty sidekicks of the hero, whether male or female. Giants are bungling oafs to be easily outwitted, not the fearsome, nightmarish figure who is not "enchanted to Jack," to quote W. H. Auden's ironic line. Witches may also be humanized into likable crones. And so on. However, as Gene Wolfe has remarked in conversation with me (September, 2011), he found this trend exasperating, and decided to counter it in the composition of his signature epic fantasy, *The Wizard Knight*, comprised of two long novels, *The Wizard* and *The Knight*. This heroic saga, related by an American lad transplanted to a fantasy realm, created out of materials from Norse and Arthurian mythology, contains its share of traditional monsters: including giants and dragons. The giants are genuine monsters who provide menace through the tyranny of size. Wolfe's hero, who earns a position as a knight, under the name of Sir Able of the High Heart, is given the task of escorting a human emissary and his daughter to the land of the giants. Aside from the fact that the giants enslave most humans who fall into their power, blinding the males and making servants of the females, they seem genuinely dangerous adversaries in combat, although they lack the speed and subtlety of human warriors in the handling of medieval weapons. Wolfe constantly emphasizes the much greater size of the giants in his kingdom, although his heroine dutifully follows her pledge to wed the king of the giants. No reader who cares about the fate of Wolfe's hero and heroine can feel comfortable about things while they sojourn among the giants. In the outcome of this section of the novels, Wolfe's characters escape because of intrigue and disloyalty among the royal courtiers of the giants' monarch, rather than from superior skill in combat. With regard to the epic's dragon, the outcome is somewhat different. Sir Able does battle the dragon and the epic combat takes him into other realms of being, a descent into the underworld comparable in some ways to Gandalf's battle with the balrog in *The Lord of the Rings*. Sir Able emerges from the conflict reborn and stronger, but the experience is not a pleasant one, as Wolfe describes it. Here again Wolfe offers a counter to the contemporary practice of presenting dragons as pleasant, chatty papier mache figures. Throughout Wolfe's fiction, the author has not taken evil lightly (except perhaps in his parodies of Sherlock Holmes), and his treatment of conventional monsters has sometimes offered revisionary transformations (as in the early story, "The Hero As Werewolf," where the werewolf of the tale is a human predator who practices cannibalism in an amoral city of the near future. But *The Wizard Knight* succeeds in restoring awe and menace to conventional iconic figures of fantasy derived from medieval European mythology.

## 17. (H) Brit Split (Personality) Lit

Vista B

Chair: Leigha McReynolds  
George Washington University

### The Divided Self: Exploring Spiritual Tensions in Charlotte Brontë's Novels

Michelle Lattanzio  
Independent Scholar

The concept of the "divided self" is a prominent trope in Victorian literature, as noted in general terms by Masao Miyoshi in *The Divided Self: A Perspective on the Literature of the Victorians* and more specifically as it applies to women's studies by Nina Auerback in *Women and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth*. This trope of the divided self, particularly as it applies to the split between "reason" and "passion," is well-illustrated in the work of the Brontë sisters. Reason in these works tends to be aligned with the predominating Judeo-Christian, patriarchal worldview of the times, and passion is generally illustrated in woman-centric pagan terms and symbols. In Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Shirley*, tensions abound between and within the realms of Christianity and Paganism. Alternatively Christians are portrayed as spiritual monstrosities and heroic spiritual proclaimers, as in the characters of St. John in *Jane Eyre*, and Caroline's Uncle Helstone in *Shirley*, and the complicated figure of the Nun in *Villette*. Pagans and pagan characterizations are also proclaimed in this fashion, in the characters of Rochester in *Jane Eyre*, Shirley in the novel of the same name, and the actress Vashti in *Villette*. In addition to characters and spiritual beliefs, these characterizations of spiritual monstrosities also applies to the spaces in these texts, notably Nunnely Woods and the Rectory in *Shirley*, the house in *Jane Eyre*, and the pennsionnat and attendant garden in *Villette*. The paper will concentrate on the complicated and complex spiritual monstrosities, both Christian and Pagan, that appear in *Villette*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Shirley*.

### Dance with the Vampire: Lady Geraldine, Vampirism, and the Gothic Imagination in Coleridge's *Christabel*

Mark De Cicco  
George Washington University

From its earliest incarnations, Gothic literature has been marked by the struggle between rationality and the powers of imaginative thought. Can the supernatural be explained away with reason? Can the Gothic monster be defeated by way of cool, rational thought? These questions recur in the Gothic tale from Walpole to Stoker and beyond. Though Samuel Taylor Coleridge is not the first author to come to mind when one thinks of the English Gothic, in this paper I will show that Coleridge's *Christabel* is clearly a part of this tradition, and a prototype for the English vampire story as later developed by Le Fanu and Stoker. In Coleridge's *Christabel*, the Gothic imagination subverts the supremacy of rationality as the dominant, ruling function of the human psyche. Coleridge presents this threat through the vampiric Lady Geraldine—a figure who feeds on irrational thoughts, and strives to penetrate and overwhelm Christabel's rational world. Yet Geraldine is also a force that draws attention to the unity of mind and body—a unity that is previously unknown or obscured. Through the increasingly pervasive presence of imaginative powers in *Christabel*, we begin to approach Coleridge's belief in "the all-connecting nerve of imagination" that "integrates the whole mind" (Engell 339). This potentially liberating possibility of integration and unity can only be reached by yielding to the Gothic imagination, as embodied by Geraldine. Though succumbing to the Gothic imagination can clear a pathway to a new, more holistic sense of self, it also has its share of dangers—after all, one cannot expect to dance with the vampire and walk away unscathed. The Gothic imagination is, therefore, the faculty that unites the infinite and the finite, the mind and the body—but in so doing threatens to destroy all traces of the old, divided self.

### The Infernal Creations in Blake's "The Tyger" and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

Samantha Banal  
University of Florida

British Romanticism cultivated many literary tropes that would go on to define and inspire subsequent stories and figures, even to this day. The nascent elements of horror, and subsequently the monster, arguably grew from this boom of revolutionary thought at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Indeed, where would horror and even science fiction be without *Frankenstein*—the first novel of a nineteen year old Mary Shelley? In my entry for the 2012 ICFA, I explore how Frankenstein's monster established major tropes of horror through the use of fire and an equally monstrous creator. While there are many assessments of the monstrous in *Frankenstein*, I provide more depth to this view of Romanticism and its most popular monster by juxtaposing Shelley's novel with a poem from William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience*—"The Tyger." Through positioning these two figures--Frankenstein's monster and Blake's Tyger--alongside one another, one can gain a better understanding of how the Romantic monster evolved from the very early stages of Romanticism to its height under the late generation of the period's writers and poets. As mentioned previously, their creation through fire and existence dictated by fire provide the main avenues I use to analyze these monsters. This symbol not only becomes a determining factor of their characterizations, but serves as an interesting connecting point both to the literary history before Romanticism and to the horror genre's subsequent evolution through the Victorian era and into Modernism.

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**Thursday, March 22, 2012 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

**19. (IF/FTV) East Meets West**

Pine

Chair: Kathryn Dunlap  
University of Central Florida

**Anime *Paprika*: Monsters in the Two Worlds of Dreams and Reality**

Hiroko Chiba  
DePauw University

Satoshi Kon's most recent anime, *Paprika*, revolves around the two worlds of dreams and reality. In the story, dreams are used as the main venues of psychotherapy in which the alter ego of a predominant psychologist "treats" patients by interacting with them. At first, the dream world is clearly a subconscious one, but the two worlds start merging into one and become indistinguishable during the course of the story. The blurry boundaries Kon depicts in this film seem to reflect the Japanese notion of *Ikai* 異界 or other world, which people often imagined to explain unknown parts of reality or the world where they live. The "fillings" of the unknown parts of the world were often explained as oxymoronic entities in the form of folklore, storytelling or even in traditional theatrical arts. The creation of an unknown world was the manifestation of people's imaginations and ambiguous grasp of reality. While the patients in their dreams increasingly become monstrous as the two worlds start merging, the alter-ego of the therapist remains human and sane. This paper will discuss Kon's vision of "dreams and reality" in *Paprika* and how it can be compared to the notion of other world and the semi-human figures can be perceived.

**Reclaiming the Punk in Japanese Cyberpunk: *Nihonjinron*, Territories, and Deviant Subcultural Exchange in Sogo Ishii's *Burst City***

Emily Connelly  
Portland State University

This paper aims to re-examine the film production of Japanese cyberpunk through the lens of the genre's first major work, Sogo Ishii's 1982 film *Burst City* (*Bakuretsu Toshi*). While the offerings of Japanese cyberpunk produced by media subcultures in to *anime*, *manga*, and science fiction literature have largely been explored, relatively few scholars have discussed the aesthetics of the film movement and its positioning within the historical contextualization of Japanese deviant subculture, with the exception of Shinya Tsukamoto's 1989 film *Tetsuo: Iron Man*. Ishii's *Burst City* with its revolutionary hyper-kinetic film technique presents a Neo-Tokyo ghetto of punks, prostitutes, cyborg *bosozoku*, *yakuza* and disenfranchised day laborers. The film offers us a unique view into the discourse surrounding the then-ongoing subcultural politics at work within the first generation of Japanese cyberpunk through this narrative of proletariat revolution and punk fury. I will engage first with issues of the meta-narrative subcultural context that encodes the characters of the film and the use of territories to enable subcultural objectives such as *medatsu*, a sometimes high risk exhibitionistic act sociologist Ikuya Sato has discussed at length in relation to *bosozoku*, or Japanese motorcycle gangs, and *asobi*, the rules of play. These concepts will be expanded on to provide a framework for how *Burst City* uses the "dislocation" provided through the dystopian technocentric framework of future that comes to be called "cyberpunk" to relay a hegemonic parody of the modern Japanese state. Of key concern will be how subcultural exchange within the film re-negotiate the project of *nihonjinron*, or the systemic ideology of Japanese uniqueness, that Kumiko Sato, by way of Takayuki Tatsumi, argues become furthered in the narratological cues of other mediums of cyberpunk.

**Anomaly, Paradigm Shift, and *Ball Lightning***

William Tung-Pen Sun  
University of California, Riverside

Just as monsters are anomalies in nature, anomalies are monstrous to the scientific world. When an anomaly becomes something more than a vexation, according to Thomas Kuhn, it evokes a crisis for the current scientific paradigm, leading eventually to a scientific revolution. However, what would it take, on a personal level, for the scientists involved to see it through the resistance of the normal science? Ball lightning, a mysterious (and monstrous) phenomenon that has continued to vex scientists even today, becomes one such anomaly in Liu Cixin's science fiction novel *Qiu Zhuang Shan Dian* (*Ball Lightning*). A man who saw his parents turned into ashes by ball lightning becomes fascinated by it. His story is entangled with those of others who shared the same pursuit: a dangerously attractive girl who is under the spell of the same kind of fascination, but over new concept weapons; his own supervising professor whose wife got herself killed chasing after a ball lightning; a soviet scientist who endured political oppression to research it, only to lose his will over the inconsistent findings; and an unemployed Nobel prize nominee, a theoretical physicist who has gone over the boundary of normal science. Fascination becomes devotion, and then obsession and even possession; they will eventually bring the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics into the macroscopic world, but it is the practical and ethical problems they faced in research and in its consequential militarization that lead into questions about very fundamental issues in the scientific enterprise: the relationship between the scientist as an individual and his/her work that shaped his individuality. The same theme is reflected in Liu's next novel, *San Ti* (Three Body), where physicists around the world are driven into despair and even suicide because, unbeknown to them, an alien race has created a way to attack the most critical point in human science: reproducible results! This paper seeks to unpack these issues from the perspectives of how "affect" works in the supposedly objective and functional field known as science.

## 20. (SF) Critical Perspectives on Paolo Bacigalupi

Oak

Chair: Timothy S. Miller  
University of Notre Dame

### Postcolonialism and *The Windup Girl*

Malisa Kurtz  
Brock University

John Rieder argues that the ideological basis of colonial practice is central to much of science fiction, and that “one of the most comprehensive and inclusive ways to think about colonialism is by way of its role in the construction of a world-wide, unified capitalist economy” (26). This paper will examine Paolo Bacigalupi’s novel *The Windup Girl* as a post-colonial science fiction text, focusing on the cyborg figure of Emiko as the “monstrous other” that disrupts the patriarchal ideology of capitalism and colonial practice through the novel’s treatment of the global economy, gender, and racial difference. Food production and distribution in this post-apocalyptic narrative is controlled and dominated by global corporations, and Thailand is one of the few remaining countries whose markets are closed off from these corporations. AgriGen’s attempt to penetrate Thailand’s market is an attempt to integrate the country into the global economy, and thus subject it to the economic and social implications of AgriGen’s superior technology and science. Emiko is a product of this commercialized technoscience, created and sold for her body to be “consumed” by others in her multiple social positions as companion, prostitute, and slave. Yet, as the cyborg figure that Donna Haraway imagines, she is one whose “transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities” undermine the very logic that has created her. She becomes the simultaneous embodiment of patriarchal fantasy and feminist resistance. Bacigalupi’s text suggests that in an increasingly global capitalist economy, technologies imposed onto the Third World reflect persisting colonial ideologies

### “The Eden that Beckons Us”: Unraveling Organic Wholeness in Paolo Bacigalupi’s *The Windup Girl*

Joseph P. Weakland  
University of Florida

The globalized production, distribution, and consumption of food constellate a series of interrelated ethical and political concerns such as cultural autonomy, social and economic justice, animal rights, biodiversity, and ecological integrity. The negative consequences of the current agribusiness food system include the intense confinement and unnecessary suffering of animals, massive expenditure of energy and material resources, exploitation of labor, genetic monoculture, and erosion of community. In response, consumers increasingly demand organic, locally grown, fairly traded, and humanely produced foods. This dilemma is dramatized in Paolo Bacigalupi’s novel *The Windup Girl* (2009). Moving beyond the rhetoric and politics of “Frankenfood,” *The Windup Girl* presents artificial life forms outside of antagonistic dualisms, and, if “the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion,” the novel demands we reconsider our stance toward the artificial in a finite and fragmented world.

### No Humans Allowed: Gaining Utopia, Losing Humanity in Margaret Atwood and Paolo Bacigalupi

David Farnell  
Fukuoka University

This presentation will look at several twentieth- and twenty-first-century “monstrous utopias,” utopian societies for which the price of entry is the loss of humanity, but will focus on two in particular: Margaret Atwood’s *Crakers* and Paolo Bacigalupi’s heartless immortals. In Atwood’s *Oryx and Crake* (2003), humanity as a species must die to pave the way for its posthuman replacements. In Bacigalupi’s “The People of Sand and Slag” (2004), humans have achieved immortality through “weeviltech” at the cost of allowing all other life on earth to die. Both of these works, in the process of depicting the sacrifice of humanity required to achieve utopia, imply a quantification of just what it is that makes us human. Thus, in addition to exploring the nature of the utopias described in these works and comparing them with several other (more briefly discussed) monstrous utopias, this presentation will consider their implied definitions of the nature of humanity as well.

## 21. (CYA) Terrifying Futures: Post-Apocalyptic, Post-Human Dystopias

Maple

Chair: Chris Tokuhama  
University of South California

### Our Cyborgs, Ourselves: Nature, Networks, and the Body in Recent Young Adult Science Fiction

Alaine Martaus  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

In her seminal text, *A Cyborg Manifesto*, Donna Haraway argues that the cyborg is “a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction.” While Haraway’s interest is in setting up the cyborg as an object through which to understand gender as a subject of scientific inquiry, this paper extends the metaphor to set up the adolescent as a cyborg figure: a socially-created creature neither innocent child nor responsible adult, largely understood in contemporary observations as unnaturally attached to networked machines. Drawing on concepts from prominent science studies scholars, including Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway, alongside those of science fiction writers and scholars, including Robert Scholes and Bruce Sterling, this paper explores the ways in which contemporary science fiction for young adults sets up an seemingly impermeable barrier between networked space and the natural world while at the same time using the body as a place where nature and the machine overlap as a way of exploring contemporary concerns about adolescents and their engagement with the larger world. It investigates the ways in which the protagonists of these novels function within these dichotomous spaces, how they understand the barriers between the natural and the technological, and how they come to question the “black boxes” and social norms that their society has built up around the technological. In order to establish a pattern of interest across the genre, this paper draws examples from a variety of novels from the past decade, beginning with M.T. Anderson’s *Feed* (2002) and including key texts like Scott Westerfeld’s *Uglies* (2005), Cory Doctorow’s *Little Brother* (2008), Ally Condie’s *Matched* (2010), and Lauren Oliver’s *Delirium* (2011).

### Fantastic Posthumanism: Horcruxes, Pensieves, and Transplanting Consciousness

Kristina Jean Lareau  
Simmons College

This paper explores the evolution of magic in the world of Harry Potter as it parallels the evolution of the technology of the modern world. From the body as organic to the additions of either magic or technology, both wizard and Muggle evolve from human to posthuman by seeking to prolong life or extend the body into foreign objects, be it Horcruxes or a prosthetic leg. It explores questions of how literature privileges humanism to posthumanism, despite the existence of the posthuman in both life and literature. This paper seeks to understand the human propensity and desire for immortality through both technology and literature using examples from the fantastic realm (Voldemort and Dumbledore from the Harry Potter Series), from the science fiction realm (Jenna from *Adoration* of Jenna Fox and Lia from the *Skinny* trilogy), and Stelarc’s mechanical third hand from the reality of technology. For example, Dumbledore does not split his soul to prolong his life; he recognizes Professor Slughorn’s emphasis that, “the soul is supposed to remain intact and whole. Splitting it is an act of violation, it is against nature” (Rowling, *Half-Blood*, 498). For over a hundred years, Dumbledore was interested in the immortality offered through the unification of three magical items—the Deathly Hallows—purported to make their owner “master of death” or immortal. Most of the wizarding world believes the magic of the Hallows to be a legend; yet similarities exist in our world: mixed with urban legend is Walt Disney’s frozen body, waiting for immortality with the retainer of a wealthy estate to be reanimated with the development of that technology. Disney is in essence, waiting to become posthuman. The corruption of humanism that has evolved into the “monstrosities” of posthumanism suggests that literature can unite science, science fiction and literature.

### Candy, Dog Food, and Tears: Food-Sharing in Young Adult Post-Apocalyptic Fiction

Leisa Clark  
University of South Florida

Given the choice between broccoli and candy, most people would choose the chocolate confection, and when children are the only survivors of an apocalyptic event, inevitably sugared treats and confections are preferred over canned beets, rice and beans when grocery stores are picked clean by young people left to fend for themselves. As food becomes scarcer, previously eschewed victuals become priceless, to the point where fried dog food may be a delicacy. Food is often valued by availability, so in a culture of abundance, empty calories can be chosen over healthy options because the healthy options are still available. In nearly all cases of novels in which disasters destroy populations over the age of majority, food preparation and access become critical. For this reason, many plots in post-apocalyptic novels center on food procurement. This requires the protagonist(s) to first find a secure home, and then to locate a safe and abundant food source. In almost every example, this is attained only by joining up with others who are in a similar position and creating a community for the purpose of survival. The codified messages about responsibility for food production can be found throughout apocalyptic/post-apocalyptic novels, where women and girls are often relegated to hearth and home, and men and boys to “outside” and defense of the home. This message of responsibility is demonstrated clearly in young adult novels, where more often than not, girls become the homemakers, laying down the rules about food preparation and consumption, even when boys are the bread-winners. This paper argues that, when they are left without adult supervision or guidance, children in young adult post-apocalyptic novels successfully respond to the need for food by creating small communities that often mimic the societies that have fallen, while those who fail to share food are often marginalized or ostracized from the rest.

## 22. (FTV) Cult Monsters: Rabbits, Robots, and Revenants

Cypress

Chair: Isabella van Elferen  
Utrecht University

### A Leap of Imagination: The Monstrous Rabbits of *Night of the Lepus*

Katherine A. Fowkes  
High Point University

Arguably one of the worst movies ever, *Night of the Lepus* is one of those films that's so bad it's funny. Ostensibly operating in the tradition of sci-fi/horror films that feature plagues of super-sized critters, here giant carnivorous rabbits roam the land terrorizing the locals. Seguing from last year's conference on the ridiculous to this year's on the monstrous, this paper will explore the monstrous rabbits in the context of both horror and humor. Could the concept have succeeded as horror with a better script or better special effects? Or does the very notion of monster rabbits doom the film to ridicule? By one definition, the rabbits are monstrous simply by being impossibly large. While rabbits are usually characterized as being cute or scared, scary movie rabbits DO exist (*Donnie Darko*, for example). But while rabbits have indeed inspired fear in certain cultures-- most notably when associated with witchcraft, current associations are usually of innocence and vulnerability. This association creates humor in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* where the incongruity between our assumptions that rabbits are cute and harmless collides with the image of a rabid-rabbit-assault. Comparing the humorous Chewbacca in *Star Wars* to similar creatures in successful horror movies, Noel Carroll writes that creatures become monstrous in part through the reaction of the other characters. Yet in this film, despite the horrified response of the characters to these giant predators, the rabbits fail to meet another of Carroll's monster criteria: film footage of real grass-munching rabbits is just not that disgusting or repulsive. If monsters are also examples of phenomena gone impossibly wrong, or alternately creatures cast as repressed or vilified "Others," (see Biskind, Cohen, Wood, for example) then the rabbits in this film are (ironically) monstrous precisely because they are monstrously inappropriate villains for a horror film.

### Robot Monster and the Science Fiction Cult Film

J. P. Telotte  
Georgia Tech

As Lincoln Geraghty reminds us, early 1950s science fiction cinema, typified by films like *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), *The Thing* (1951), *Invaders from Mars* (1953), and *War of the Worlds* (1953), typically "presented America and the world in the grip of emergencies—emergencies that jeopardized the future of the [human] race" (23). And the "emergency" visions in the film he cites did assert a serious purpose and raise a level of awareness, as they prompted audiences to contemplate the trajectory of their newly atomic-driven world, to reconsider the strained and potentially destructive relations between nations, or simply, as *The Thing* urged viewers, to "watch the skies, keep watching the skies" for possible threats—from aliens, both extraterrestrial and earthly. Yet other films of the era, works like *Plan 9 from Outer Space* (1959), *Cat-Women of the Moon* (1953), and *Robot Monster* (1953)—all of which also invoked the specter of invasion, monsters, and apocalyptic destruction—moved viewers in rather different ways. While tracking many of the same concerns and anxieties of the era, these works and their monstrous visitors prompted, both then and now, a less serious, at times even laughing response—albeit one that suggests a kinship between the film groups. As most readily recognize, works like *Plan 9 from Outer Space*, *Cat-Women of the Moon*, and *Robot Monster* are cult films, works that have a special following and special appeal, even if mainly as camp texts. Yet thanks to such key verbal indicators as "space," "moon," and "robot," we also quickly recognize their science fictional status, as works that draw much of their identity from the way they treat science, technology, and reason, the triad at the film genre's heart. In fact, a great many science fiction films have attained a similar status, found their own cult reputation and following, works like *The Phantom Empire* (1935), *Attack of the 50 Foot Woman* (1958), *Santa Claus Conquers the Martians* (1964), *Zardoz* (1974), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975), *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976), even a recent film like *Serenity* (2005). They have done so, I would suggest, not because they are bad or campy films—although several answer to both charges—but rather, at least in part, because of their science fiction identity and thus because of a similarity between the science fictional and the cult in terms of their thrust, their narrative, and their audience appeal.

### From Gunfighters to the Living Dead: The Western Revitalized as the Zombie Film

Lokke Heiss  
Independent Scholar

The concept of the paper takes its cue from the seminal work of film historian Richard Slotkin, in particular his book about the Western titled *Gunfighter Nation*. Slotkin's thesis is that for about sixty years, Western genre became the most important pop culture forum in attempting to create a national mythology...a forum that tried to explain or discuss race, miscegenation, and regeneration through violence. Slotkin's conclusion is that the genre as a central American mythology fell apart in the mid-70s, in part due to its failure to encompass or explain the failure of the Vietnam War. My contention is that the Western genre split into fragments, partly turning to space opera (*Star Wars*) and partly finding its issues of race and identity in the films that would become 'the zombie film,' a new genre that is finding more traction every year. I think the zombie film has taken over the role of the Western, and would discuss how the TV show *Walking Dead* is this decade's version of *Bonanza*.



### 23. (FTV/H) Now I'm Feelin' Zombified

Palm

Chair: Haley Herfurth  
University of Alabama

#### "I always wanted to see how the other half lives": The Contemporary Zombie as Seductive Proselyte

Kyle Bishop  
Southern Utah University

Over the past decade, audiences have struggled with increasingly ambivalent attitudes towards zombies. What were once horrifying creatures, monsters born from imperialistic violence and enslavement, are now more complicated figures. Recent explorations of the zombie have asked audiences to see them in more empathetic terms, as misunderstood victims of an uncontrollable infection. In fact, as many film posters, DVD covers, and book jackets indicate, the contemporary zombie seems to be reaching out to its human counterparts, inviting them to join their unified and heterogeneous ranks. For the first time in the zombie's century-old tradition, recent narratives suggest being a zombie may not, in fact, be that bad after all. Flying in the face of established euthanistic practices, Cholo, from George Romero's *Land of the Dead* (2005), openly refuses to be executed after being bitten by a zombie, saying instead, "I always wanted to see how the other half lives." Similarly, Helen, the plucky housewife from Andrew Currie's *Fido* (2006), defiantly tells her husband, "Bill, get your own funeral. Timmy and I are going zombie." And most recently, on the AMC-produced teledrama *The Walking Dead* (2010– ), Jim makes the same choice: "Just leave me. I want to be with my family." Recent zombie narratives challenge the customary definition of "monster," demonstrating the potential benefits of being a zombie. The coda of *Shaun of the Dead* (2004), for example, shows how Ed, although zombified, enjoys a carefree lifestyle, playing videogames with his best friend, presumably forever, as the infection preserves him in an eternally unchanging state. For those tormented by post-9/11 anxieties and the stresses of millennial living, contemporary zombie narratives cast the former monsters as almost redemptive "missionaries" promoting an easier, less angst-ridden existence.

#### Grief of the Living Dead: George Romero and Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Deirdre Crimmins  
Independent Scholar

The paper argues the relationship between humans and zombies in George Romero's first four zombie films follows the stages of grieving described by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross in *On Death and Dying*. Romero's films each show a different stage in a zombie outbreak, starting from the first night of the scourge in *Night of the Living Dead* to many years after the plague has destroyed nearly the whole world in *Land of the Dead*. Kubler-Ross's book aims to explain the stages of grief that terminal patients step through while trying to accept their imminent death. Using Robin Wood's theory that horror films are about three things, the monster, the normal, and their relationship, this paper explores the fact that the only changing factor between the films is the relationship between people (the normal) and zombies (the monster). In *Night of the Living Dead* the people are in denial of having any relationship with the zombies. In *Dawn of the Dead* the characters have obvious anger and hatred for the zombies, and are intent on killing them just for sport to express their frustration for the situation. *Day of the Dead* features scientists that are trying to reverse the zombie outbreak, which is essentially an attempt at bartering with the zombie situation to try to undo the epidemic. *Land of the Dead* shows characters eventually accepting and existing alongside the zombies. Each film sequentially represent a stage of grieving. Going through each film, scene by scene, this paper explores how Romero's grief for the loss of his generation's ideals is manifested through the characters in his films, both living and undead. The close film analysis is supplemented by additional texts on Romero, horror films and zombie films as a genre and sub-genre, and theories of authorship in film.

#### More Than a Symptom: The Zombie and Apocalypse

Mark McCarthy  
University of South Florida

In nearly every modern iteration, the zombie is shown as both harbinger and instrument of the apocalypse. Yet their intimate relationship to these end of world scenarios has allowed a crucial aspect of the zombie to be overlooked. That is, more than simply the mode of destruction, they are concomitantly the reification of a society facing destruction. In its evolution the zombie has shown an uncanny ability to symbolize a host of cultural anxieties as diverse as consumerism (Lauro & Embry, 2008; Loudermilk, 2003; Harper, 2002; Shaviro, 1993), capitalism (Lauro & Embry, 2008), gender and race relations (Aizenberg, 1999; Dendle, 2007), colonialism (Dendle, 2007), identity (Shaviro, 1993), hybridity (Boon, 2007), and biomedical ideologies (Mulligan, 2009). They have proven so adept at this that they have become, in Peter Dendle's words, a "barometer of cultural anxiety" (Dendle, 2007, p. 45). This paper will show that their embodiment of these anxieties has effectively obscured the fact that they are not simply manifestations of the anxiety du jour, but rather, they represent a society constituted by imperfect institutions like capitalism, colonialism, and the biomedical complex, yearning for its own destruction. These exposed anxieties are simply the symptoms of a sickened body that, in the popular imagination, is a decaying carcass ripe for reveal-destruction-rebirth. Žižek once quipped, "It is much easier for us to imagine the end of the world than a small change in the political system" (Mead, 2003, p. 40). The zombie allows for this imagined destruction while revealing all that is thought to be rotten in our world.

## 24. (VPA) The Monstrous Across Media

Magnolia

Chair: Georgia K. Natishan

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

### Terrors in Tights: The Monster in Superhero Fiction

Daniel Felts

University of Memphis

This paper explores Superman's literary genealogy: his direct progenitor, Hugo Danner from Philip Wylie's *Gladiator*, is a 20<sup>th</sup> century version of Frankenstein's creature.

### Paul Laffoley's Visual Thoughtforms and Cognitive Singularity

Pawel Frelik

University of California, Riverside / Maria Curie-Skłodowska University

This paper demonstrates how the form of Laffoley's image/text paintings demands a completely different species of "reading" or "decoding" and suggests that Laffoley's iconography and style are intimately coupled with the sf thematics of transcendence and singularity.

### Surviving the Progress Beast: Utilizing the Performing Arts to Preserve the Culture and Expand the Practice of Chinese Martial Arts

Ed Hicks

Independent Scholar

This paper considers how films such as *Mulan* and *The Legend of Drunken Master* translate Chinese Martial arts into different media rather than the traditional writing of poems in a family book, or the passing down the material through family lineage or Chinese temple.

## 25. (H) Made In America

Dogwood

Chair: Michelle Lattanzio

Independent Scholar

### Gothic Realism's Capitalist Horror Stories

Rebecca Peters-Golden

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

How did we get from the 18<sup>th</sup> century gothic of dark, crumbling castles and imprisoned heroines to the suburban gothic of Todd Haynes' 1995 eco-horror film *[Safe]*, which finds heroine Carol White so poisoned by her daily routine that she confines herself to a hermetically-sealed igloo in the New Mexico desert? Or, on the other hand, from 19<sup>th</sup> century realism's details of small town life to the ruralized incestuous cannibals of hicksploitation films like *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*? In this paper I explore these genealogies of the gothic and of realism at the *fin de siècle*, when American realism shades into naturalism. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the gothic seems to be an archaic and outdated genre, out of place among texts increasingly concerned with innovation, and with little to say to the rapidly shifting cultural, economic, and technical climate of American modernity. Or does it? Texts like Frank Norris' *McTeague* (1899) and Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906) suggest otherwise. Indeed, for these naturalists, the gothic in fact provides a productive mode of approaching the details, aesthetics, and politics of daily life. This unique combination of banality and horror is central to the genre of texts that I call *gothic realism*, a designation that attends to these texts' simultaneous concern with the banal details of everyday material and economic conditions and to their use of gothic aesthetics to render those conditions horrific. The slaughterhouses of *The Jungle*, for example, with their masses of workers and machines would seem to present a vision of modern efficiency. Instead, I argue, Sinclair uses the grotesque details that are the underside of the industry's efficiency to portray the horror of industrial capitalism.

### Monsters in America

John Lavelle

Florida Institute of Technology

Such famous fantastical monsters as the monster from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Hyde from *Jekyll and Hyde* and Dracula from the novel of the same name do not seem to have a direct counterpart in American fiction of the same epoch. Richard Chase's axiom, what was lacking in America to produce the English-style novel, might be applied to the lack of monsters within early American fiction, the lack of an entrenched society. If the creation of fantastical fictional monsters and their popularity is a manifestation of repressed fears within the author and reader, the monster does exist in Early American fiction, but is manifested in a different shape in America because of exactly this lack of an entrenched society, the every moving frontier, and rapid change. In nineteenth-century America, the subconscious psychological cauldron of repressed fears attached itself to real world "monsters" erupting in the fear of the native "savage," the masculine "body" of the working-class, and the poor immigrant. Fantastic monsters are rare in early American literature because "real" monsters existed. The frontier and the squalor of the city provided ample resources in which the psyche could attach its repressed fears. The papers proposes that monsters have always existing in mainstream American literature from Rolandson's Native American devils in *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mayry Rowlandson* to Henry James working-class ghosts, Miss Jessel and Peter Quint, in *Turn of the Screw*, that they have manifested in characters such as Injun'Joe in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, the steel workers in Rebecca Harding Davis's *Life in the Iron Mills*, and the fat man and even Jimmy and Pete in *Maggie: A Girl of the Street*, but because of the ever present frontier (the unknown) manifested in the psyche of Americans, fantastical fictional monsters such as Frankenstein's monster, Hyde, and Dracula were not needed.

### **Fight Club: Amalgam of the Horrific Reality and Dissident Behavior (or Fistful of Reality in the face of Consumerism)**

Nenad (Max) Jakovljevic

University of Barabook/Sauk County

According to Andrew Hewitt, *Fight Club* is a “testosterone driven anti-social and anarchic” film; the Chuck Palahniuk story “Fight Club” serves a purpose of presenting the horrific reality of consumer/network society (7). *Fight Club* focuses on horrendous control of the subservient programmed masses, and responds to it through apocalyptic visions of a free civilization opposed to induced societal fabrication of bliss. It dissects the decomposing cadaver of society, revealing the internal sickness or disease of the system, challenging the ideals of the *status quo*. These ideals clash against the very “freedom fighting” spirit that has been labeled “dissident” by the capitalist machine. The abstract concept of the “machine” cannot coexist accordingly with cognitive public. *Fight Club* offers a profound examination of reality against delusion prevalent in the capitalist Western Culture. Bulent Diken and Carsten Bagge Laustsen argue the same point, “... [*Fight Club*]...is desperately searching for a non-consumerist domain outside capitalist exchange” (11). Finding this sphere of influence (or rather the lack of it) would horrifically affect not only the system, but the addicted consumer body as well. Through *Fight Club* the elements of horror and terror become tangible. The aspect of horror manifests through the physical iteration: the brutal fighting scenes, consumer victims of the system, and scenes of human fat being used to make soap. *Fight Club*’s evocation of terror is the opposite; the terror lies not in the physical but rather in the psychological arena, creating internal stress and fear. *Fight Club* is a psycho-social terror film that scares each individual not by creating a false scenario, but rather acting out the real life scenario in which capitalist Western Culture is part of. *Fight Club* crushes borders and in the process creates “Existential Terror.” Existential Terror draws its *telos* from the philosophy of Jean Paul-Sartre, in which every human is facing the concepts of “forlornness, anguish and despair” (194). This fear is generated through individuality; humans can only rely on themselves and not on any institution. Such concepts are frightening for the modern man. As much as the consumerist system depends upon the consumer, the consumer is dependent on the system. Existential Terror also wrestles with the notion that every human has a choice. However, in the Consumerist/Network society there is only the illusion of choice as people are conditioned to choose a certain way. *Fight Club*’s vivisection of the consumer body will demonstrate the abhorrent revulsion of reality. This reality, like a devastating fever brings a realization that no one is truly free, and that the consumers are slaves to the things they consume. Literary critic, Suzanne Del Gizzo posits that *Fight Club* is the updated version of *The Great Gatsby* and once both are brought into context with each other they present, “a world where the culture of commodity has spun out of human control to the extent that it appears that commodities control people” (3). *Fight Club* argues that the totality of life is based upon the accrued valueless commodities, not on the individual character, rendering life an empty shell.

### **26. (F/CYA) The Monstrous and the Human**

*Captiva B*

Chair: Audrey Taylor

Middlesex University

#### **The Monstrous and the Human in Robert Holdstock’s *Avilion***

Donald E. Morse

University of Debrecen

The monstrous is most often defined as the inhuman. In Robert Holdstock’s *Avilion* there are such inhuman monsters, preeminently the Amurngoth those terrifying nonhuman creatures who claim to have created humans—a mistake, they admit. All that they stand for is inimical to human values, interests, and survival. But of even more importance are the non-monstrous, but wholly inhuman sympathetic mythagos who interact with humans and like them struggle with questions of identity and epistemology. The mythago Guiwenneth, for instance, although she “felt human for a long time,” concludes “I am mythago. I always was.” Holdstock thus uses fantasy and his notion of the mythago to help define what it means to be human.

#### **The Monstrous Child: Alice Through the Looking-Glass**

Veronica Schanoes

Queens College – CUNY

In Chapter 10 of Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, the Unicorn, who had been battling the Lion for the crown of the White King, catches sight of Alice and regards her “with an air of the deepest disgust.” When informed, with great to-do, that she is a *child*, the Unicorn is very excited, exclaiming “I always thought they were fabulous monsters!” It is even more fascinated upon being informed that “It [Alice] can talk,” and when addressed, Alice good-naturedly says that *she* had always thought that *unicorns* were fabulous monsters. Despite this momentarily mutual recognition of monstrosity, it is Alice who is referred to as “the Monster” and addressed as “Monster” by both the Unicorn and the Lion for the rest of the chapter. In this sequel to Carroll’s wildly successful *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, the dream-child has become a monster. But to the outside observer, *Looking-Glass* Alice is far *less* monstrous than *Wonderland* Alice, as Nina Auerbach noted nearly forty years ago. *Wonderland* Alice’s size and shape changes at an alarming rate and with an alarming elasticity; *Looking-Glass* Alice maintains her physical self admirably well. *Wonderland* Alice threatens the inhabitants of the fantastical realm through which she travels both accidentally, when she speaks repeatedly and longingly of her cat Dinah, who would love to gobble down the creatures Alice encounters, and purposefully, when she warns the White Rabbit not to set fire to his own house in order to rid it of her overlarge presence; *Looking-Glass* Alice is unfailingly helpful, and even deferential, to those she encounters, biting down on some of her thoughts to avoid “hurting the poor Queen’s feelings.” So, then, what is the relationship between childhood and monstrosity in this extraordinarily popular and influential sequel? Is Alice’s newfound monstrosity related to her increasing unattainability, as Alice Liddell herself moved away from Carroll and into the realm of womanhood, or is Carroll making a snide comment on the adult world’s desire that children remain as unobtrusive as possible? Or is there some larger cultural force at work, working in counterpoint or even reaction to the rise of the Victorian cult of childhood that interprets children to be not little angels, but little devils? And why in this sequel does this assault on Alice’s sense of self and identity bring nothing but a small smile to her lips, while in the previous book, such attacks as the pigeon’s insisting that she is

a serpent cause her to doubt her very species? By examining this passage from *Through the Looking-Glass* in the context of Victorian perceptions of childhood and of monstrosity, I complicate our understanding of what it meant to be both child and monster in the age of the cult of childhood.

#### **Monstrous Responses to Charles Finney's *The Circus of Dr. Lao***

Daniel Creed  
Broward College

Since 1935, *The Circus of Dr. Lao* has been examined in few critical studies. While the text has been ignored for many reasons, Finney's work is written in a seemingly disjointed style of vignettes that seem "more familiar today than when it was originally published" (Wolfe 283). However, Finney's novel is not disjointed, but well organized. The order in which the characters encounter the advertisement for the circus in the morning paper is the same order their episodes occur within the circus, implying a carefully crafted order of perception and reception of the fantastic. Through their interactions with the fantastic, the residents of Abalone, Arizona, (and readers of the text) tap into a desire to commune with creatures of nature that are more powerful, more pure, and more fantastic than they; to traverse space and time, examining their lives from an immortal point of view. Here is the world of the fairy-story, where man is monstrous (Frank Tull provides a very thorough example) and the fantastic is natural (the Hound of the Hedges), written in a style that is similar to attending the circus itself. The vignettes are echoes of the multiple acts of the circus, and readers confronting the text need to imagine themselves in the auditorium of a modern circus, where acts enter, perform, and leave, culminating in the main event, where the short acts they have witnessed previously converge into something grander. It is through the small acts that Finney expresses his displeasure with the hypocrisy and complacency of 1930s American society, and in the main event (Woldercan) his attitude about his primary world is evident, for what saves Woldercan has failed in Abalone, because the people refused to believe, to sacrifice their preconceptions and prejudices and embrace the fantastic when they were presented with it.

#### **28. (PCS) Dark Lords and Creatures of The Night: The Monstrous in Fandom**

Vista B

Chair: Karen Hellekson  
Independent Scholar

#### **Normalizing the Monster and Marginalizing the Reader: *Twilight* as Popular Romance**

Kelly Budruweit  
Western Illinois University

The presentation focuses on close readings of a selection of fan fictions (amateur-authored, Internet-published stories) based on vampire text worlds. Although a general 'rule' in fan fiction is to stay true to the logic of the fictional universe the fanfic authors write about, fanfic texts also illustrate resistance to elements in it. Of particular interest is the resistance to the de-fangedness of contemporary romantic vampires who control their bloodlust and integrate themselves in human societies where they often function as protectors of the less powerful humans. In vampire fan fiction, based on *True Blood*, *Twilight*, and *The Vampire Diaries*, there is a clear tendency to recuperate the danger and monstrosity of the trope: to leave the vampire fanged, once again. Re-fanging the vampire in fan fiction implies reclaiming its predatory status as well as the amorality connected to both bloodlust and the transgressive sexuality traditionally associated with vampires. Of interest is therefore how the reworked, dangerous vampire in the fanfic texts comes to resemble the marginalized but fascinating monster of earlier periods. In contemporary vampire texts, metaphysical issues are central, and often linked to the theme of the soulless vampire. The choice of a morally responsible life which contemporary vampires such as Edward Cullen, Stefan Salvatore and Bill Compton make is largely based on their conviction that transformation into a vampire entails a loss of the human soul and, thus, eternal damnation: moral and metaphysical issues which are variously negotiated in fan fictions featuring re-fanged vampires. Through analyses of fanfics narrated from a predatory vampire's point of view I discuss which characteristics and values fan fiction authors associate with the re-fanged vampire and highlight which aspects of the contemporary text worlds fanfic authors challenge through their reworkings.

#### **Re-fanged Monsters: Good, Evil and the Search for a Soul in Vampire Fan Fiction**

Maria Leavenworth  
Umeå University

*Twilight* is one form of escapism that has been difficult to escape. Often, in spite of attempts at resistance, readers have found themselves inexorably drawn into the magnetic field of a world which promises passion without any of the usual drawbacks, like change or death. If, as Peter Brooks asserts, "plot is the internal logic of the discourse of mortality" (Reading for the Plot 22), then we might assume that it isn't the desire for the plot which drives readers to inhale *Twilight* at high speeds. Rather, it might be the opportunities for identification with the protagonist, which provide a world in which all desires are fulfilled, and fulfilled forever. However, in spite of the possibilities offered by various *Twilight*-centered cultural experiences, this fantasy cannot last forever. Thus, my presentation would focus on answering the question: What happens to readers of *Twilight* when the last page is turned? With a view to answering this question, I will examine the normalization of the monstrous, which occurs to the degree that the books can hardly fit within the horror genre. Instead, what we have may be a slightly scary romance. Thus, the experience of reading *Twilight* could be understood better from the perspective of Janice Radway's *Reading the Romance*, a study of (primarily) middle-aged women who spend their free-time reading romance novels. Meanwhile, I will also attempt to illuminate the complex relationship between reader identifications of the "gothic" and the "romantic," drawing on Michael Gamer's study of canon formation during the late 18th/early 19th centuries. Such a reading might account for the way that, in divesting vampires of their monstrous qualities, Stephenie Meyers divests the monstrous of its subversive potential.

### **Taking the Monsters out of the Closet: Sith and Sex in *Star Wars* Fan Fiction**

Sarah Carpenter  
George Mason University

Ever since the release of *A New Hope* in 1977, *Star Wars* fans have known that “Vader was seduced by the Dark Side of the Force.” (Lucas) In 2005, *Revenge of the Sith* embodied that seduction in Supreme Chancellor Palpatine, who lured young Anakin Skywalker with false promises. Their interactions on screen are charged with a homoerotic subtext that causes many fans to read against the grain of the official *Star Wars* canon, producing narratives that bring forward that subtext and render the (presumably) metaphorical seduction literal. Such narratives tend to focus on the monstrous nature of Anakin’s seduction on two fronts: the unequal power dynamic established through Anakin’s youth and Palpatine’s fatherly role, and the physical transformation of each man into a monster at the end of *Revenge of the Sith*. I analyze specific fan fiction texts shared by fan fiction writers in the popular blogging platform LiveJournal.com and examine the ways in which these writers intervene in the canonical subtext to develop their own narratives that use the Sithly dyad to interrogate power relationships, problematize conceptions of masculinity, and enhance, celebrate, and redeem two monsters and their sex. Drawing on gender theory and audience studies that explore negotiated meanings as I closely read these fannish texts, I argue against popular conceptions of the *Star Wars* fandom as inherently heteronormative and hegemonic to demonstrate instead that the fannish tradition provides a space for resistant readings and productions of meaning.

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### ***Thursday, March 22, 2012 2:30-3:30 pm.***

#### **30. (IF/FTV) Recycling as Resistance and Genre Innovation**

Pine

Chair: Terry Harpold  
University of Florida

#### **C’est de la récup’’: Recycling as Resistance in Jeunet’s *Delicatessen* and *Micmacs***

Elizabeth McManus  
Northwestern University

Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s films, from the post-apocalyptic *Delicatessen* (1991) to the crowd-pleasing *Amélie* (2001), conjure an ethereal France of a bygone era. While his most recent film, *Micmacs* (2009), is set in contemporary France, the protagonist and his motley group of friends embody a figure from France’s past: the rag-picker who, until the 1960’s, survived by collecting trash to be reused. Out of place in modern Paris, this anachronistic figure revives old France, the nostalgia for which colors all of Jeunet’s films. The rag-picker is also important for the work that he performs on rubbish. In this paper, I will argue that recycling and reusing rejected objects is a subversive act used to undermine the inhumanity perpetrated by a cannibalistic butcher in *Delicatessen* and international arms dealers in *Micmacs*. In *Delicatessen* disparate sounds are recycled into music and in *Micmacs* metal scraps are reworked into animated animal or human forms; reusing rubbish becomes a way to appropriate and re-humanize unwanted objects. “La récup’” (salvaged material) thus fosters a community that ultimately counteracts the brutality of the tyrannical butcher and the amoral arms dealers. To better understand Jeunet’s portrayal of recycling as resistance to dehumanization, I will compare it to recycling and the rag-picker in Jacques Tati’s *Mon Oncle* (1958). In Tati’s film, the rag-picker is an intermediary between traditional Paris and modern Paris, and the impetus behind new meetings and connections made throughout the film. While *Delicatessen* and *Micmacs* seem to develop this idea, Jeunet’s brand of nostalgia for old France, criticized as “politically disturbing” and “regressive,” renders the image of the rag-picker resisting dehumanization rather problematic: how can a precarious means of survival be subversive? What is ultimately at stake in critiques of Jeunet’s nostalgia is the question of how we are to read the fantastic in relation to our own world.

#### **A History of French Literature from 1966 to 2060: Michel Jeury’s *Le Temps Incertain***

Brittany Murray  
Northwestern University

Michel Jeury’s *Le Temps Incertain* (1973) recounts a time-traveler’s journey to the year 1966. His task is to establish communication between past and future. The novel might be said to perform a function similar to that of its protagonist. Looking backward, its innovative formal structure has invited comparison to the nouveau roman, a “high literary” experiment of the 1950s and 1960s. Looking forward, *Le Temps Incertain* also precipitated the “new” French Science Fiction movement of the 1970s. In this paper, I will argue that Jeury’s novel re-reads older aesthetic forms in order to formulate a new literary project. Amidst a future war over the dimensions of “uncertain” time, Jeury’s time-traveler is sent to investigate a past crime that can only be perceived as a single scene repeated on loop. The protagonist’s task is to preserve the mutability and openness of history from within a perspective where time appears to be the inevitable repetition of the same. First, I will compare this novel to Robbe-Grillet’s *Les Gommages* (1953) in order to highlight how *Le Temps Incertain* offers an implicit critique of the nouveau roman. While *Les Gommages* recounts the story of a detective who becomes complicit in the crime he is investigating, the circular structure of Robbe-Grillet’s novel becomes complicit in the problem that Jeury’s protagonist investigates twenty years later. Then, I will discuss how *Le Temps Incertain*’s protagonist raises the question that will face the “new” French Science Fiction: can older literary forms be recycled and re-purposed in order to formulate a new genre?

### 32. (CYA) Neil Gaiman's Books for Children

Maple

Chair: Daryl Ritchot  
University of British Columbia Okanagan

#### Thresholds and Depths: The Submerged and the Guardians of the Thresholds in Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* and *The Graveyard Book*

Kacey Doran  
Hollins University

This paper explores how Neil Gaiman uses the old associations of the serpent in Western Art to raise questions about gender and identity in his stories "Hob's Leviathan", a comic in the Sandman series, and The Graveyard Book. In "Hob's Leviathan", the sea serpent acts as the guardian and the symbol of the thresholds of reality/fantasy and man/woman. The main character Jim, who is later revealed to be Peggy, discovers that there are fantastic parts of the world like the sea serpent that are just as real as the ordinary, and the reader discovers that a more integral part of Peggy's identity is being on the open ocean and not a gender association. This progressive move by Gaiman keeps with the social deconstruction work done by such scholars as Kate Bornstein. Gaiman also takes a twist on identity with a serpent-like creature in The Graveyard Book, where his protagonist Nobody Owens discovers who he is with the help of the ancient guardians of a tomb, the Sleer. Nobody is a living boy who can communicate with ghosts and lives in a graveyard, and cannot figure out whether he belongs in the world of the living or the dead. Nobody discovers his real name with the help of the Sleer, and therefore his place in life: Nobody. He does not need to exist in one realm or the other, and is unique in that he understands both the worlds of the living and the dead. Unlike Lee Upton, who explores the negative connotations of the monsters in the work of Rachel Ingall, Kacey Doran shows how Gaiman gives his monsters a positive spin; thus, the fantastic continue to thrive in modern fiction, and provide a healthy space for the questioning of socially constructed genders and identities by children and teenagers.

#### Monster Parents, Normal Kids?: Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*, *The Wolves in the Walls*, *The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish*, and *The Graveyard Book*

Marek Oziewicz  
University of Wrocław

One of the most popular fantasy writers today, Neil Gaiman has been notorious for representing parents as monsters—physical, psychological and/or emotional. His child characters are always puzzled about their parents' or parent figures' monstrosity, yet learn to accept it as part of what their parents are. In Gaiman's fiction, to be a normal kid one must have monster parents. This essay examines a selection of Gaiman's YA fantasy—*Coraline* (2002), *The Wolves in the Walls* (2003), *The Day I Swapped my Dad for Two Goldfish* (2004) and *The Graveyard Book* (2009)—in which he uses the trope of parent monstrosity. My argument is that Gaiman projects the perception of parents as monsters—seen as irrelevant or even threatening to a child's wellbeing—as a common phenomenon and an important developmental stage of childhood. Yet, unlike those children's authors who, like Sendak, have either denied children's perception of parents as monsters or, like Dahl, placated it by replacing monstrous, insensitive parents with adult versions of children's idealized playmates, Gaiman offers his readers a picture that is more emotionally honest. He acknowledges parental monstrosity, but insists that it serves a vital purpose. If done away with, it would not provide a child with an opportunity to learn two lessons crucial for growing up. One, that the world will not change to suit one's expectations; two—that each one of us is a monster of sorts. In struggling to come to terms with their parents' and their own monstrosity, Gaiman's protagonists thus learn that lasting human relationships are built not in the absence of but despite our own and other people's shortcomings.

### 36. (F/IF) Original Monsters in New Forms

Dogwood

Chair: Elizabeth Whittingham  
The College at Brockport - SUNY

#### Chaos and Companionship: How Urban Fantasies Use Wolves and Ravens from Norse Myths

Emil Hjörvar Petersen  
Lund University

The wondrous and monstrous fauna of mythologies is frequently brought into fantasy fiction. This paper focuses on how creatures from Norse mythology, namely wolves and ravens, are depicted in urban fantasies. Fantasy is a genre which depends on realism unlike the myths and folktales that feed into it, or as Brian Attebery puts it: "[Fantasy] is a form that makes use of both the fantastic mode, to produce the impossibilities, and the mimetic, to reproduce the familiar" (*Strategies of Fantasy*, p. 16–17). Rendering mythological aspects realistically makes the myths more prominent and detailed, especially when they are set in what seems to the reader to be a familiar setting. Moreover, urban fantasy as a mode – and as low fantasy – makes use of myths in conjunction with the type of fantastic that intrudes reality. I will concentrate on wolves and ravens, examining similarities and differences, in two urban fantasies: *American Gods* (2001) by Neil Gaiman and *Norse Code* (2009) by Greg van Eekhout, where, in both cases, the main intrusion is the Norse pantheon. The juxtaposition of Norse mythic brutality and modern locations and sensibilities results in a specific representation of wolves and ravens. In Norse mythology, ravens are not seen as tricksters, but as creatures of wisdom, guidance and companionship. In both stories in question, the ravens become guides in a disorienting urban setting, bringing a balance to a story which is otherwise filled with motifs of trickery and chaos. The other dominating animal of Norse mythology, the wolf, brings disruption into the urban setting. In *Norse Code*, wolves are symbols of ill omens and their intrusion on reality initiates an escalation of chaos. Being creatures of chaos, but also of terrible greed, wolves are used to underscore the apocalyptic theme. Meanwhile, the ravens, as narrators and companions, counterbalance the narrative. Gaiman frequently uses animal imagery in *American Gods*, where it is related to the gods, such as Odin, but the relation is never coincidental.

#### The Monster Gardens: How Do Mythical Creatures and Monsters Originate, And What Happens After That?

Kaspar J. Saxena  
Independent Scholar

This paper addresses questions about the fundamental differences and similarities between mythical creatures and monsters; how do they they originate and what subsequent roles they play in different historical moments? Anyone who has set out to make a serious study of mythical creatures and monsters is bound to find themselves eventually caught up in the underbrush of their meanings, in time, geography, discipline and context. There are key problems, questions and principles arising when building taxonomies of mythical creatures and monsters while addressing multiple paradigms, including traditional, colonial, social, scientific and popular culture frameworks. Although discussing these frameworks systematically would obviously be beyond the scope of this paper, I will be using a variety of frameworks to approach these taxonomies dynamically to discuss specific principles. I am developing core theories, concepts or principles that have assisted me my own navigation and research between these paradigms, and I believe would be of help to others who might be trying to make sense of these creatures. Using an image-based approach, I will be using several examples of mythical creatures and monsters in time, place and culture that focus on origination, meaning and changes in meaning in different contexts to illustrate the discussion.

### **38. (F) Monstrous Sexuality**

*Captiva B*

Chair: Veronica Schanoes  
Queens College – CUNY

#### **From Rape to Metamorphosis: The Paranormal Evolution of a Romance Trope**

Jessica Jernigan  
Central Michigan University

For more than two decades starting in the 1970s, the rape of a virginal heroine was a standard component of the historical romance genre. The huge success of Kathleen E. Woodiwiss's *The Flame and the Flower*—a novel that reinvented the romance genre with its graphic eroticism—demonstrated that romance fans of the late twentieth century were ready and eager for love stories shot through with rough, explicit sex, but neither publishers nor writers expected readers to react sympathetically to sluts. Rape solved that problem, in that it allowed the female protagonist to succumb to sex without any suggestion of wantonness. Readers approaching the genre from the outside, however, have suggested that, while rape-as-a-plot device might solve one problem, it raises a host of other issues, and romance fans themselves have grown weary—if not disgusted—with this trope. Romance has evolved—albeit slowly. Rape has all but disappeared, and heroines with sexual histories have become an unremarkable feature of the genre. However, author Lilith Saintcrow has made the intriguing suggestion that the narrative dynamic of rape has reappeared in the paranormal subgenre as involuntary transformation—such as when a vampire turns his victim with a bite. I touched on Saintcrow's idea in a recently published article on the selkie novels of Virginia Kantra, but I feel that this concept merits further, more sustained investigation. Using Saintcrow's thoughts on unwilling transformation as a starting point, I would like to take a close look at how Kantra uses sex and shapeshifting in three of her novels: *Sea Lord*, *Sea Fever*, and *Forgotten Sea*. I would examine how Kantra adopts and adapts the evolving tropes of romance, and I would also consider the—in my opinion, very sophisticated—relationship between Kantra's selkie novels and the folklore that gives them their distinctive shape. Like the paper I presented at last year's meeting, this essay should be of interest to scholars who study folklore and the fantastic in popular culture, as well as students of genre studies.

#### **Troubling Feminism: Monstrous Desire for the Monster in Romantic Fantasy**

Robert von der Osten  
Ferris State University

Feminism faces troubling times. As Kathleen Rowe Karlyn points out, the discourses of feminism today are being re-written across media culture. McRobbie, Levy, Tasker, Negra and others argue that much popular culture presents a form of postfeminism that construes the early goals of feminism for career opportunity and equality as having been principally achieved and reconstructs female liberation in terms of consumer individualism. The other feminist discourses critiquing an entire value system are marginalized. Feminist struggle becomes absorbed into a neoliberalism which places its emphasis on the power of the individual in the market place rather than in a sustained community based ideological struggle. Tasker and Negra even argue that “the transition to a postfeminist culture involves an evident erasure of feminist politics from the popular, even as aspects of feminism seem to be incorporated within the culture.” Instead, of seeing feminism as being the political movement that promotes future female advancement and cultural transformation, achievement becomes based on “female individualism” (McRobbie). Central to the generational problem of feminism are many key struggles. One Projansky identifies is the perceived conflict between feminism and femininity, explored in variations of girl power. Another tension Ariel Levy describes “explores the formulaic female sexualities of a culture in which (most often young) women enthusiastically perform patriarchal stereotypes of sexual servility in the name of empowerment,” as in strip tease aerobics, an activity that split my campus into fierce generational camps. These shifts are tied to a presumed move away from second wave feminisms potentially generalization of “being a woman,” already critiqued by Judith Butler and others, and so part of a community struggle, to an emphasis on individual life style choices; as McRobbie puts it, a shift from “we to she,” that also attempts to reclaim traditional markers of femininity and heterosexuality in a range of lifestyle choices, while negotiating the anxieties latent in the feminist position for young women. Within the context of this struggle, it is important to consider the extensive and burgeoning literature that I would call Romantic Fantasy by writers such as Patricia Briggs, Ilona Andrews, Faith Hunter, Michelle Sagara and others. These are works, especially the works of Briggs, Andrews, and Hunter, that focus on independent and powerful women who act violently for sanctioned reasons against deadly enemies but who also struggle with desires, marked as problematic and even monstrous, for men who are physically “monsters” and who enact what can only be seen from a second wave feminist point of view as a monstrous patriarchy. As Radway had pointed out, even in traditional romances the “love story” was always about patriarchy. The drive of these works is for a resolution of these conflicts in sexual gratification and marriage or mating that negotiates the complex spaces of feminist and postfeminist discourses. These works seem consistent with the traditional gothic romances explored by Radway which also focused on independent women who struggled in morally ambiguous situations until they achieve heteronormative, patriarchal sexual gratification. However, we should also, with Radway, avoid so quickly

underreading the narratives and their implications. Nor should we try to automatically reconstruct them as “secret” feminist texts. Instead we need to carefully explore their complex position within the contexts of contemporary discourses.

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**Thursday, March 22, 2012 4:00-5:30 p.m.**

## **42. (SF) Monstrous Posthuman Imaginings**

Pine

Chair: Gerry Canavan  
Duke University

### **The Monstrous Future: Freedom and the Posthuman Age in Scott Westerfeld’s *Uglies* Trilogy**

Robert Gadowski  
University of Wrocław

The figure of the monster is universally recognized as a powerful cultural metaphor. Most scholars believe that the monster is not a mere signifier of the other, alien qualities, but rather performs the role of an avatar of humanity’s own anxieties and potentials. Significantly, as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen emphasizes in his 1996 book *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*, “[m]onster notoriously appears at times of crisis as a kind of third term that problematizes the clash of extremes” (6). In this day and age humankind stands at the threshold of technologically mediated transformation from human to posthuman—a clash of two extremes bringing unprecedented consequences. Much as the monster, the posthuman belongs to a “break category” (Cohen x), a condition that has to be defined in order to be understood and then either embraced or deplored. Such considerations are strongly present in popular culture, particularly in science fiction. In this paper I argue that Scott Westerfeld’s *The Uglies* trilogy can be seen as a narrative that sets a new paradigm for the argument that the posthuman condition and values it entails have yet to be determined. Informed by Cohen’s theories and by such penetrating approaches to the monster and the posthuman as presented by Elaine L. Graham, Francis Fukuyama and Chris Hables Gray and others, my paper aims to reflect upon *The Uglies* trilogy as an important narrative commenting on the possibilities of becoming posthuman.

### **A Cancer in the Body Polity: Terrorism and Monstrosity in the Post-Human Novels of Neal Asher**

Stan Hunter Kranc  
The Pennsylvania State University

The thematic underpinning of much of science fiction is the conflict between protagonists and “monsters.” The works of British science fiction author Neal Asher problematize this conflict: in a post-human world, where form, identity, and even mind can be whimsically fluid, what truly can be considered “monstrous”? Asher posits a near future civilization ruled by an oligarchy of all-seeing, all-powerful artificial intelligences. But, as seen through the eyes of characters human, machine, and something in between, Asher asks readers to imagine this government not as a dystopic and inhuman technocracy, but rather as a kind of post-human utopia, whose citizens have lost privacy and self government but gained economic freedom and security. Of course, the peace of Asher’s Polity universe is threatened by enemies both internal and external. The struggles of Ian Cormac, a human secret agent “gridlinked” to the AI rulers forms the unifying narrative of the series. This paper proposes a rhetorical reading of these novels, focusing on the construction of a fundamentally moralistic conflict between Agent Cormac and the monstrous foes of the Polity. However, as both protagonists and antagonists are able to “reshape” their bodies and minds, readers are robbed of the traditional signifiers in identifying heroes and villains.

### **Popping the Bubble of the Metaverse: Posthuman Control in Neal Stephenson’s *Snow Crash***

Monica Sedore  
Florida Atlantic University

Neal Stephenson’s third novel, *Snow Crash*, is one of the most popular works of cyberpunk science fiction. Though the novel was published in 1992, several years before the Internet became a necessary tool in the late 90s, it still offers an eerie prologue to the world of technology used by individuals in the twenty-first century. The main component of Stephenson’s novel is the Metaverse, a “computer-generated universe,” (24) into which one may be “goggled in” at any place, any time. My argument centers on the idea that in the Metaverse, the more freedom the characters believe they have achieved, the more control is actually exerted upon them. The two theoretical texts I will be relying on (and subsequently merging) to frame my argument are Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* and N. Katherine Hayles’s *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. The setting of *Snow Crash* is both a carceral system and a posthuman world. The Metaverse gives the characters their perceived freedom in the posthuman world, but the carceral system is what keeps them locked down.



#### 44. (CYA) The Monstrosity of Teenage Girls

Maple

Chair: Kendra Holmes  
University of Florida

##### The Monstrous Feminine and Signifying Other: Gorgons, New Women, and Neo-Victorian Literature

Mandy Mahaffey  
University of Central Florida

Originally stemming from the idea of the female grotesque and the carnivalesque nature of Libba Bray's Gemma Doyle Trilogy outlined in my previous paper for ICFA 32, this paper will examine [O]ther monsters, both literal and metaphorical, through teasing out complexities of the Gorgon and Felicity in their paralleled and converging storylines of selfhood. It is the juxtaposition between and confusion of [self-]denial and [self-]acceptance, "real" and mythological, hidden and exposed, and inner- and outer-lives that I am most interested in presently. Because Felicity exists, for the most part, in a phallogcentric culture, her need to communicate her Self is different from the Gorgon's need. Both, however, are steeped within particulars of language, coding themselves according to what they think the hegemonic order and respective sub-sect requires as well as creating their own language of existence for, by, and in regard to their Self---simultaneously denying and nurturing a particular monstrous bodies. That what is most monstrous might in fact be what is least definable, and nothing more sinister than that, has powerful and disturbing ramifications in identity politics. In her young adult novel, *Liar*, Justine Larbalestier engages in such discourse in introducing us to Micah, a biracial, bisexual, boyish, adolescent girl. What complicates the text is that the story is told through an unreliable first person narration in which Micah is only clearly honest with us about one thing: she is a pathological liar. Two aspects of the text embody what I argue is its underlying monstrosity: Micah's assertion that she is a werewolf and the novel's lack of closure about this as well as all of Micah's other assertions. In this paper, I argue that the monstrosity of the textual body itself, as well as that of the teenage body it purports to illustrate, reflects our cultural fears both about the breakdown of the imagined borders between girl, boy, straight, gay, black, white, adult, child, human, animal, etc, and about the unknowable "truth" of an existence which straddles such categorical boundaries. Both the novel's unknowability and Micah's understanding of herself as something monstrous, liminal, and thus unknowable, contribute to the novel's illustration of the imagined monstrosity of adolescent girls. Because Micah, not unlike many teenage girls, struggles to identify with culturally conceivable identities—fictional or not—her story highlights the contingency and contestability of the way in which we define ourselves.

##### Justine Larbalestier's Werewolf *Liar*: Why Teenage Girls Are Scary

Tamar Ditzian  
University of Florida

Integral to at least five of Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's seven theses on monstrosity are borders and the threat of their breakdown. Monsters tend to vex culturally important categorical distinctions: living/dead, substantial/insubstantial, human/animal, domestic/alien, etc. Thus, Cohen's third thesis, that "the monster is the harbinger of category crisis" might be usefully understood as central to understanding monstrosity as a reflection of cultural concerns over identity. This minor theoretical shift helps in analyzing the categorical dissolutions being signaled through particular monstrous bodies. That what is most monstrous might in fact be what is least definable, and nothing more sinister than that, has powerful and disturbing ramifications in identity politics. In her young adult novel, *Liar*, Justine Larbalestier engages in such discourse in introducing us to Micah, a biracial, bisexual, boyish, adolescent girl. What complicates the text is that the story is told through an unreliable first person narration in which Micah is only clearly honest with us about one thing: she is a pathological liar. Two aspects of the text embody what I argue is its underlying monstrosity: Micah's assertion that she is a werewolf and the novel's lack of closure about this as well as all of Micah's other assertions. In this paper, I argue that the monstrosity of the textual body itself, as well as that of the teenage body it purports to illustrate, reflects our cultural fears both about the breakdown of the imagined borders between girl, boy, straight, gay, black, white, adult, child, human, animal, etc, and about the unknowable "truth" of an existence which straddles such categorical boundaries. Both the novel's unknowability and Micah's understanding of herself as something monstrous, liminal, and thus unknowable, contribute to the novel's illustration of the imagined monstrosity of adolescent girls. Because Micah, not unlike many teenage girls, struggles to identify with culturally conceivable identities—fictional or not—her story highlights the contingency and contestability of the way in which we define ourselves.

##### The Last Human Monster: Power, Sexuality, and Embodiment in Kristin Cashore's *Fire*

Meghann Meeusen  
Illinois State University

Depictions of monstrosity have flourished in recent adolescent literature, with stories of vampires, werewolves, zombies and demons flying from the shelves as quickly as they can be marketed. As scholars like Jeffrey Cohen have posited, such monsters often reflect cultural anxieties, and Kristin Cashore's *Fire* offers no exception. Cashore develops a compelling monster heroine who seeks redemption for the horrors her tyrannical father committed, providing commentary on feminine sexuality, embodiment and power in a characterization of the last human monster. In Cashore's mythic realm, each species has a stunningly beautiful and powerful "monster" equivalent, including the text's female protagonist, Fire. Human monsters can control what others think, a trait Fire's father manipulates until she feels forced to orchestrate his death, a secret she believes solidifies her as a monster. Still, despite her attempts to embrace humanity and reject her monstrous characteristics, she cannot control the physical effect of her beauty. Fire's incredible sexual allure frequently places her in profound danger, so that her happiness and safety depends on not only her own mental discipline, but on the human men in her life who are often lost to lust, becoming far more monstrous than she. My presentation considers how Cashore uses these aspects of monstrosity to complicate constructed identity, accentuating the complexity of a mind/body binary in gendered power relationships. Furthermore, my study explores the ways Fire's instinctual characteristics connect to her beauty and tie sexuality to monstrosity, problematizing the humanity/animality distinction that defines characters as monsters, humans and gendered individuals. Cashore's text prompts questioning of whether Fire can or should control those monstrous parts of herself, why she needs to, and what cultural anxieties they represent. My presentation investigates these questions, seeking to articulate what it means to be a monster in both fiction and society.

## 45. (FTV) Angels & Demons

Cypress

Chair: Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock  
Central Michigan University

### Monstrous Messengers: Bad Angels in Horror Films

Regina Hansen  
Boston University

Media images of angels have usually focused on the positive. From Clarence in *It's A Wonderful Life* to the helpful angels of *Touched By An Angel*, angelic characters, especially in American film have reflected a combination of New Age and pop-Christian ideals. Angels have been guardians, saviors or simply representations of "good energy." In recent years, however, the image of the helpful angel has been replaced by that of an angry, punishing creature, closer to popular conceptions of the demonic than the angelic. In some ways, this is more in line with original scriptural and theological understandings of angels as beings of pure spirit meant to carry out God's will, even when that will is destructive. Moreover, these modern films also suggest a thinner line between the angelic and the demonic, another reflection of earlier literature – from Christian theology to the work of Dante and Milton -- in which demons are merely fallen angels. This paper will examine how the newer depictions of angels as monsters (in films like *Constantine* and *The Prophecy*) are closer to depictions of angels in scripture and theology than are the sentimental "Touched by an Angel" images. Angelic tropes to be discussed will include the "avenging angel," "the angel of the bottomless pit," and the "angel of death."

### Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who's the Most Monstrous of All?: *Supernatural's* Monsters

Lisa Macklem  
University of Western Ontario

It is difficult if not impossible to imagine a horror movie without a monster of some ilk. Monsters are what scare us, and they come in many shapes and sizes. The television series *Supernatural*, based as it is on a monster-hunting family, manages to cover the gamut of monsters. Some of these monsters are easily recognizable from urban legends and the horror tradition and some are either completely original monsters or an original spin on an old favorite. Some monsters recur in the series, like the demons Azazel or Alastair. Some types of monsters, like vampires, are worthy of more than one episode while others are specifically identified as "monster-of-the-week" characters. The monsters in *Supernatural*, as in much literature, film, and television, serve a deeper purpose than to simply instill fear in the audience. Laura K. Davis and Cristina Santos suggest that "one of the reasons monsters fascinate and compel is that they are symbols of human vulnerability: we are all potentially vulnerable to violence. The fine line between 'human' and 'monster,' between 'Self' and 'Other,' however, makes the monster somehow even more alluring, and yet makes the Self more vulnerable to it" (x). The monster often acts as a mirror to the larger themes running throughout the series and this is what sets the series apart from other series and movies: not that they don't examine the usual tropes, but that they are able to incorporate so many of them and interweave them meaningfully throughout the series, both playing into and thwarting the audience's expectations. Indeed, not all monsters are supernatural – and not all monsters are entirely evil. Monsters become foils for the hunters themselves in the monster-heavy landscape. The two brothers live in a world that is largely oblivious to the monsters lurking in the shadows, but even in the community of hunters they are outsiders. Philip L. Simpson points out that "isolation is the essence of the horror genre. Characters in horror films confront the monsters in the border zone" (qtd. in Royer and Royer ix). Both brothers carry something of the monster within themselves. Good and evil, black and white, hunter and monster blur in the world of *Supernatural*, creating a richer and more nuanced landscape.

### "What music they make": Demons, Angels, Music

Isabella van Elferen  
Utrecht University

In literature, cinema, television, and even computer games, music often represents demons and angels. Music identifies, conjures up and vocalises supernatural beings: ghostly melodies haunt the heroines of Gothic novels, the children of the night in Stoker's *Dracula* make music, flageolet tones or disembodied child song indicate supernatural presence in horror movies and TV, sacred hymns exorcise demons and vampires, pounding drones of white noise indicate the presence of zombies in survival horror games. Music, moreover, can draw listeners into its flow and take them across borders of reality or spirituality; for this reason music functions as a gateway to other dimensions in culturally disparate ceremonies. Buddhist mantras, Gregorian chant, and Satanist rites alike are based on the same metaphysical assessments of musical immersion, which has been described as "supernatural ecstasy" by Edgar Allan Poe. My paper explores these musical metaphysics, arguing that music's transcendent workings are the result of its subtle disturbance of the ontology of Being and Time. Music compellingly suggests the possibility that there can be Beings that are infinite like deities, that fold time like ghosts do, that are undead like vampires or zombies, or that are quite outside time like the *Lost* smoke monster. The musical distinction between angels and demons, in this sense, is only recognisable through conventions -- while monsters mostly sound harsh and dissonant, angels are often carried by serene polyphony. *Mostly. Often.* But beasts, too, can sing in treacherously sweet timbres, like *Dracula's* brides and their silvery, musical laughter. Does the supernatural ecstasy of musical experience allow a real difference between angels and demons?

## 46. (FTV/SF) Monstrous Spin-offs: *Torchwood* and *Serenity*

Palm

Chair: Deborah Christie  
ECPI University

### Reaver Apocalypse: Much Ado about No-thing

Kelly Kate Stockton  
University of Missouri

Like many monsters, the Reavers of Joss Whedon's *Firefly* and *Serenity* are significant because they point to questions about what it means to be human. This paper shows that the most instructive method of understanding the horror embodied in the Reavers is to reveal their apophatic nature. In the way that Christian apophatic theology describes what God is not because humans have no real and precise language for what God truly is, the Reavers cannot be described as what they are, for we lack the vocabulary to fully describe such horror. In this way, Reavers should be described by way of what they are not – they are not human. Through an apophatic reading Reavers not only represent what is not human, they are revealed as the total absence of human Being. In numerous religious cosmologies the creation of humans follows closely on the heels of the absence of human Being – cosmologies tend to run in a semi-linear fashion; humans are not there and then they are. The purpose of the cosmology is to explain how humans came into Being. The cosmology of the Verse seems to suggest that we can go backwards: first there is human Being and then there is the absence of human Being. In this way, Reavers are not as much a representation of fears about the nothingness of the edge of space but the *embodiment* of the possible nothing of space. Analyzing the Reavers in terms of the theological question, "What does it mean to be human?" is particularly significant at this moment in our cultural history because Reavers present that familiar question in the context of unfamiliar outer space; a destination many scientists argue provides the only salvation for humankind.

### Intelligible Genders, Monsters and Subversive Space in *Torchwood*

Josefine Wälivaara  
Umeå University

The paper will examine the relationship between "gender intelligibility" and the monster in the *Doctor Who* spin-off *Torchwood* (2006-). I will argue for the importance to be intelligible to resist becoming a monster. In addition, investigate the possible space of resistance for the protagonists in *Torchwood*. The paper will apply queer theory to explore this relationship and mainly Judith Butler's notion of gender intelligibility. According to Butler, "'Intelligible' genders are those which in some sense institute and maintain relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice and desire." The intelligible is closely connected to the notion of "the person" which "is called into question by the cultural emergence of those 'incoherent' or 'discontinuous' gendered beings who appear to be persons but who fail to conform to the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility by which persons are defined". I will argue that being, or not being intelligible in Butler's sense could prove a focal point in exploring the limits of normality. In addition, that being or becoming intelligible is vital in remaining and being understood as "a person" in opposition to becoming a non-person or potentially, some kind of monster. "The cultural matrix through which gender identity has become intelligible requires that certain kinds of 'identities' cannot 'exist' – that is, those in which gender does not follow from sex, and those in which the practices of desire do not follow from either sex or gender. "Those identities with an "impossible" existence are my main concern since they, according to Butler, can be sites of the subversive. In relation to *Torchwood* I will argue for the creation of a subversive space within the narrative— where the impossible is made possible. *Torchwood* is part of my research for my thesis on subversive science fiction film and television.

## 47. (VPA) Sands of Time

Magnolia

Chair: David Steiling  
Ringling College of Art and Design

### Stop All the Clocks: Narrative Time in *Watchmen*

Lingerr Senghor  
University of Virginia

This paper analyzes how the layering of time in the graphic novel *Watchmen*, specifically time as perceived by Dr. Manhattan in Chapter IV of the work, develops an argument about the possibilities for time in the graphic novel narrative.

### Female Power, Monstrous Appearances, and Change in *The Sandman*

Georgia K. Natishan  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Dream, the male protagonist of Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman*, has no shortage of women in his life: sisters, lovers, goddesses, witches, human and immortal alike make up the diverse and dizzying ensemble cast. This paper shows how the entanglements of the supporting characters with Dream ultimately illuminate both the positive and negative qualities of his personality, showing his failures and accomplishments as both a hero and a man.

### **Magical Illustrations: Edward Said's Orientalism on Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* – Ramadan**

Kenneth Lota

University of Virginia

The paper will explore the similarities of the narrative and visual elements of Ramadan to Richard Burton's Victorian-era translation of *The Arabian Nights* as well as the crucial differences that mark the comic as a product of post-Said cultural awareness.

### **48. (H/CYA) She Monsters**

*Dogwood*

Chair: Manuel Tejada

Barry University

### **Beauty and the Beast Within**

Sara Cleto

George Mason University

Normative versions of Beauty and the Beast (ATU 425C), such as Beaumont's literary fairy tale and Disney's 1991 film, emphasize the transformation of the male Beast from a monster into an idealized human prince. While this conclusion dominates the fairy tale's tradition, a new trend has emerged. Authors of contemporary revisions are beginning to envision Beauties who transgress fairy tale norms by transforming into monstrous Beasts. While the transformation is often a physical change, it can also be expressed as Beauty's rejection of her cultural norms and her corresponding embrace of the Beast's unconventional, socially transgressive mores. The transformation, or evolution, into a female beast is prompted by a number of disparate impetuses, which vary depending on the story. For example, in Angela Carter's "The Tiger's Bride," one of the earliest and most influential of this subset of tales, Beauty experiences rage and suffocation in her passive role. Freed from her doll-like existence, Beauty transforms into a strong, self-reliant tiger. This desire for agency and self-expression prompts a number of female transformations into culturally abnormal "monsters," including those that occur in Francesca Lia Block's "Beast" and Emma Donoghue's "The Tale of the Rose." Female transformations also appear in vampire revisions of Beauty and the Beast, following from the long tradition of vampires and transgressive sexuality that emerged in *Carmilla* and *Dracula*. These transformations are often prompted by sexuality or self-discovery. Perhaps the most currently popular tale of this type is Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series, in which the heroine becomes a vampire in the final novel. Robin McKinley's *Sunshine*, however, provides a much more subtle exploration of personal identity and acceptance of the monstrous within. In this paper, I will explore the motivations for and the consequences of these transformations into the monstrous, as well as the significance of these changes within the context of the normative tale.

### **Both Monstrous and Menstruous: Reimagining the Female Werewolf**

Beth Feagan

Longwood University

Female werewolves embody power, wildness, and violence in contemporary young adult fiction. My examination of *Liar* (Larbalestier) and *Blood and Chocolate* (Klaue) focuses on the role of menarche and menstruation in the life of the female werewolf. Women have been compared to beasts as a justification for political and social repressions; menstruation taboos are wrapped up in anxieties about castration, pollution, infections and insanity. By constructing female werewolf protagonists who transgress social and sexual norms, and whose lycanthropy is interconnected with menstruation, Larbalestier and Klaue reimagine the monstrous feminine, and reshape werewolf iconography for today's teen audience.

### **Terrible Mothers and Fantastic Language or Fantastic Mothers and Terrible Language? Stephen King's Unflattering Representations of Monstrous Mothers**

Yi-Jung Lin

National Taiwan Normal University

Apart from fabulous monsters, monstrous females, especially terrible mothers, also form an integral part in Stephen King's horror landscape. The monstrosity of King's fictive mothers ranges from weakness (Wendy Torrance in *The Shining*), irresponsibility (Rachel Creed in *Pet Sematary*), lustfulness (Donna Trenton in *Cujo*), religious fanaticism (Margaret White in *Carrie*), a tendency towards dominance and overprotection (Arlene Hanscom in *It*), sickness, madness and obesity ("Gemma") to fatal genetic inheritance (Loretta in "The Man in the Black Suit"). Moreover, the queen rat in "Graveyard Shift" and the she-spider in *It* strike readers as extremely sickening when they are found to mother numerous offspring. King's unflattering representations of women seem to confirm the critical opinion, such as that of Leslie Fiedler, that most male American writers are so inept when it comes to presenting female characters that their fictional women are either stereotypically flat or darkly imagined as deviants from social conventions and expectations. This chauvinist perspective of male writers is understood by Anne Cranny Francis as resulting from a misogynistic fantasy that finds women, especially their biological otherness, threatening and accordingly attempts to demonize them when they are proved too difficult to domesticate. Besides, King's interest in the power of writing leads Clare Hanson, in light of Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection, to view the heroes' confrontations with monstrous mothers as indicative of how language and subjectivity arise from the abjection of the maternal, a process in which mother is rejected in exchange for text. This paper attempts to prove that King's representations of monstrous mother figures are by no means expressive of the writer's misogynistic fantasy; rather, they come from King's attempt to showcase how the mother and the maternal body have come to be fantasized as terrifying. King's fiction shows a reluctance to progress beyond the primal repression and its trajectory is consequently not as masculine as those critics, who side language with masculinity, have pointed out. Moreover, if language has everything to do with abjection because uttering leads to purification and order, fantasy writers like King stretch the capacity of language to the extent that it witnesses its own disintegration and thus brings us back to the time before abjection when the mother and the maternal body do not have to be experienced as mediated by language.

## 49. (F) Aspects of Miéville

Captiva A

Chair: Howard Canaan  
Mercy College

### Wonders on Display: *Kraken* and the Recontextualized Wonders

Kerry Kaleba  
George Mason University

China Miéville's 2010 novel *Kraken* introduces the reader to the mnemophylax, the angels of memory, constructed of the ephemera of memory to protect their fellow recontextualized objects of display. These angels are born and primarily reside in museums, modern temples of culture and constructed memory. Drawing from Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's discussions of museums as a way to de-contextualize culture, and continued issues of display in museum settings, this paper will seek to explore how the mnemophylax construct an identity for themselves out of the invented memories on display. Like Frankenstein monsters of memory, the mnemophylax become beings beyond the intent and control of their creators, pulling from the scraps of display. Museums have a long history of attempting to contain the wonders of the world, natural and unnatural, from the Renaissance *kunstkammers* attempting to keep the world in a box, to the World's Fairs of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and on to the private museums for every possible interest. By containing and displaying wonders, man seeks to hold dominion over the (im)possible. In the mnemophylax, the displayed objects establish their own identity, as items purely for viewing, and subject to different rules, a crucial point in the novel. This paper explores the issues of shifting identity of objects from the ordinary to the wondrous and fantastic, and how that movement requires a change in point of view in the interpretation of meaning. Drawing on the ideas of museum-framed objects that Miéville uses in *Kraken* with criticism of the current museum and display practice, monstrous objects become commonplace, and the everyday become fantastic.

### fReemades and Familiars: Living Fetishes in the Fiction of China Miéville

Leah Richards  
Fordham University

This paper will draw on the original idea of the fetish and its appropriation in Marxist discourse to examine the significance of China Miéville's semi-human characters, the bioengineered outlaw Jack Half-a-Prayer in *Perdido Street Station* and the short story "Jack," Wati, the sentient but non-corporeal ushabti in *Kraken*, and the half-rat Saul in *King Rat*. Beginning with a consideration of their hybridity and the processes by which these characters transcend the limitations of both human and Other, this paper will then explore the processes by which they are fetishized within their respective fictions: Jack, a vigilante, Wati, a union organizer, and Saul, the Prince Regent to a despised king, are deified by their followers and demonized by those in power; these processes are responses to and catalysts for their revolutionary, subversive acts within the novel. As all three are potentially "monstrous"--non-human--it is interesting that it is this objectification that renders them most "human," whatever that term means within these fantasy worlds. In addition, tremendous value is placed upon their success or defeat; though symbolic, this valuation turns these figures into commodities in the novels' struggles for power. As objects of worship and exchange, these characters transcend boundaries and exhibit tremendous fluidity, but their work, in defense of those whom they themselves are not, and their roles within their respective fictions is complicated by these processes.

### Myself as Monster: Self and Other in China Miéville's "The Tain"

Siobhan Carroll  
University of Delaware

China Miéville's "The Tain" (2002) depicts an apocalyptic London ravaged by a war between humans and "imagos": creatures from the world beyond mirrors, which have burst free from their specular prisons to enact a bloody revenge on their human tormentors. "The Tain" not only exemplifies Miéville's interest in the "violence inherent in social relations under capital" (311), as Mark Bould has argued, but also, as I argue in this essay, explores the relationship between Self and Community in contemporary urban space. Viewed through the lens of Lacanian theory and spatial theory, "The Tain" emerges as a parable regarding the Ego's struggle to both achieve a sense of coherence and to mediate a connection to community in the spaces of produced by late capitalism. The twin protagonists of "The Tain" – the ostensibly-human Sholl, and the nameless vampire he interrogates, – start out respectively as an isolated individual in a fragmented urban community and as the representative of a united community. Their encounter and mutual moment of "mirroring," however, leads both protagonists to undertake parallel but opposite journeys, with Sholl (who may, as it turns out, be a vampire who has forgotten his true nature) serving as a representative of a re-forged human community, while his doppelganger, a human who has been pretending to be a vampire, forces his way into the desolate London of the mirror world, a "city where I can be alone" (297). Using extensive close reading, this essay explores the ways in which the false vampire's "silly little game" of "myself as monster" (297) represents one possible response to the challenges to Ego posed by immersion in the un-knowable community of the late-capitalist city, while Sholl's climatic surrender of identity represents another. Miéville's experimentation with urban constructions of Self and Other in this story, I conclude, represents a fascinating contribution to urban fantasy's ongoing interrogation of the effects of urban development on identity.

## 50. (F) New Takes on Old Tales

Captiva B

Chair: Jeana Jorgensen  
Indiana University

### A Voice for the Silent Daughters: The Beast-Bridegroom in Feminist Fairy Tales

Christine Mains  
Mount Royal University

In her comprehensive exploration of the tradition of beast-bridegroom tales, *From the Beast to the Blonde*, Marina Warner examines the changing interpretation of this common literary motif over centuries of tale-telling. While earlier tales, she argues, “hold out the dream that, although the heroine’s father has given her into the keeping of a Beast, he will change” into a good and decent and caring man (279), later tales, particularly those revisions popular in the later half of the twentieth century, have something very different to say to their female readers. In these tales, the heroine – Beauty, Psyche, Belle – learn something from their monstrous lovers, something about themselves and the monster within. The Beast may represent “a moral flaw, a part of her carnal and materialist nature . . . he holds up a mirror to the force of nature within her” (307). Where once the tales cautioned innocent young women to beware the perils of men and their monstrous beastly desires, feminist fairy tales spoke to the possibility of embracing such animalistic pleasures; instead of being a civilizing force to tame the beast within their men, women were encouraged to explore the beast within themselves, to become not angels but animals. And yet there remains something monstrous about the force of sexuality in the lives of young women. Using selected feminist fairy tales written from the 1970s to the 1990s, I will briefly trace the development of the beast-bridegroom motif as a means of exploring the representation of sexuality in contemporary fairy tales. Some of the tales I may use include Barbara G. Walker’s “Ugly and the Beast” in which the beastly bridegroom is not under any enchantment that can be cured with a kiss; Tanith Lee’s “Red as Blood” which connects the onset of female sexuality with vampirism; Angela Carter’s “The Tiger’s Bride” which ends with the young bride’s transformation into beast, her human skin stripped off to reveal fur by the rough tongue of her tiger-husband; Robin McKinley’s unsettling novel *Deerskin* in which the young princess costumes herself in animal-skin to avoid, unsuccessfully, the abuse by her father; and Jane Yolen’s “Allerleirauh,” based on the same traditional fairy tale and included in an anthology of fairy tale revisions centered on the monstrosity of childhood abuse, sexual and otherwise.

### “A Girl Who is Both Death and the Maiden”: Reimagining Sleeping Beauty and Snow White as Gothic Monsters in Contemporary Fairy Tale Retellings

Brittany Warman  
George Mason University

The focus of this paper will be the examination of several modern fairy tale retellings that transform the traditionally passive fairy tale heroines of “Sleeping Beauty” (ATU 410) and “Snow White” (ATU 709) into monsters typical of the Gothic subgenre. What does it mean to turn a princess into a monster and what are the feminist messages inherent in such a transformation? This paper seeks to explore this question by approaching it through the combination of fairy tale, gothic, fantastic, and feminist scholarship. Cristina Bacchilega states in her book *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies* (1997) that modern fairy tale retellings attempt to “hold mirrors to the magic mirror of the fairy tale” and “[play] with its framed images” (Bacchilega 1997, 23) – they reject the “complicity” traditional fairy tales have “with ‘exhausted’ narrative and gender ideologies” (50) and instead alter them to suit new and feminist purposes. Intriguingly, feminist retellings of the sleeping maiden fairy tales are often also Gothic retellings in which the submissive, inactive princesses of the traditional stories become powerful, frightening, sexual, and fascinating monsters. The majority of the texts that will be examined feature a “Sleeping Beauty” or “Snow White” reimagined as a vampire, such as Angela Carter’s “The Lady of the House of Love” and Neil Gaiman’s “Snow, Glass, Apples.” Other kinds of monsters, however, such as the ghostly princess of Leon Garfield’s *The Wedding Ghost* and the decaying beauty of Catherynne M. Valentine’s “The Maiden-Tree” will also be considered. The undeniably uncanny nature of fairy tales themselves allows for a near effortless blending with the Gothic aesthetic that modern writers are using to their advantage. This blending allows for the creation of strange and beautiful fairy tale retellings that force audiences to rethink the standard image of the sleeping maiden.

### The Sleep of Reason? Fantasy Meets the Post-Modern in Angela Carter’s “The Tiger’s Bride”

Caroline Webb  
University of Newcastle

The work of celebrated British novelist Angela Carter is habitually shelved under “literature” rather than “science fiction and fantasy” in chain bookshops, and scholarship has focused on its feminist deployment of postmodern techniques. To the extent that her work has been considered in relation to fantasy, it has been discussed for its deployment of magic realism, and more usually to the fairy tale. Her 1979 collection *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* especially has received considerable critical attention for its radical rewritings of European fairy tales by Perrault, Beaumont, and the Grimms. In this paper I will examine the beast transformation in Carter’s story “The Tiger’s Bride,” a re-take of Beaumont’s “Beauty and the Beast,” in relation to the history of monstrous transformations within the fantasy tradition. In George MacDonald’s *Lilith*, most notably, both the eponymous villainess and her benign counterpart transform themselves into monsters; as the narrator, Vane, gradually realises, the apparently comatose Lilith has been preying on him nightly as he sleeps after tending her. In Carter’s story the sleep of reason takes quite another form: Carter’s narrating protagonist, the story’s Beauty, analyses her own situation as commodity with a fierce rationality, but is shocked into an emotional and eventually physical transformation that takes her outside the rational when confronted with the sight of the naked tiger. I shall consider the narrative strategy of Carter’s story in relation to MacDonald’s, and shall consider their location of the beast transformation as central to an understanding of value. Reason, in these texts, is for both Beauty and Vane a stage in growth that must be surpassed by a recognition of an underlying truth (whether of the body or the soul) that can only be represented through the monstrous.

### 53. (SF) War and Crisis in 1940s and 50s Science Fiction

Vista C

Chair: S.C. Kranc  
University of South Florida

#### History as Crisis: Asimov, Heinlein and Histories of the Future

Jari Käkälä  
University of Helsinki

This presentation examines the view of history and methods of historical fiction in Isaac Asimov's Foundation and Robert Heinlein's Future History series. Both series reflect the spirit of the 1940s Golden Age by conveying a sense of history as a crisis where great individuals must rise to the occasion and take active control of the course of history. Although Asimov's and Heinlein's story sequences are often equated in sf literary history because of their consciously historical approaches, it seems that they are crucially different at the core. This paper suggests that Heinlein's stories of individuals at (future) historical settings and moments may, in fact, resemble actual historical fiction more closely than Asimov's sweeping accounts of large movements of history – which in turn go more into philosophical issues of the role of individual action at the face of history.

#### Prophesying Neocolonial Wars in 1950s American Science Fiction

Rob Latham  
University of California, Riverside

This paper focuses on two 1950s sf stories—William Tenn's 'The Liberation of Earth' (1953) and Robert Sheckley's 'Citizen in Space' (1955)—that were deeply critical of neocolonial power structures and their implications at home and abroad. Initially fashioned to insure access to global markets, American neocolonial policy spawned during the postwar era a succession of covert or "police" actions designed to overthrow socialist governments, mount counterinsurgency operations, and prop up client regimes. H. Bruce Franklin's classic essay "The Vietnam War as American SF and Fantasy" analyzed a range of sf novels and stories from the 1960s that were "fundamentally hostile to the militarist fantasies endemic to modern American culture." Yet the broad contrast Franklin draws between jingoistic celebrations of American imperial might and subversive critiques of militarist ideology is a bit too pat, relying on a standard division between pulp "fantasies of technowonders and ... superheroes" and the New Wave's "alternative visions" and thus ignoring the strong strain of anticolonial and antimilitarist sentiment in 1950s science fiction.

#### "Bloody unnatural brutes"? The Colonial Context of John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*

Jerry Määttä  
Uppsala University

The aim of this paper is to discuss some crucial aspects of the contemporary context of John Wyndham's influential novel *The Day of the Triffids* (1951). This paper will explore the notion that, alongside the perhaps more obvious themes of evolution and Darwinian struggle – where mankind is threatened by scientifically created monstrosities – there runs a strong social commentary that derives from the particular predicament of a post-war Britain in the midst of dismantling its empire. Bearing in mind that Wyndham's novels reached a vast and diverse audience, *The Day of the Triffids* can perhaps be viewed as a symbolic negotiation of the British situation in the first few years after WWII. Apart from discussing the ways in which the novel can be said to assay a variety of political and ideological stances towards the challenges facing a decolonised Britain, this paper will consider a few intriguing aspects of the geography of the novel, and present a possibly startling new perspective on the novel's eponymous ambulatory, carnivorous plants. The paper will also touch upon some perhaps revealing alterations between the novel as published in the UK in the fall of 1951, the American serialization in *Collier's* in early 1951, and the oldest extant manuscript from the late 1940s.

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**Friday, March 23, 2012 8:30-10:00 a.m.**

### 54. (SF) Maternity and Monstrosity

Pine

Chair: Mary Long  
Florida Atlantic University

#### Monstrous Motherhood: Alternative Visions of Late Pregnancy

Aline Ferreira  
University of Aveiro

Visions of alternative types of pregnancy and reproductive scenarios abound in science fiction and utopian or dystopian literature. However, representations of older pregnant women have been mystifyingly absent from fiction, a situation which, given medical developments and longer life spans, would appear to be somewhat strange since women in their 50s and 60s are increasingly making headlines for bearing children. On the other hand, very late pregnancy is still considered anomalous, grotesque and even monstrous. I will examine Ann Patchett's recent novel *State of Wonder* (2011) where women bear children practically to the end of their lives, often in their seventies, an event that is regarded as natural in the Amazonian tribe they belong to. It is outside observers who feel wonder and awe at these "monstrous" pregnant women, who, to the outsiders, effectively correspond to Bakhtin's depiction of a pregnant hag: "There is nothing completed, nothing calm and

stable in the bodies of these old hags. They combine a senile, decaying and deformed flesh with the flesh of new life, conceived but as yet unformed. Life is shown in its two-fold contradictory process; it is the epitome of incompleteness. And such is precisely the grotesque concept of the body (*Rabelais and his World*, 25-6). This putatively grotesque concept interfaces with the antagonism often vented towards older women who wish to become mothers, which in Marge Piercy's view "sounds just like the general hostility toward older women in our society, who are considered ugly and useless" ("Love and Sex in the Year 3000", 2003, 134). While men often have children in their 50s, 60s and even 70s, women's reproductive years are much shorter, an aspect that is often perceived as not simply unfair, but as a distinct disadvantage when it comes to career or other options. The scenario envisaged by Patchett provides an alternative, albeit "grotesque" and even, to some, "monstrous" vision of the Bakhtinian pregnant crone.

#### **Mothering Monsters: Technology, Reproduction, and the Maternal Body in Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* and Nalo Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber***

Kathryn Allan  
Independent Scholar

Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* (2002) and Nalo Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber* (2000) explore the ways that reproductive technologies have the capacity to reshape human being in unexpected and frightening ways. Drawing on corporeal feminism (of Margrit Shildrick and Elizabeth Grosz, most notably), I interrogate the ways in which Lai and Hopkinson explore issues of monstrosity, maternity, and reproduction in posthuman worlds. Cloning meets reincarnation in *Salt Fish Girl*, as Lai traces the journey of durian-odoured Miranda from adolescence to motherhood. I examine the ways reproductive technologies, like cloning, intersect with environmental pollution and hybrid diseases to create a threatening maternal body that has no need for men. Lai reflects that "now we step out of moist earth, out of DNA new and old, an imprint of what has gone before, but also a variation. [...] By our strangeness we write our bodies into the future" (SFG, 259). Miranda's struggles with corporeal indeterminacy and "seepage" are reflected, I argue, in *Midnight Robber's* Tan-Tan. Like Lai, Hopkinson exposes the particular vulnerability and monstrosity inherent in maternity as Tan-Tan struggles with self-actualization and non-normative embodiment. Straddling the worlds of technology (Toussaint) and unadulterated nature (New Half-Way Tree), Tan-Tan becomes a contested site of the posthuman mother – her child is directly connected to the Grande Anansi Nanotech Interface: "[His] little bodystring will sing to Nanny tune, doux-doux. [He] will be a weave in she flesh" (MR, 328). Reading these two texts as exemplars of feminist post-cyberpunk SF, I ultimately propose that Lai and Hopkinson situate the monstrous maternal body as both vulnerable and technologically adaptable. *Salt Fish Girl* and *Midnight Robber* articulate the dangers inherent in adopting any new technology, but remain optimistic that the maternal body will continue to replicate on its own terms and in unforeseen ways.

#### **The Nuclear Family: Monstrous Domesticity in American Cold War Science Fiction**

Elizabeth Lundberg  
University of Iowa

This paper investigates early cold war fears and anxieties surrounding domesticity, reproduction, and the female body as they play out in American science fiction. My argument tracks several overlapping tensions: in the late 1940s and 1950s, at the same that there was a push in American culture toward domesticity and family life, there also emerged fears of birth defects due to radiation exposure, and paranoia that any member of one's family could turn out to secretly be someone completely alien (a communist, a spy, homosexual, etc.). The American family was seen as a tool for patriotism and containment but a tool that was constantly failing and betraying its nationalistic possibilities. The American woman's body became a focal point for many of these fears and was coded monstrous, unpredictable, and abject, in need of control and regulation. The baby boom began in 1945, but women's reproductive choices were more and more rigidly controlled: abortion was regulated and prosecuted in the United States more than ever before starting in the 1940s, and the natural childbirth movement began in earnest in the 1940s as a reaction against the increasing medicalization of pregnancy and birth. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union was feminized in some of its American portrayals, depicted as a wayward woman in need of courting, domestication, and impregnation, adding another political dimension to some of the era's portrayals of female and feminized monsters and villains. American domestic or "housewife heroine" science fiction of the late 1940s and 1950s, by authors such as Judith Merrill, Kit Reed, Alice Eleanor Jones, and Wilmar H. Shiras, registered and often literalized cold war anxieties surrounding domesticity and reproduction. This paper examines such texts for what they reveal about cultural pressures on the American cold war family.

#### **55. (SF) Sex, Power, and Language in Samuel Delany and Ursula K. Le Guin**

*Oak*

Chair: Adam Guzkowski  
Trent University

#### **Monstrous Love Affairs and Grotesque Genders in Samuel Delany's Science Fiction**

Päivi Väättänen  
University of Helsinki

Monsters "ask us to reevaluate our cultural assumptions about race, gender, sexuality, our perception of difference, our tolerance toward its expression," notes Jeffrey J. Cohen (1996:20). This is especially true of Samuel Delany's science fiction, where monsters and aliens never conform to strictly policed identity categories or norms. In Delany's sf, love – or sex – is often an integral part of really understanding the alien. The aim of this paper is to present a cross-section of grotesque love affairs with the alien and the monstrous in Samuel Delany's science fiction, and demonstrate how his aliens promote tolerance toward difference. Cohen argues that monsters are frightful because of their ability to break down categories. Therefore, "the monster threatens to destroy not just individual members of a society, but the very cultural apparatus through which individuality is constituted and allowed." (Cohen 1996:12) Whether one sees that destruction as terrifying or desirable depends on one's attitude towards the very cultural apparatus. This paper concludes that when it comes to Delany's aliens, monstrosity is definitely in the eye of the beholder.



## **Abuse of Power: An Evolutionary Response within the Fiction of Ursula K. Le Guin**

Sandra Lindow

University of Wisconsin - Stout

Throughout her career, Ursula K. Le Guin has examined the nature of power and abuse. Central in many of her novels and short stories is a glaring abuse of power. More often than not this abuse is made possible by the political structure of the culture she has created. As in “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” one part of a society is used, enslaved, or disenfranchised, supposedly to improve the lives of others. Frequently, Le Guin structures her work so that an abuse of power--monstrous human behavior--provides inciting action and works as a primary organizational component of her dialectical thought experiments. For instance, *The Dispossessed* begins with a mob attempt to stone Shevek to death, and *Tehanu* begins with Therru, a child who has been raped, shoved into the fire and left for dead. More often than not, the formula involves an unempowered, perhaps young and inexperienced, or elderly and marginalized protagonist attempting to overcome or negotiate abuses of power in order to achieve a goal. To do this, the character must transcend personal uncertainty by entering a period of self-searching and darkness before the status quo can be challenged and the balance of power reset. Ultimately, Le Guin’s solution to abuse of power requires *communitas*: a united community spirit focused on community action for the common good. This paper looks at Le Guin’s evolving thought experiment on abuse. I begin with “An Die Musik” (1961), Le Guin’s first published short story which does not offer any clear solution to abuse but personal acceptance; I then examine *The Word for World is Forest* (1972) and *The Lathe of Heaven* (1973) where Le Guin creates a formula for community response to abuse that continues in her work until the present day.

## **Perverted Binaries: Language and Sexual Difference in Le Guin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness***

Douglas R. Fisher

Auburn University

In what is perhaps her most famous novel, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, Ursula Le Guin introduces the alien society of the planet Winter through the eyes of the Terran diplomat Genly Ai. Of the many cultural differences Genly navigates while on Winter, most prominent is the absence of sexual differentiation among the inhabitants of the planet, which prompts the inhabitants of Winter to perceive the permanent sexual differentiation of Terrans such as Genly as a “perversion.” A great deal of the criticism published to date on *The Left Hand of Darkness* focuses on the sociological and anthropological implications of Le Guin’s argument, paying particular attention to the fluidity of gender and the performance of sexuality. However, relatively little has been written on the problem of language in the novel. The major barrier both Genly and the inhabitants of Winter overcome in the novel is the problem of a language which does not admit easy description of the others’ sexual realities. In order to better understand the nature of the problem of language, and Le Guin’s implicit solution, in this paper I draw on Wittgenstein’s early theory of language as a function relating elements from the set of experience to the set of symbols.

## **56. (F/CYA) Death, Decay, and Depictions of the Monstrous**

Maple

Chair: Merja Polvinen

University of Helsinki

## **The Secret Garden at the Back of the North Wind: The Life and Death Journey in Frances Hodgson Burnett and George MacDonald**

John Pennington

St. Norbert College

In *Secret Gardens* Humphrey Carpenter writes that “George MacDonald’s influence seems to be present too” in Burnett’s *Secret Garden*, with Misselthwaite Manor echoing the gothic chambers in *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) and the secret key to the garden reflecting the lock and key instrumental in “The Golden Key” (1867). In fact, Carpenter claims that “Mrs. Burnett met MacDonald when he was on a lecture tour in the 1870s, and there is every likelihood that she knew his books.” Juliet Dusinberre, in *Alice to the Lighthouse*, argues that Burnett, in *The Secret Garden*, moved away from the “prolonged meditation of the dead child” depicted in the novel *In the Closed Room* (1904) to a new outlook: “The lugubrious Victorian death story has been transformed into a child’s celebration of living.” This transformation, Dusinberre contends, was influenced by Burnett’s reading of two central texts: Gaskell’s *North and South* (1885) and Molesworth’s *An Enchanted Garden* (1892). I would offer a third, one that may be even more influential, one that may have convinced Burnett that death is another form of living, worth celebrating. That text is MacDonald’s *At the Back of the North Wind*. My essay will explore the life-death journey of MacDonald’s *At the Back of the North Wind* and connect to the death-life journey of Burnett’s *Secret Garden*. In *the Garden* (1925) Burnett has a favorite refrain that encapsulates her desire to capture life in her novel about Mary, Colin, and Dickon: “As long as one has a garden one has a future; and as long as one has a future one is alive.” My contention is that Burnett has worked through the loss of her son, Lionel, to view his death as a form of continued life symbolized by the garden. *The Secret Garden* moves from death to life as we witness the physical growth not only of the garden but of Colin, who, rejoices: “I shall live forever and ever and ever! . . . I shall find out thousands and thousands of things. I shall find out about people and creatures and everything that grows . . . I shall never stop making Magic!” For MacDonald, this Magic may be found in the realm at the back of the north wind, a realm that is everlasting—it is the realm of death that offers, magically, more life. MacDonald’s journey in *North Wind* is a spiritual one and provides for Burnett the space to embrace, somewhat paradoxically, death as life. A central text I will examine is “A Far, Fair Country,” an unpublished story by Burnett that grappled with the death of her son. Burnett writes: “They think I died,” he cried. “They think so—and it is all over—and I have awakened here.” Compare this to the end of *North Wind*: “I walked up the winding stair, and entered his room. A lovely figure, as white and almost as clear as alabaster, was lying on the bed. I saw at once how it was. They thought he was dead. I knew that he had gone to the back of the north wind.” Furthermore, my essay will explore the importance of the fantasy impulse in MacDonald’s and Burnett’s exploration of death: fantasy provides the liminal space whereby death can be exposed and explored. At *the Back of the North Wind* flaunts its two-worldness (the realm of London and the realm at the back of the north wind) in a hybrid fairy-tale fantasy and realistic novel. *The Secret Garden*, while ostensibly realistic, needs the fantasy impulse to propel its narrative of death, while the realistic impulse backs away from death to lead to healing and renewal.

### **“We are the Barbarians Now”: M. John Harrison’s Viriconium Novels, Post-Imperial Fantasy, and the Aesthetics of Decay**

Matthew Oliver  
Campbellsville University

Although genre fantasy has often been criticized for being ahistorical, nostalgic, and reactionary, the development of fantasy in the twentieth century is linked to decolonization and modern and postmodern critiques of the imperial past (and present). Much heroic quest fantasy is preoccupied with empires, both good and evil, and adventuring in exotic lands. While some of these stories uncritically accept the tropes of imperial romance, many writers use fantasy formulae to question the ethics of empire-building in concrete socio-political terms with magic serving as a metaphor for the exercise of power. Such imaginary locales as Steven Erikson’s Malazan Empire, Alan Campbell’s Deepgate, and China Miéville’s New Crobuzon represent varied levels of post-colonial critique of the ideological apparatuses of empire. However, a number of these writers have acknowledged an influence too often ignored by critics, M. John Harrison and his Viriconium novels. Harrison’s influence reveals a strand of what Paul Gilroy calls “post-imperial melancholy” within the fantastic critique of empire. Gilroy has argued that since the collapse of the British Empire, a significant conflict has arisen in British society between nostalgic attempts to revitalize the nation through a return to the imperial past and melancholic self-punishment for past crimes. Harrison’s Viriconium novels position themselves in this debate by representing imperialistic exercises of power as something that makes one monstrous and grotesque. Harrison’s protagonists opt for aesthetic melancholy as a productive political choice, a counter to more violent attempts to revitalize society. Over the course of the novels, Harrison replaces fantasy adventure with what I call the aesthetics of decay—a melancholy pleasure in the beauty of social decline, which is presented as a more ethical alternative than violent exercises of power. Heroism itself decays over the course of the series, from the comparatively straightforward quest fantasy of *The Pastel City* to the satirical “quest” in *In Viriconium* to the fragmentation in the stories of *Viriconium Nights*. Harrison deconstructs imperialistic tropes of quest fantasy, suggesting it is often the heroes who are the real monsters. While the Viriconium novels are not simple nostalgia, they seem content to remain in melancholy, as though taking pleasure in one’s own decline is the only viable alternative to a violent reassertion of power. It would fall to later works to offer more positive alternatives.

### **“What ever it is we dont come naturel to it”: Russell Hoban and the Monstrousness at the Heart of Existence**

Graeme Wend-Walker  
Texas State University-San Marcos

Monstrousness in Russell Hoban’s writing is invariably chthonic, ancient, subterranean. It arises at once from the underworld of mythology and from the shadows of the unconscious mind; as Hoban’s protagonists brave the caverns of their inner selves, their journeys often repeat or revise those of classical forebears, such as Orpheus. The triumphs of these would-be heroes are always highly qualified, for in Hoban’s world the monstrous can never really be vanquished: one can but make some form of peace with it. In his novel *The Medusa Frequency*, the monster is the Kraken: a terror at the center of all being, an original nightmare out of which consciousness itself arose but which remains forever alien to it, begging not even to be thought of by human minds. In *Riddley Walker* we find it “looking out thru our eye hoals” in terror of its own being, unable to fit itself to the human forms it must inhabit: “Tremmering it is and feart. [...] What ever it is we dont come naturel to it.” In *Turtle Diary*, it is in the pitilessness of the eyes of gulls, which “have no pity even for the bird they’re part of.” It is a “terrible lurking thing in existence” that men are compelled to seek out and to “hurl themselves upon [...] like Ahab and the White Whale”—or else to conjure up, like the vampire lesbian cowgirls produced in the laboratories of *Linger Awhile*. This paper explores Hoban’s depiction of the monstrous fantastic and the journeys of his heroes through both Kristevan and Jungian lenses, while exploring also the influence of H.P. Lovecraft on Hoban’s sense of a monstrousness that is both elemental and essential to being.

## **57. (FTV) Colonized Bodies**

Cypress

Chair: Sherryl Vint  
Brock University

### **"Don't give him no sass or he'll kick yo' ass": Anti-Imperialism and Race in US Countercultural SF Cinema**

Mark Bould  
University of West England

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed the transition from imperialism to Empire (Hardt and Negri 2000). In this context, postwar British sf films can be understood in terms of post-imperial melancholy, articulating national anxieties about the loss of empire, immigration, changing gender roles, the erosion of class hierarchies and a decreasing role in world affairs. The US, however, has not typically perceived itself as an imperial power (despite the Monroe doctrine’s claim to US hegemony over the Americas, numerous overseas military ventures and examples of imperialism without colonies). How, then, did US sf films refract this transition? Ann McClintock (1995) argues imperialism profoundly shapes not just international relations but also domestic structures, practices and texts. This paper will focus on countercultural sf films of the 1960s and 1970s, briefly drawing attention to the few that are overtly imperialist (e.g., *Mr Freedom* (1969), *Punishment Park* (1971), *The Crazies* (1973), *Piranha* (1978)). Building on my earlier work on radical black sf and black power sf (Bould 2007, 2010), this paper will then consider the ways in which anti-imperialist politics and sentiments are articulated in sf addressing civil rights and black power: *Change of Mind* (1969), *The Watermelon Man* (1970), *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* (1972), *The Thing with Two Heads* (1972), *Blackenstein* (1973), *The Spook Who Sat by the Door* (1973), *Space is the Place* (1974), *Dr Black and Mr Hyde* (1976) and *Born in Flames* (1983).

### Disappearing Natives: The Colonized Body is Monstrous

Andrea Hairston  
Smith College

In this paper, I investigate the monstrous post-humanity offered up for our entertainment in films such as *Source Code*. I am haunted by the image of the blasted body of a once handsome white male soldier encased in/attached to an iron-lung-like black box. The body is a legless torso with stubs for arms and an injured skull, the barely living remains of a helicopter pilot shot down in the Afghanistan war. A tangle of wires feed in and out of this body, providing breath and sustenance, but also offering access to other bodies in parallel universes, where other (alternate?) realities play out. The soldier lives in/with the machines, but has not chosen this cyborg existence. Nor is the soldier's shattered being (the life of his mind/body) under his control. He is the unwilling servant/slave of cool, dispassionate military/scientist/spies—techno-wizards, exemplary citizens of empire. Citizens of empire are notorious for their lack of empathy with the colonized. The *war on terror* is the techno-wizards' justification for exploiting the soldier. After all, didn't he almost die for this very cause in Afghanistan? What remains of the soldier's mind/body/life is still an asset of the empire. The soldier's mission is to find a terrorist who could bring the techno-wizards' precarious empire to a stuttering halt with a dirty nuclear bomb. Again and again, the protagonist-body, the person, the decorated, severely wounded white male soldier must ride a train about to blow up. He must live the explosion-death of another body—in order to save "us" from horror and devastation. This save-the-world-adventure with a monstrous twist comes from the fiction film, *Source Code*. Captain Colter Stevens (Jake Gyllenhaal) is someone the audience knows intimately for 93 minutes. Stevens' pain, joy, exploitation, triumph fill the theatre of our mind/bodies. The techno-wizards torturing him, like the terrorist, lack this bodily empathy (at least initially). Watching *Source Code* and other SF films such as *Moon* and even *The Adjustment Bureau*, I am struck by the angst of the straight white male characters who should benefit from the current set-up, who should, with intelligence, physical beauty, heterosexuality, and economic access, be basking in deep privilege as the premier subjects of 21<sup>st</sup> century societies. Instead, these characters are ruthlessly exploited, by cold, distant, military industrialists. Techno-wizards (or, in the case of *Adjustment Bureau*, grey-suited "Angel" figures acting like corporate operatives) colonize the heroes for profit, technical/strategic advantage, or the so-called greater good. In *Moon* and *Source Code*, the heroes' colonized bodies are monstrous.

### "Gangsta Monstas": Hollywood's Ghoulish Imaginings of Caribbean Gangsters

Andrea Shaw  
Nova Southeastern University

Fantasy films merge disparate entities: the unreal and the real, the intangible and the tangible, the past and the present. The resulting dissonance signals a tension between real and imagined existences, and numerous contemporary readings of this dissonance suggest that fictional spectral presences are markers of marginalized histories or unspeakable national traumas. However, this approach presumes that the cultural artifact has been created within the marginalized community. When these stories are told about the Caribbean, specifically from the gaze of Hollywood filmmakers, what do these ghoulish imaginings suggest? My presentation contemplates Hollywood's portrayal of Caribbean "Gangsta Monstas," the fantastical ghouls that people crime thrillers such as *007 Live and Let Die*, *Predator II*, and *Marked for Death*. My presentation pursues and interrogates those ways in which Caribbean "monsters" are framed by the movie camera and what those framing strategies seem to suggest about the region and its inhabitants.

### 58. (FTV/H) The Thing Is ... Barker, Craven, Carpenter, and Watts

*Palm*

Chair: Michael Arnszen  
Seton Hill University

### The Thing Is .... Carpenter's and Watts's Vision of the Fantastically Monstrous

Dominick Grace  
Brescia University College

"I don't know what's in there, but it's weird and pissed off, whatever it is," Clarke says of the thing in the dog kennel in John Carpenter's *The Thing*, in one of the best-known quotations from the film. The quotation focuses attention on a key feature of the film, reclaimed from John W. Campbell's original "Who Goes There?" from 1938 but absent from *The Thing from Another World* in 1951: the thing is amorphous. This formlessness serves as the basis of the profound paranoia in Carpenter's film: because the thing can mimic anybody, the idea of coherent and knowable identity is undermined, and everyone becomes monstrous *in potentia*. However, the thing is not only able to become invisible in perfect imitation of friends and colleagues, but also able to assume the most radical conceivable alternate forms, as bits and pieces of transformed people and animals (e.g. the notorious spider-head). Its monstrosity, therefore, is dual, a function both of its profound familiarity and its profound otherness. In 2010, Peter Watts published "The Things," which he describes as an "unabashed piece of fan-fic," ("I Shared My Flesh with Thinking Cancer"), offering his own mashup in a venue itself occupying the liminal space between professional and amateur work. Watts's take falls outside the parameters of authorized adaptation and in the more complex territory of fan production. Indeed, such adaptations are as often as not re-readings, converting (some might argue perverting) the original work into something fundamentally alien. Campbell's original version privileges the human—and a specific humanity, demonstrated by the "superiority of masculinity, of scientific rationality" (Vint 422). Watts, by contrast, inverts the earlier versions in several ways, notably by shifting the narrative point of view from the human to the alien ("The Things" of his title are the humans). He selects elements from his source material and rearranges them to tell a story that forces a fundamental reconsideration of that material, in terms that replace the Campbellian or Carpenterean perspective with the Wattsonian. The monstrous becomes, in the Watts version, not the amorphous other but rather the unchanging and unchangeable human. This paper will compare and contrast Watts's story and Carpenter's movie (with some reference to Campbell's story) to explicate their contrasting theses about the nature of the fantastically monstrous.

### **Never Sleep Again: Resurrecting the Fantastic Beast in *A Nightmare on Elm Street***

Joseph L. Lewis

Delta College

"Never Sleep Again" employs Joseph D. Andriano's explication on the tropological revision of the monster to analyze the representational boundaries of Freddy Krueger in New Line Cinema's *A Nightmare on Elm Street* franchise. Andriano makes a distinction between metaphor and metonymy to analyze the monster. As a metaphor, the monster is a representation of a human characteristic in which the human obtains bestial characteristics; inasmuch, this bestial human experiences a transformation from the human to the monster and in some cases, from the monster to a human. As a metonym, the monster is represented in juxtaposition to the human. In this case, the monster ironically becomes a cultural signifier for the culture in which he terrorizes partially due to the fact his transformation is a result of a secret from an unspeakable past. As a metaphor, Krueger is demarcated as the Other prior to and post his violent and horrific transformation from human to beast. In this case, his transformation into the beast is both actual and symbolic. As a metonym, he is represented in juxtaposition to the human. Here, Krueger's image signifies the dark id of the human collective consciousness.

### **Embracing the Tribes of the Moon and the Order of the Gash: The Possibility of (Meta)cultural Identities in Clive Barker's *Hellraiser* and *Nightbreed***

Tony M. Vinci

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

The cultural trajectory of the horror film in the 1980s shares an unfortunate history with the European fairy tale. Through its intensely graphic and visceral depictions of murder, dismemberment, and supernatural violence, 1980s horror cinema embodies a host of working-class anxieties regarding the effects of living in a post-industrial, postmodern milieu engulfed in the nebulous and dehumanizing workings of late capitalism. Yet, because of these graphic aesthetics, middle and upper class critics and scholars coded them as immature, violent, and artistically crude. As Zipes says of the Fairy Tale, "the bourgeois establishment had to make it seem that the fairy tales were immoral, trivial, useless and harmful if an affirmative culture of commodity values supportive of elite interests were to take root in the public sphere" (17). Thus, the horror film's cultural capital was reduced and their artistic import nullified by their position as mindless, violent entertainment of the ignorant masses. However, through persistently radical depictions of post-human bodies, revolutionary action, "deviant" sexual expressions, alternative psychological and metaphysical possibilities, much horror film of the 1980s works to create sites of critical engagement wherein both cultural critique and a constitution of what I term (meta)cultural identity is explored and asserted. By (meta)cultural identity, I refer to a mode of subjective identity formulated in hopes of recognizing the legitimacy of acculturated identity while simultaneously transcending acculturation. It is not either/or; it is both/and: cultural identity and metacultural identity, which creates a third, liminal space for one to live within and without culture. (Hence my use of brackets around "meta" in [meta]cultural.) This (meta)cultural reconfiguration is perhaps expressed most forcefully in the cinematic production of Clive Barker: *Hellraiser* (1987) and *Nightbreed* (1990).

### **59. (VPA) Monstrous Nature**

*Magnolia*

Chair: Jen Schiller

Montclair State University

### **Magnificent Monster Gardens**

Cris Hassold

New College of Florida

This paper considers three gardens – the Sacred Grove or Monster Garden at Bomarzo created by the Count Pier Francesco Orsini in 1552, in memory of his wife Giulia Farnese, the Tarot Garden created by Niki de Saint-Phalle, again in Italy but produced in the twentieth century, and one by Leslie Fry and her father, John, for the Boca Ciega Park in Seminole, Florida – to consider the monstrosity of their hybrid forms.

### **The Profane Amongst the Holy: The Strange Imagery of the Green Man, the Wodewose and the Sheela-na-Gig in Medieval Churches of the British Isles**

Robert Faleer

Central Michigan University

This proposed paper will explore the purpose and meaning of the *wodewose* and the *sheela-na-gig* to show how they ultimately served the religious agenda of the medieval Church. The paper will focus on carvings found inside and occasionally outside medieval parish, collegiate, monastic and cathedral churches throughout the British Isles.

### **What Is That Thing?: The Grotesque Beasts of H.G. Wells and Patricia Piccinini**

Nancy Hightower

University of Colorado, Boulder

This paper considers the ways that Australian artist Patricia Piccinini continues and deepens the discourse Wells started by creating uncanny monsters which elicit the full range of emotional juxtapositions the grotesque promises: fear, pity, wonder, laughter, terror, and even love.

## 60. (H/IF) Ancient and Medieval Monsters

Dogwood

Chair: Franc Auld

University of Baraboo/Sauk County

### Absenting Narratives in the Werewolf Tale of *Melion*

Ryan Brown

University of Alabama at Huntsville

In the thirteenth-century Old French Breton Lai, *Melion*, the title character one day shows his wife that he can transform into a werewolf with the help of stones housed in a ring he wears. When he then transforms into a wolf to prey upon a stag whose meat his wife desires, she quickly takes the ring and departs for her homeland in Ireland, leaving Melion permanently canine. The narrator claims at this point, “Now she had what she required” (200). What does this line mean for our interpreting the poem and the werewolf’s role, not merely in this text but in numerous medieval werewolf tales? Giorgio Agamben identifies the transformation into a werewolf as the subject’s crossing into a zone of indistinction, wherein he may be killed with impunity but not sacrificed like the *homo sacer*. But the narrator’s telling us that Melion’s wife “had what she required” calls into question the power, or, rather, powerlessness, that Melion’s plight as the hunted wolf assumes. Is it he that we should feel sorry for? I will suggest that this paradoxical line points to an absent narrative in *Melion*, one in which we might have learned the wife’s motivations for beguiling her lycanthropic husband. Such a reading implicates the narrator as well in what might be heard as a misogynistic voice, absenting a narrative that might have justified the wife’s actions. My reading will recast Melion’s shape-shifting as the machinations of sovereign power, and his later alignment with Arthur himself, on an imperial mission to Ireland, only further implicates the werewolf not as the figure of *homo sacer* but as the sovereign himself. The other female voices, those that collectively claim to hate the wolf-knight, further point to this absent narrative putting pressure on Melion’s strange vow to love only a wife who has never thought of another man besides him, a pure and, thus, sacred wife. This kind of reading complicates gendered voices in the Breton Lais, which often assume a misogynistic tone and yet whose most famous proprietor, Marie de France, was decidedly female.

### Snakes on a Plain: Monsters and Art Horror in Lucan’s *Civil War*

James Lohmar

University of Florida

This paper argues that Lucan’s *Civil War* can be regarded as a work of proto-horror featuring monstrous and grotesque elements. In the poem’s ninth book, the author unleashes a cadre of supernatural snakes upon the wearied Cato and his Republican troops. I examine Lucan’s virtuoso technique in this scene and highlight Roman anxieties concerning violence in art and mimetic carnage. Critics of art horror often cite Aristotle’s prescription that tragedy inspires ‘pity and fear’ in one’s audience, and Lucan understands this precept (cf. Carroll 1990, Freeland 2000 and Worland 2007). Yet, Lucan further understands Aristotelian aesthetics, which prefer literary works constructed like well-proportioned animal bodies (*soma*). For Lucan, Aristotle’s *soma*-text equates to the Latin *corpus* (‘body of work’). When the *Prester* serpent causes Nasidius’ *corpus* to expand into a body ‘exceeding human size’ (BC 9.789-804), he offends and explodes Aristotelian anatomy in order to horrify his reader. Likewise, the *Haemorrhoids* induces Tullus to bleed from his eyes, ears and pores (BC 9.805-14). Poor Sabellus’ body turns inside-out and melts into a pool of *viscera* and venom (BC 9.762-88). Worland, *qua* film critic, redeems such art horror succinctly: “outrageous violence is on display, no mistake; but so is formal control.” Lucan’s formal control – his deployment of poetic devices and rhetorical flourish – betrays his ballistic approach to literary composition and aesthetics. Readers variously describe his *outré* interests: ‘nervous laughter’ (Bartsch 1997), ‘dark humor’ (Martindale 1993), and ‘comic ugly’ (Johnson 1987). Through humorous asides and macabre scenery, Lucan points up the horror and absurdity of civil war. His violence expresses an assault on the aesthetics of his age, a detonation of the inherited literary tradition. This paper builds on a body of scholarship that privileges aesthetic judgments in literary criticism. The ancient and modern *corpus* metaphors elide into a linguistic determinative for aesthetic response. If other epics construct the body of literature, Lucan’s places that *corpus* under siege, makes it the target of aestheticized violence. Like his prophetic zombie corpse in Thessaly, Lucan’s battered poetic *corpus* proclaims the hellish work of civil war.

### In Myself, a Monster: A Critical Reading of Monstrous Bodies and the Implications of Monsters and Contrapasso in Dante’s *Inferno*

Megan Mandell

Florida Atlantic University

Recent scholarship debates the use of Dante’s classical monsters and their allegorical and symbolic presence, many times referencing parallels of meaning derived from their placements in the original text. Geryon, Cerberus, even Satan himself has come to be seen as a representative construct of Dante’s Classical discourse. This paper intends to progress beyond the allusion, indeed beyond the theology of the Monsters who lead us through *Inferno*, and focus rather on the bodies of the shades in their monstrous contortions. The paper examines Dante’s use of Classical monsters as mirrored reflections of the human condition, debased and dehumanized, each a contrapasso engendered to reflect the lack of humanity present when God’s Grace is absent. As the Classical monsters suggest the separation of soul and intellect from their proper nature in the way their own bodies are deconstructed, so Dante suggests that the shades, whose bodies are in various states of deformity, are suffering a secondary contrapasso to the active punishment – that their own “monstrous” bodies are appropriated according to their sins. Dante’s idea is that the body is the projection of the true self; this is why shades have no technical substance, but can still feel torturous pain. Once the shades have been relegated to their significant space in *Inferno*, the making of their bodies into something “other” than Human allows for their separation from the human population and their transcendence into monstrous territory. The bodies, then, are reflective of the defects in their souls. The punishment is that they identify with the monsters rather than with the qualities of being human, as evidenced by their responses to the Pilgrim’s body and the treatment of their own.

## 61. (CYA) The Monster in Classic Children's Books

Captiva A

Chair: Kristina Lareau  
Simmons College

### The Faceless Monster

Pam Walsh  
Independent Scholar

The concept of the monster as it appears in works of science fiction and fantasy is intimately connected with physical appearance. Just as human identity is so often linked to form, the form of the monster can be the source of its capacity to inspire fear. In some cases, visual depictions of the monstrous portray appearances which are perceived to be ugly, disfigured, or terrifying. In fact, the definition of the word monstrous refers specifically to something which is hideous in appearance, immense in size, and revolting to the beholder. These monsters prey upon our fear of the unknown because we do not recognize and empathize with their features, and we perceive them to be perversions of our own selves. In other cases, the monstrous comes as a twisted form of beauty, embodying temptation and playing with themes of sexuality and desire. Certain monsters, however, appear in literature with no form at all. Such is the case with the mysterious being IT in Madeline L'Engle's *A Wrinkle In Time*. IT is a formless mind, with no defining features or characteristics, yet able to control the entire planet Camazotz through powerful telepathic forces. Under the influence of IT, the inhabitants of Camazotz have succumbed to absolute conformity. Their very actions occur in rhythm with IT and they display no outward freedom or desires. This utter loss of individuality serves to illustrate precisely what is terrifying about IT: the capacity to deprive people of their own free will and hence their very identity, rendering them in many ways as faceless as the monster. This paper aims to explore how the link between physical form and identity is presented in L'Engle's work, and how the faceless monster exemplifies a fear not of an external evil, but from our own fundamental fear of losing our selves.

### Marks of the Beast: Fragmented Monstrosity in *Narnia* and *Harry Potter*

Maria Sachiko Cecire  
Bard College

In his 'monster theory,' Jeffrey Jerome Cohen refers to the monster as 'difference made flesh, come to dwell among us.' Visions of this otherness incarnate are often impressionistic and incomplete, and Cohen admits that monster theory 'must content itself with fragments (footprints, bones, talismans, teeth, shadows, obscured glimpses— signifiers of monstrous passing that stand in for the monstrous body itself).' Grendel's arm hanging over Heorot in *Beowulf*— then later, his head— stand in for the whole monster. The monster, 'kin of Cain,' in turn represents the broad and complex challenge that the inhuman 'enemies of mankind,' the 'enemies of the one God,' pose to people. This divide transmits not only Christian sentiments but also a stark worldview in which physical difference encodes the moral hierarchies that govern high fantasy. This worldview allows that enemies of God may also be (at least nominally) people, as with the Saracen foes of medieval crusade romance. Drawing upon my research into the influence of medieval literature on British children's fantasy, this paper explores the fragmented representations of monstrous humanity in C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* and J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. It focuses on the gaps in the line between the knowable "us" and the irreconcilable "them," and argues that both Christian and secular images of monstrosity in these works rely upon a certain proximity. The texts take advantage of the genre's potential for the fantastical, but monstrosity and evil never stray far from the familiar. As Cohen reminds us, 'fear of the monster is really a kind of desire.' The sensual, heretical Orient in Lewis's fantasy functions as '[t]he monster [that] awakens one to the pleasures of the body.' Meanwhile the diffuseness of evil in the latter *Harry Potter* books offers a modern-day approach to the "inhuman" potential for monstrosity that underlies everyday life.

### Binding and Unbinding Female Monsters: Lilith and Eve in *The Chronicles of Narnia*

Jennifer Taylor  
Hollins University

Elizabeth Gillhouse's insightful article, "'Eve was Framed': Ideostory and (Mis)representation in Judeo-Christian Stories" explains how Eden narratives influence society's treatment of women. Her work links Christian tradition to both oppression and a struggle for freedom through story. Surprisingly, she does not discuss *The Chronicles of Narnia* though they contain multiple fractured Eden narratives. Heroines in the story are Daughters of Eve and heroes are Sons of Adam. Two major villains in the story, the White Witch and the Green Lady, play the part of Satan, with one of them tempting a boy with a stolen apple from Aslan's garden. Interestingly, these villainesses play their parts not as fallen angels, but as monsters. Elizabeth Rose Gruner's work, "Wrestling with Religion: Pullman, Pratchett, and the Uses of Story," discusses how heroines break paradigms set out for them in religious narratives. Once again, Gruner leaves out *The Chronicles of Narnia*. My essay will discuss how Eve and Lilith characters either conform to narrative paradigms in biblical and literary tradition or resist them. For example, I will discuss the roles of Satan as villain or hero of the Eden story as he appears in works such as *Paradise Lost* and *Prometheus Unbound* and how the Witches conform to or deviate from common patterns. I am particularly interested in the link between their Satanic role in *The Chronicles* and their identification with monsters such as giants, the Lilith and the Lamia. Does Lewis trap these females into a particular narrative role? Or does he expand the scope of Satan figures in literature? I will also contrast the Witches' role with that of Daughters of Eve. Is there a battle between passive angel-women and active monster-women? Is Eve temptress, fool, or neither? Is agency treated as monstrous, natural, or both?

Because C. S. Lewis became a Christian apologist, many assume he has no quarrel with tradition, including attitudes towards women. As a consequence, his work as a satirist has largely been overlooked. I plan to demonstrate that in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, archetypal figures of Eve and Lilith challenge traditional Christian assumptions concerning the nature and role of women.

## 62. (F) The Works of Tolkien

Captiva B

Chair: W. A. Senior  
Broward College

### Of Spiders and Elves

Joyce Tally Lionarons  
Ursinus College

In J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Two Towers*, the ent Treebeard tells Merry and Pippin that orcs were made by Sauron in mockery of elves and trolls in mockery of ents. A closer look at Tolkien's novels, however, would indicate that the evil race corresponding to the elves is not the orcs, but rather the giant spiders who inhabit the parts of Mirkwood that border the land of the wood-elves, and whose progenitor lurks in Cirith Ungol on the borders of Mordor. Although several scholars (notably Anne C. Petty and Peter Goselin; see bibliography) have noted and explored the binary relationship between Galadriel, queen of the elves in Lothlorien, and Shelob, mother of the spiders, none have developed their arguments to deal with the elven and arachnid races as a whole. This paper will examine Tolkien's complex web of correspondences between elves and spiders in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* to show that these associative characteristics underlie his construction of the feminine and sexuality in both books, and that they in turn prepare for and make possible the crowning obverse of Tolkien's two archetypes of femininity, Galadriel and Shelob.

### The Ring as Protagonist: The Instigating Power of the Ring in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*

Matthew DeAngelis  
College of Charleston

This paper discusses the narrative qualities of Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, focusing on Bilbo's heroic journey. I attempt to dissuade this point as the primary theme of *The Hobbit*, arguing instead for the Ring to be the primary protagonist of the story. The paper compares scenes before and after the Ring's finding, analyzing Bilbo's actions. Also, the chapter "Riddles in the Dark" is examined in great detail as to Tolkien's views of power as a detractor to society. The essay sums up by taking a deeper look at the Battle of Five Armies, revealing Bilbo to potentially working for evil without even knowing it, indicating the Ring's treacherous intentions rather than shrouding Bilbo in glory. The final point is how the because of the blatant power of the Ring in *The Hobbit*, the metafictional element of the narrative can be questioned. As Tolkien revised the early edition of *The Hobbit*, so too did he claim Bilbo's version to have been corrupted by the Ring, particularly the treating of Gollum. With this interpretation it is possible that *The Hobbit* is a novel wrought by and of the Ring. While accepting Bilbo to be a hero, the paper takes issue with the emphasis of a number of previous critics. While Bilbo is the hero, he can only complete his journey with the Ring. Tom Shippey even calls the Ring a 'trinket' which is a major disservice to the object, which truly takes on vital importance to the narrative both in garnering Bilbo respect, as well as establishing a hero.

### Tolkien's "Great Saga": A "Long Defeat" without a "Final Victory"

Elizabeth Whittingham  
The College at Brockport - SUNY

Although the tale of Beren and Lúthien has received much attention and is closely associated with Tolkien's own life, the tales about Húrin and his children came to be the author's "Great Saga" (*Jewels* 1994, x). Christopher's description of his father's writing process in regards to this tale is true of most of his stories about Middle-earth: "the story grew and changed as he wrote . . ." (*Jewels* 1994, 260). The tale of Túrin Turambar, which involves all the members of his family and their individual deeds and experiences, is a good example of the evolution of many of Tolkien's works over nearly six decades of writing and revision. In *Turambar and the Foalókë* from *The Book of Lost Tales II*, Tolkien uses many names that appear in different forms in later versions as his stories and languages evolve: The tale is told by Eltas in the framework of the storytelling of the first two volumes, and some elements of the later versions are missing. A few elements of the tale apparently exist from the beginning, but one of the most unusual aspects of this early version is in the final paragraph, which explains that Úrin and Mavwin intercede for their children and the "Gods had mercy on their unhappy fate": "those twain Túrin and Nienóri entered into Fôs'Almir, the bath of flame . . . and so were all their sorrows and stains washed away" (*Lost Tales II* 1984, 115-16). Not only are they purified, but the text also states, "they dwelt as shining Valar among the blessed ones . . ." (*Lost Tales II* 1984, 116). The idea of two humans living as Valar is unbelievable and inconsistent with the metaphysics of Middle-earth, so it is not surprising that it disappears from the tale in the very next telling. Also averred in the tale's last paragraph is Túrin's role in what is later referred to as the Last Battle: "Turambar indeed shall stand beside Fionwë in the Great Wrack, and Melko and his drakes shall curse the sword of Mormakil" (*Lost Tales II* 1984, 116). Some version of this final role for Túrin survives until the late 1950s. The next version of the story is in verse form. Although Tolkien wrote many poems about Middle-earth, only the tales of Túrin Turambar and of Beren and Lúthien are developed into lengthy works, which are contained in *The Lays of Beleriand*, volume three of the History of Middle-earth. As a scholar of medieval literature, Tolkien had a special appreciation for alliterative verse and chose that form to relate the earliest elements of Túrin's tale. The poem begins with the capture of Húrin and only in this work is the conversation between Húrin and Melko/Morgoth recounted in any detail, a powerful moment. The two versions of the poem cover little of the story, and the poems break off before the appearance of the dragon, the events involving Níniel, and the tale's tragic ending. The early 1930's *Quenta Noldorinwa*, from *The Shaping of Middle-earth*, is only about a third as long as *Turambar and the Foalókë*. In this later text, Mîm the Dwarf appears, though his role is quite limited in comparison to its final form in the 1977 *Silmarillion*. The *Quenta Silmarillion* from the late 1930s, the last version of the *Silmarillion* before Tolkien set it aside to work on *The Lord of the Rings*, breaks off at the point at which Túrin flees from Menegroth and becomes an outlaw, and many tales from the end of the First Age are omitted. The final section picks up with Eärendel's appeal to the Valar, the subsequent battle against Morgoth at the end of the First Age, and the prophecy concerning the Last Battle at the End of Days, which still mentions Túrin's triumphant return and places Túrin "among the sons of the Valar" (*Lost Road* 1987, 333). Tolkien picks up the story again in the early 1950s in *The Grey Annals*, but more significantly, in *The War of the Jewels*, the story of Húrin and Túrin develops further and more fully in *The Wanderings of Húrin* and in *Ælwin and Dirhaval*. *The Tale of Years* also changes and adds to some aspects of the story. Túrin's tale

takes a long time to evolve into the form found in *The Silmarillion*, and being able to examine this evolution step-by-step and in detail is among the great benefits of the History of Middle-earth. One of the changes evident is the evolution from the fanciful to the moral. It is not surprising that Tolkien eliminates such strange ideas as the purifying fire, Fô's Almir, which cleanses Túrin Turambar and his sister Nienor of their incestuous sin, and as the deification of the two mortals since Tolkien also deletes other astonishing ideas found in early texts. In Túrin's tale, as with the *Valaquenta*, Tolkien seems to minimize the mythological, removing the pagan and fanciful. Even Túrin's victory against Morgoth in the Last Battle, by which "the children of Húrin and all Men [will] be avenged" (*Lost Road* 1987, 333), disappears from the published *Silmarillion*—along with the entire prophecy of Mandos—and there is no vengeance for Húrin's family or mankind as a whole. The absence of these elements seems to increase the darkness of the tale and is consistent with Tolkien's statement: "I do not expect 'history' to be anything but a 'long defeat'—though it contains . . . some samples or glimpses of final victory" (*Letters* 1981, 255). Additionally, these changes seem to underscore the pervasiveness of evil, which Tolkien clearly demonstrates is woven into the very fabric of the created world since, as is told in the *Ainulindalë*, Melkor/Morgoth participated in creation. No tale of Middle-earth is as dark as that of Túrin Turambar and his family, a tale from which, in its final form, all glimmer of hope has been extinguished.

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**Friday, March 23, 2012 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

#### **66. (SF) New Wave Science Fiction**

Pine

Chair: Jennifer Cox  
Florida Atlantic University

#### **Life at the Top: Residential Segmentation and Class Division in Ballard's *High Rise* and Silverberg's *The World Inside***

Jeff Hicks  
UC Riverside

As SF scholar Rob Latham has suggested, by the end of the 1960s the utopian promise suggested in Le Corbusier's 1930s architectural project the "Ville Radieuse" had begun to come under heavy criticism by SF's New Wave authors. The idea that centralized living and work spaces could create a classless, tightly-knit community seemed out of touch with the urban realities of the 60s and 70s. Specifically, the image of the tall, free-standing apartment complex had become less associated with a community of equals than with the separation of a specific class of residents from the outside world. My paper aims to show the connection between the isolated, self-contained living spaces depicted in J.G. Ballard's *High-Rise* (1975) and Robert Silverberg's *The World Inside* (1971), and the residential segmentation and class segregation found in the urban realities of the late 1960s to mid-1970s.

#### **Impure Children and the Mothers That Keep Them: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Judith Merrill's "That Only a Mother"**

Connor Boyle  
Florida Atlantic University

My paper offers a close reading of Judith Merrill's "That Only a Mother" as an atomic age *Scarlet Letter* tale, where the Puritan desire for moral purity is replaced with post World War II America's desire for genetic purity. Both Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Judith Merrill's "That Only a Mother" acknowledge that the "ideal mother" is a social construction, and that it is often the real love of a mother that prevents her from achieving this ideal. In Hawthorne's 17<sup>th</sup>-century New England, the village elders offer to adopt Pearl in order to properly socialize her and save the young girl's soul. In Merrill's scientific America, the antidote for impurity is much more severe. My comparison will demonstrate how expectations placed on the "good citizen" often conflict with mothers' rights in both religious and scientific societies. The characterizations of the "protector" mother and the "socially minded" father in American fiction will also be explored.

#### **Before *Stand on Zanzibar*: John Brunner's Early Fiction**

Jad Smith  
Eastern Illinois University

Editor Donald A. Wollheim regarded Brunner's early fiction as key to understanding his approach and once expressed regret that, for whatever reason, it tended to pass beneath critical notice (qtd. in De Bolt 19). Brunner himself frequently discussed *The Squares of the City* and *The Whole Man* as conscious experiments in craft conducted during his early career, and also once described his Ace novels as "dry-runs for the later and more substantial books," adding "I set about this quite deliberately" (12). Nonetheless, *Stand on Zanzibar* is often viewed as a lightning-strike moment without precedent in his early fiction. Through reconsideration of stories and novels such as "Fair" and *The 100<sup>th</sup> Millennium*, and attention to Brunner's own published comments about the craft in various prozines and fanzines, my paper examines the long-gestating approach that led to *Stand on Zanzibar* and other notable fiction of Brunner's mid-career.



## 67. (SF) Imperial and Postcolonial Imaginings in Science Fiction

Oak

Chair: Catherine Siemann  
Cooper Union

### The Windigo in SF Contact Narrative

Grace L. Dillon  
Portland State University

From Stephen King's novel *Pet Semetary* (1984) to Eden Robinson's "Dogs in Winter" (1999); from Antonia Bird's film *Ravenous* (1999) to Grant Harvey's *Ginger Snaps Back: The Beginning* (2004) and Larry Fessenden's *The Last Winter* (2006), Windigo has become a familiar horror trope in both literature and cinema. However, little has been written about its presence in sf, where combined interests in (post)colonial theory and post-apocalyptic settings are incorporating Windigo as a metaphor of imperialism and conquest. Stephen Graham Jones' *The Fast Red Road: A Plainsong* (2000) and *All the Beautiful Sinners* (2003), Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* (2005), Joss Whedon's *Firefly* (2002), and other sf offerings use Windigo allegorically to examine the sociopolitical tensions of contact between Euro-western imperialism and Indigenous culture. A metaphor of "colonialism as cannibalism," the Windigo trope can alternatively represent Euro-Western consumption of Indigenous peoples, lands, and resources or judgment and justice, or revenge, upon colonizers for their greed and brutality. Characters suffering possession by the Windigo might represent either the colonizer or the colonized, as both the role of imperialist conqueror and of victim reflect states of excess and imbalance. This metaphor is consistent with the Algonquian identification of the Windigo as the personification of excess, greed, and gluttony (Johnston, *Ojibway Heritage* 66).

### The Technology of Consent: American Technomilitary Fantasies in the 1980s

Chad Andrews  
Trent University

In the 1980s a group of American science fiction authors became enormously influential in the political sphere. Acting as leading members of the Citizens' Advisory Council on National Space Policy, these authors (Jerry Pournelle, Larry Niven, Poul Anderson, Greg Bear, Gregory Benford, Dean Ing, Steven Barnes, and Jim Baen) conceptualized the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) for Ronald Reagan, advised his administration on foreign policy matters, and promoted the militarization of space as a means to end Cold War détente. While this paper recognizes their direct and active engagement with the politics of the time, its primary focus is instead on the fiction--broadly termed 'military science fiction'--they produced during the decade. I argue that a number of widely read texts written by the Advisory Council authors contributed to a kind of consensus culture during the 1980s, a hegemonic discourse that in turn founded itself on a particular conception of technology. The central tenet of these texts (and of the general discursive trajectory they participated in) is that technology is subservient to other spheres of human interest and involvement--that we in other words have a firm grasp on technology. Like any tool, it serves us when necessary, and is ultimately guided by the traditions and values established in the cultural and political spheres.

### Science Fiction and Postcolonialism

David M. Higgins  
Indiana University

Postcolonial literatures are often understood to be fictions written by authors from locations around the world that once suffered colonial occupation by Western powers; such literatures respond in various ways to the complex dynamics of continuing imperial legacies in the aftermath of decolonization. In this regard, science fiction would not often be viewed as a postcolonial genre in the most traditional sense; aside from a few collections such as Nalo Hopkinson's *So Long Been Dreaming: Postcolonial Science Fiction & Fantasy* (2004) -- which gathers together a diverse group of authors who write short stories with postcolonial concerns -- few science fictions showcase the firsthand voices of authors who Gayatri Spivak would refer to as "subaltern" subjects whose perspectives have historically been neglected and devalued in mainstream Western culture. Science fiction as a whole, however, offers insightful critical perspectives regarding colonialism and imperialism during the postcolonial moment. This presentation traces critical intersections between science fiction and postcolonial thought, and it argues that there are multiple ways to articulate the relationships between SF and postcolonial thinking.

## 68. (CYA) How the Reader Uses the Monster

Maple

Chair: Amanda Firestone  
University of South Florida

### Feral, Growling, Hungry: Young Readers and the Sensuous World of Monsters

Dawn Rouse  
McGill University

A fascination with monsters often begins in early childhood: Young readers return to favorite texts repeatedly, and grow savage skins in their play-- growling, stomping and snarling. As beasts, children can fully explore the world through sensual experiences. While psychologists have traditionally read this play as an exploration of power and powerlessness in childhood, we investigate how 'being monsters' allows children to safely embody the bestial. And, because one continues to feel freakish as they transform in young adulthood, we extend the conversation to consider how adolescent readers may experience the monstrous through the literature produced for them. In this paper, we draw on Merleau-Ponty's conception of phenomenology, theories of Embodied Education and the criticism of young people's literature and culture to 'cage' the conversation. Additionally, we examine how young readers explore and conceptualize monsters through their real world experience of story

(e.g. through research from an early childhood classroom). By presenting both a theoretical and qualitative framework for the discussion we mean to provide a more holistic inquiry into young people's early encounters with the sensual monstrous.

### **The (Digital) Natives are Restless: A Critique of Information Access and Agency in Young Adult Dystopian Fiction**

Chris Tokuhama  
University of Southern California

Although the nature, scope, and utility of constructs like utopia and dystopia have been oft discussed in realms like Political Science and American Literature, discourse has thus largely failed to explore the theme of information manipulation and access with regard to Young Adult (YA) dystopia and its readership. This paper attempts to address this issue by recasting thematic elements of YA dystopia in terms of their relevancy to informational modes of access by modern youth while simultaneously critiquing preexisting notions of youth empowerment in the genre. Contrary to the position that youth (i.e., "digital natives") evidence an innate ability to manipulate, sort, filter, and process information, I argue that the categorization of youth as digital natives ignores that facility with information and its associated technologies is a series of learned skills. Moreover, this position stems from a romanticization of children and ignores the way that YA dystopia can be used as a teaching tool to help students navigate real-world problems. To guide readers through this set of intersecting issues, I will situate discussion of the #YASaves movement that occurred on Twitter during the summer of 2011 in a history of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century YA utopia/dystopia and discuss how the lessons of YA utopia/dystopia offer a distinction between the concepts of "freedom from" and "freedom to" and how these terms intersect with other teen coping tools like Dan Savage's "It Gets Better" campaign. Ultimately it will be argued that although dystopia can represent an opportunity to cultivate critical skills through reflexive thinking, a greater sense of empowerment comes from a rethinking of utopia/dystopia thought as a form of media theory—in other words, a process and not a product.

### **"It's Recreation Not Suicide": Exploring the Popular Appeal of Stephenie Meyer's Vampire Romance through a *Twilight*-Inspired Girl-Band**

Katie Kapurch  
University of Texas at Austin

Despite their disparate political leanings and discursive outlets, mainstream media, feminist bloggers, and conservative parents' groups (in the U.S. and elsewhere) have all questioned *Twilight* protagonist Bella Swan's role-model potential for girls due to the perception of her problematic lack of agency in the throes of vampire romance. According to MSNBC contributor, Susan Young, "It's too bad that a force as strong as 'Twilight' can't serve to show young women that they have their own power, and don't need to be subservient in order to find true love." This kind of role-model criticism has become relatively outmoded in literary and media studies; the perspective assumes readers, especially young ones, model themselves after the characters about which they read. Holly Blackford's recent study of girl readers has specifically disproven this contention since she finds girls read for the aesthetic experience of reading itself. Indeed, in the case of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*, the Saga has inspired many girl-readers to produce their own vampire-themed fan productions that not only defy role-model worries, but also demand attention for their artistic contributions to the pop culture landscape. My essay offers an understanding of girls' reading experiences, especially those that revolve around the monstrous fantastic in YA fiction, through a consideration of The Bella Cullen Project, a musical trio founded by several teen girls. As their songs demonstrate, contradictions in mass-produced popular culture, especially paradoxical and controversial representations of girlhood may, in fact, create a space for girls to re-negotiate the meaning with adult-generated texts like *Twilight*. "It's Recreation Not Suicide," "Vampwolf," and "Victoria's Lament," for example, illustrate how the songwriters toy with perspective by singing through multiple characters'—even villains'—points of view. Thus, these girls' creative work at once exemplifies their interpretive strategies of literature and calls for a better appreciation of what Mary Celeste Kearney has termed "girl-made media."

### **69. (FTV) Fear of Fembots**

Chair: Dominick Grace  
Brescia University College

Cypress

### **Fear of Fembots: Male Fantasies and Anxieties Regarding Robotic Women**

Susan A. George  
University of California, Merced

In *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, Roger's wife, the sexy, buxom, redheaded Jessica quips "I'm not bad, I'm just drawn that way." While literally true for the cartoon Jessica, this phrase could have been uttered by any of the vamps that came before or after her. The female vampire or vamp figure has had a long history in western art. While not a fanged vampire from the Bram Stoker novel, she is a metaphorical bloodsucker who, often merrily, leads men down a primrose-lined path to destruction. These powerful and alluring women have sucked men dry physically, financially, and/or morally for centuries on stage, in literature and more recently in film (George para 1). Scholars, including Janet Staiger and Kristine J. Butler note that the vamp is a staple of early cinema and appeared in everything from American films such as D.W. Griffith's *The Mothering Heart* (1913) and Frank Powell's *A Fool There Was* (1915) to French movie house serials made in the same years. The vamp is certainly not a neglected figure; she is discussed in most work on early cinema and is a central concern of much work on film noir. Still, there has not been an extended examination of the most persistent and perhaps monstrous of the vamps—the science fiction vamp. And yet, from the 1950s, the Golden Age of SF film, to last TV season's primetime line up, the SF vamp has remained a powerful staple of the genre and in the popular imagination. Therefore, in this paper I continue this discussion by looking at the decedents of one of the SF vamps that started it all—the robotic Maria in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927). Films to be considered in this paper include *Cherry 2000*, *Eve of Destruction*, and TX3 in *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines*.

## Beheading the Gorgon: Beautifying Cinema Monsters for the Male Gaze

Victoria Harkavy

George Mason University

In modern feminist discourse, the issue of the “male gaze” is often addressed, particularly as it relates to the continuing (worsening?) sexual objectification of women in visual media—glossy magazines, television, and film. The question of how the male proprietary gaze affects women is further complicated with approaching the topic of monsters in recent film. In the 2007 release, *Beowulf*, Grendel’s mother is portrayed, with little physical alteration, by Angelina Jolie, often acknowledged as one of the most beautiful actors in Hollywood. In 2010, *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* was released with Uma Thurman playing the petrifying gorgon, Medusa. These female monsters fill the traditional femme fatale archetype, with some fantastic elements thrown in. What is the significance when modern films take grotesque figures and re-imagine them as irresistible bombshells? Even in the more light-hearted cartoon representations of monsters in both the *Shrek* (2001 and later) series and *Monsters vs. Aliens* (2009), both by Dreamworks, the female “monsters,” Fiona and Ginormica/Susan, are significantly less “monstrous” in their personal traits than their male counterparts. Why would we portray monsters as beautiful women? In the case of the cinematic portrayals of Grendel’s mother or Medusa, they arguably fit, either overtly or subtly, into the monster tradition of the terrifying succubus, whose sexual appetite threatens the power and/or integrity of the male hero, thereby embodying at least monstrous intentions, if not very monstrous physicality. However, in the case of Fiona and Ginormica, these are friendly monsters who are designed to be endearing to children and adults, rather than frightening, and so their monstrousness is only marginally, if at all, revealed by physical grotesqueness or asocial behavior; in the case of the monstrous heroine, it is questionable if she is allowed to be a monster at all. My argument for this paper is that female monsters have to be physically attractive because modern society sees female ugliness as utterly unapproachable and unacceptable. By recasting even the most unsightly monsters as attractive, they are placed back under the power of the male gaze and emphasize that the ultimate, and inescapable, defining factor of femininity is a woman’s attractiveness to men.

## Mapping the Monstrous: The Horrific Female Body in New French Extremism

Alicia Kozma

University of Illinois

In the past decade French cinema has seen the rapid development of a new breed of films, born from the horror tradition and grounded in ideas of shock, hyper violence, deviant sexuality, and the transgression of the physical body. Labeled as the New French Extremism by critic James Quandt, these films represent a hybrid of taste cultures, merging high-art intellectualism with low-art body horror into an experimental dialectic of contemporary French cinema. Although there exists a tension around the exact construction of these films, as a trend, as a movement, or even as a wholly definable entity, there remains correlative themes amongst them that signal a fascination with the exploration of monstrosity. These are films which forcefully manipulate normative notions of gender, sexuality, and the physical body to fascinating and fantastic extremes. Utilizing a series of films which arguably fall into the New French Extremist movement, including *Inside (À l’intérieur)*, Alexandre Bustillo, 2007), *Irreversible* (Gasper Noë, 2002), *Martyrs* (Pascal Laugier, 2008), *Trouble Every Day* (Claire Denis, 2001), and *Frontier(s) (Frontière(s))*, Xavier Gens, 2007) this paper will explore the particular fascination with, and revulsion toward, the physical female body as the space and site upon which the monstrous and horrific is expressed. By moving into conversation the theoretical framework of spatial theory, the rhetoric of home and motherland, constructions of biohorror, and the violent gaze, this paper will attempt to uncover the impact of translating ideas of the monstrous both around, and through, the female body, and how this translation impacts future iterations of women in the horror film.

## 70. (FTV) The Poe Function

Palm

Chair: Kyle Bishop

Southern Utah University

### The Poe Function

Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock

Central Michigan University

My focus in this presentation will be on the “textualization” of Poe—that is, the transformation of Poe the historical entity into “Poe” the adaptable narrative. In order to facilitate this discussion, I will first revisit French philosopher Michel Foucault’s consideration of the “author function” and then consider American author Robert Bloch’s 1951 short story, “The Man Who Collected Poe,” its subsequent cinematic adaptation in the British film *Torture Garden* (1967—for which Bloch wrote the screenplay), and the cult film *Danza Macabre* (1964, released in the U.S. as *Castle of Blood*) that includes Poe arguing for the truth of all his macabre tales. There is clearly a kind of poetic justice at work in this repeated summoning of Poe from the grave. After all, his writing is persistently poised precisely at the intersection of life and death. Again and again, his characters are suspended between worlds or invoked to speak from outside time or beyond death. Beyond this, however, this construction of an uncanny afterlife for America’s most famous writer of Gothic stories in which the author is compelled to give voice to new tales from beyond the grave speaks to us concerning the strange economy of authorship in general in which the author becomes part of the narrative he himself tells—a construction that then becomes available for adaptation and appropriation. Therefore, in answer to the question posed by Foucault by way of Becket, “What does it matter who is speaking?” *Danza Macabre*, “The Man Who Collected Poe,” and *Torture Garden* suggest that, in terms of establishing what one could consider the particular *ethos* or “aura” of a tale, it matters very much. “Poe” continues to speak from beyond the grave and thereby remains an uncanny living force that continues to produce effects.

## **Fantastic Romantics: Romantics as Characters in Fantastic Fiction: Edgar Allan Poe**

Terry M. Weyna

Independent Scholar

In my previous discussions of Romantics in fantastic literature, I focused on Keats as an avatar of the fantastic (ICFA 2000); Byron's use as a dashing figure of dark romance and mystery (ICFA 2001); and Shelly's use as a mythical figure himself, his own Prometheus (ICFA 2003). This year, I will focus on Edgar Allan Poe, my first venture into examining the American Romantics. Poe has been and continues to be widely used as a character in fantastic fiction, including "In the Sunken Museum" from Gregory Frost's *Attack of the Jazz Giants* (Golden Gryphon, 2005) (in which Poe loses his mind quite thoroughly in the course of a scientific experiment gone awry); Rudy Rucker's *The Hollow Earth* (William Morrow & Co., Inc., 1990) (in which Poe undertakes an expedition to the South Pole); Manley Wade Wellman's "When It Was Moonlight" (1940) (in which Poe uncovers a vampire who arose from a premature burial and is defeated by burial in a wall); Harold Schechter's *The Hum Bug* (Pocket Books, 2001) and *Nevermore* (Pocket Books, 1999) (in which Poe acts as a detective to solve horrific crimes), and many others. Despite his reputation as a master of horror, Poe is used most often as a figure in a scientific tale of one sort or another, always marrying the imagination to the empirical world. Why this man? What is it about Poe and his legacy that is so attractive to the modern writer of the fantastic? More broadly – and the question I address in my larger project, of which this paper on Poe is but one chapter – why are Romantics such popular characters in fantastic fiction? What is it about these sensualists, these literary theorists, these naturalists and philosophers, these experimenters with form and masters of language, that so entrances contemporary writers of speculative fiction? In *Hyperion* (1989) and *The Fall of Hyperion* (1990), Dan Simmons creates a new John Keats, embodied in a cybrid; and a poet, Martin Silenus, is in the process of rewriting Keats's poetry. In "Sister Emily's Lightship" (1998), Jane Yolen imagines Emily Dickinson meeting aliens while on her nightly stroll with her dog. In Tom Holland's *Lord of the Dead* (1995), Lord Byron's sensuality and poetic nature lead him into the arms of a beautiful vampire, making him one of the most formidable of the undead. In John Kessel's "Herman Melville: Space Opera Virtuoso" (1980), Melville becomes a "bright young star in the SF firmament," transforming the genre from Hugo Gernsback's original ambitions for the genre into the wildly imaginative genre we enjoy today. In R.F. Nelson's *Blake's Progress* (1975), Blake visits with Cleopatra, Ezekiel, Churchill and JFK without leaving his easy chair. In Paul West's *Lord Byron's Doctor* (1989), Polidori watches Byron, Shelley and Mary Shelley sample every form of debauchery and dabble in satanism and the occult. In Tim Powers's *The Stress of Her Regard* (1989), Shelley and Keats struggle with forces beyond their comprehension – but not beyond their imaginations. Why these poets and writers? Why not purely fictional characters? One explanation is that these Romantic novelists and poets possessed a "firm belief in the autonomy of a poet's imagination" (Bloom, 1). They sought a life of the mind, a life lived in letters, a life in which poetry was more important than the day-to-day tangibility of life. The American Romantics created new modes of storytelling to match the newness of their nation (Poe the detective story, for instance; Melville and Hawthorne, the novel itself). Each of them created a body of remarkable work filled with extraordinary creatures not of this world – their own fantastic fiction, from Keats's Lamia to Poe's M. Valdemar to Melville's white whale to Shelley's Prometheus. Yet each was also tied to the world, to reason, to science, to nature, and felt that their writing made the real more real. As Shelley proclaims in "A Defence of Poetry" (1821/1840): "Reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities, both separately and as a whole. Reason respects the differences, and imagination the similitudes of things. Reason is to Imagination as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance....A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth" (339, 342). Contemporary writers of the fantastic similarly use the Romantics as characters in their fiction in order to integrate reason with imagination. Poe added code-breaking and mathematical deduction to a pirate tale in "The Gold-Bug," pondered the modern phenomenon of hypnotism in "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," and studied crime-solving to create the modern detective story in such tales as "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." With these tales, Poe created the modern short story and gave Romantic poetry its darker, Gothic aspect. Thus, I will examine why Poe is so attractive as a subject by exploring the way in which contemporary authors have used Poe's manipulation of science, nature and language to their advantage. In a wider sense, I will be examining how fantastic fiction is itself a highly Romantic endeavor.

## **The Monstrous and the Fantastic in the Short Stories of Edgar Allan Poe and the Paintings by Antoine Wiertz**

Jan Vander Laenen

Independent Scholar

The Belgian painter and sculptor Antoine Wiertz (1806-1865) can be labeled as "monstrous" in more than one respect. Not only has he literally reproduced "monsters," such as Cyclops and witches and the political "monster" Napoleon Bonaparte in a sea of flames in hell; he has, on several occasions, also taken inspiration for the paintings on his canvasses from the more inhuman aspects of society at that time and mankind in general. Worthy of mention in this regard are "Hunger, Madness, Crime," a woman who cuts off her baby's leg and deposits it in the cooking pot because she cannot pay her taxes, the triptych "Visions of a Severed Head," a lampoon against the guillotine, "The Burnt Infant," a mother who finds her baby's cradle in flames by the fireplace when returning home because she cannot afford a nanny, and the frightening image of "The Suicide," an indictment of Marxist materialism and atheism. Strangely enough, Wiertz is dismissed as a charlatan by Charles Baudelaire in his "La Belgique deshabillée," whereas the French poet is an absolute admirer of Wiertz's contemporary, Edgar Allan Poe: he has translated several of Poe's short stories into French, compiling them as, among other things, "histoires extraordinaires," which is extraordinary in the sense that they are, through their monstrousness, far removed from the ordinary and everyday life – just take the orangutan in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" or the madman in "The Tell-Tale Heart." The paper entitled "The monstrous and the fantastic in the short stories of Edgar Allan Poe and the paintings by Antoine Wiertz" draws parallels between three short stories and three canvasses which have a common source of social inspiration: the short story and painting "The Premature Burial" take a close look at an obsession of the time and point an admonishing finger at the "monstrous physicians" with regard to their rash and hurried diagnoses; "The Oval Portrait" (a painter robs his model of all her life energy by portraying her on canvas) and "The Beautiful Rosine" (a vivacious model stares at her own skeleton) emphasise the vampire nature of the Romantic artist; Poe's "The Power of Words" (a man is welcomed by another soul a second after his death) and Wiertz's "One Second after Death" (a person who has just died flies in a shroud towards eternity) both illustrate hope of the hereafter in a fantastic though rather morbid way.

## 71. (VPA) Monstrous Music

*Magnolia*

Chair: Jen Gunnels

*New York Review of Science Fiction*

### **Do Androids Dream of Robotic Actors? An Examination of the Delay Between the Twin Golden Ages of Sci-Fi and Broadway, and the Dawn of the Mega-SF-Musical**

Jen Schiller

Montclair State University

This paper dissects SF and Broadway historically and thematically, looking at how they changed between the dawn of the “Golden Age” and the early 1980s, paying special attention to transitions which Science Fiction and Broadway underwent between the 1960s-1970s, and analyzing the SF musicals from the 1980s to understand why it worked on stage during this era.

### **Ludology, Narratology, Hobby: Games Workshop as a Business and Theoretical Model**

Neal Baker

Earlham College

This paper analyzes the value proposition of Games Workshop Group PLC, a London Stock Exchange quoted company whose core products are Warhammer Fantasy Battles and Warhammer 40,000, to underline the importance of what might appear to be “para-game” activities.

### **The Monstrous Fan: Otherness and Lady Gaga’s Little Monsters**

Arnau Roig Mora

Universitat de Barcelona/University of Illinois

This paper will examine the shifting relationship between Lady Gaga’s “fame-seeking” discourse and the embracement of monstrosity in creating a queer metaphor for otherness, resulting in an empowering discourse for, and around, her fans. It aims to explore the connection between the monster metaphor and the empowerment of otherness in general and queerness in particular, interrogating Lady Gaga’s discourse on “Little Monsters” and queer politics, as well as fan readings and rewritings of the “Little Monster” subculture and Gaga’s work.

## 72. (H/IF) The Post-Monsters

*Dogwood*

Chair: Douglas Ford

State College of Florida

### **Breach: The Monstrous Mundane**

Jason Embry

Georgia Gwinnett College

In China Mieville’s novel, *The City and the City*, the agency known as Breach, is feared by all citizens of Beszel and Ul Quoma. Breach appears omniscient, omnipotent, and invisible to insiders and quaint fairy tale to outsiders until its powers are tested during a homicide investigation in Beszel. The novel takes place in two cities on top of one another. They are not separated by geography in the traditional sense. They are separated by culture, law, architecture, fashion, language, history, industry, politics, and most importantly, Breach. Citizens of one or the other city must will themselves to unseen neighbors, adjacent buildings, and cars as they make their through their own respective cities for fear that they will breach and be taken by the mysterious and frightening Breach—ever present, ever watching. Pedestrians struggle to unheard foreign conversations taking place mere feet from them, grossstopically, but politically and effectively located in another city. Drivers must avoid noticing and hitting foreign drivers on the many of the same roads because to acknowledge their presence constitutes breach. As all citizens know, to breach means to disappear, so citizens of both Beszel and Ul Quoma fearfully follow the protocols of unseeing, unhearing, and unknowing those who inhabit the other city. In this novel, Breach begins as a neo-boogey man and ends as yet another governing system that simply moves through the motions without knowing its original purpose. Inspector Tyador Borlu, of the Beszel police, begins as a wary believer, always averting his eyes just in time to avoid breach, and ends as Breach himself. His path highlights the problems of political and governmental systems that have been allowed too much power and and subjected to too little accountability. I would argue that Breach represents the very real monstrosity of governmental power wielded too freely and the necessary people who consent to this power out of fear and lack of information. I will argue, using Brian McHale’s *Postmodernist Fiction* and Theodor Adorno’s *Negative Dialectics*, that Breach willfully separates the people in Beszel and Ul Quoma, effectively pitting them against one another in order to justify itself and its power. This overlaying of cities is one method found within postmodern narrative that symbolizes the separate spheres of humans engaged in a celebration of their ceaseless self-obsession and condemnation of the Other.

### **On Violence and Becoming: Mala's Territorial Art of Survival in Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night***

Emily Mutchler  
Western Illinois University

Elizabeth Grosz's *Chaos, Territory, Art*, and Donna Haraway's *When Species Meet* both critically engage the human/animal dichotomy which drives so much of the anglocentrism of imperial thought. Drawing on these texts, I will demonstrate the ways in which Mala's "becoming animal" in Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night* constitutes what Frantz Fanon describes as the first act of the anti-colonial revolution, rather than simply a young woman's tortured retreat from sexual and colonial violence into "madness." Unfortunately, Mala's psychic pain does not end with the death of her abusive father and, similarly, Fanon points out that the struggle of decolonization does not end once the colonizers leave. In much the same way that in writing *Cereus Blooms at Night*, Mootoo acknowledges the epistemological language of the colonizer, but undermines it by having the creatures of Mala's garden roam freely; Mala has to carve out her own territory among the remains of Wetlandish statues, mausoleum, and the Thoroughly's mission; she has to try to reappropriate the tools of the colonizer to build a safe home for herself. Finally, drawing from "The Paradise Alms House" and *When Species Meet*, I will discuss the ways in which former subjects can truly decolonize themselves and each other within the safe space of the Alms House. Here, the residents and staff are at first bewildered, but then inspired by Mala and Tyler's mutual becoming. Then the people of the Alms House can redefine notions of "family" and "home" to welcome queerness, or difference- to reclaim their long-lost brothers, sisters, and pieces of themselves.

### **Reflections in a Jagged Mirror: How Women's Postcolonial Vampire Writing Problematises the Monstrous "Other": Nalo Hopkinson's "Greedy Choke Puppy" and Tananarive Due's "My Soul to Keep"**

Gina Wisker  
University of Brighton

The figure of the postcolonial vampire in writing by women from the US and the Caribbean engages the monstrous, the vampire, with issues of history, power, gender, identity and self worth. It represents and enacts the discomfort of an everyday reminder of the hidden denials and destruction of the colonial and imperial past and the liminal spaces lined with that past in which we now all walk and live. Where the postcolonial Gothic and the monstrous figure of the vampire, boundary crosser, transgressive, invasive Other, are infected by gender, it deals with more than a troubled violent repressed past and engages with the debilitating effects of internalising a monstrous, negative view of self, a lack of self worth. The un-dead stalking the living to feed on them; the liminal space between living and dead, history and the present, the draining effect of a damaging and undying history on those who carry it about with them on an everyday basis. These characteristics of the postcolonial condition are also descriptions of the vampire, such a versatile figure with which to uncover and explore fears of identity, belonging, ownership and the stability of self and others. Tabish Khair in *Ghosts from the Colonies* (2010) highlights the ways in which the postcolonial Gothic uses strategies of Othering, and Julia Kristeva (*Powers of Horror* 1984) emphasises the ways in which that which is Other is defined as abject, to be rejected with disgust (often mixed with desire) but finally to be recognised as our own production, a version of the projected monster self. The un-dead vampire offers an opportunity for longing, loss and melancholy, and endless draining, mourning of the hurtful damaging, undeniable colonial and imperial past which, once revealed, cannot ever be fully laid to rest. It also exposes weaknesses, and threats. The melancholy in action and aggressive angry vengeance are each features of both the postcolonial condition and of the postcolonial vampire's recurrent, morphing presence in our myths and literature. In women's writing this vampire often also engages with the self loathing grown from internalising a racialised, negative self image. Such self loathing combines with fears of loss of beauty, ageing, and with the cosmetic narrative of the need to retain youth and the power of beauty. Women postcolonial vampire writers look at ways in which women self construct as monstrous, at the debilitating narratives which undermine self image and self worth, relationships of power and disempowerment, at beauty, self worth, sisterhood, families and communities. Nalo Hopkinson's 'Greedy choke puppy' uses the figure of the soucouyant to expose and indict an internalised fear of ageing which leads to the destruction of others. Tananarive Due's *My Soul to Keep* and *The Living Blood* creates a vampire community in Africa which replicates the divisive destructiveness of racism in their treatment of mortals and women as lesser beings on whom to merely prey, and who need to learn to treat difference as equal. Narrative trajectories in work by women vampire writers combine a rejection of the historically inherited negatives and silencing, with moving towards a celebration of sisterhood and community. Postcolonial women's vampire narratives problematise the traditional trajectory established in *Dracula* where foreignness is terrifyingly invasive, to be rejected and destroyed, and women's sexuality is seen as monstrous, demonic. Facing the vampire who is also ourselves (Auerbach, 1995) means recognising that we construct this monster figure from our own desires and fears. It can, like the Gothic itself, expose hypocrisies and contradictions, hidden secrets and vulnerabilities and also it has a social intent. It is the facility of the literary vampire to be re-imagined in different contexts that has also made it a favourite among post colonial Gothic writers who seek to explore the melancholic mourning and loss, the invasive violent disturbance of that which is hidden and denied, and the opportunities that this figure offers for social and cultural critique. In the hands of some contemporary post colonial women writers of the Gothic and horror it also offers an opportunity to rewrite history and to suggest alternative ways of being. As Wilson Harris comments, the prisonhouse of history can be deconstructed and rebuilt in a liberating form. The metamorphosing boundary crossing postcolonial vampire is a key figure in this re-empowering change. The liberating powers of the imagination record different histories and presents, envision alternative futures. Contemporary postcolonial African American and Afro Caribbean women writers use elements of horror springing from the literary Gothic, from myth, the supernatural, the fantastic, to critique the legacy of slavery and racism, and current issues such as power and identity infected by gender, race & history. The work of Nalo Hopkinson and Tananarive Due uses ghosts, vampires, werewolves, voodoo and various horror figures as vehicles through which to remind, indict, review and revise. In their work, the postcolonial vampire provides a radical challenge to gendered and racialised constructions of the abject, and recuperates the Monster other.

### 73. (F/IF) Portraying New Worlds

Captiva A

Chair: Jerry Määttä  
Uppsala University

#### Lord Dunsany and J. R. R. Tolkien: Two Kindred Spirits

Skye Cervone  
Broward College

Despite the lack of critical attention Lord Dunsany's work has received at the hands of critics, his fiction has been immensely important to the work of other Fantasy authors. Both Dunsany and J.R.R. Tolkien were troubled by man's increasing removal from nature, as well as valued man's return to nature, and their fictional writings contain dire warnings of the desolate world humans will find themselves in if the natural world is destroyed. These themes were of a paramount importance to the work of both authors. Lord Dunsany's depiction of the realm of Faery was metaphorically important to Tolkien's understanding of that "Perilous Realm" ("On Fairy-Stories" 38). Using a phrase first employed by John Dryden, Joseph Addison defines what is required to achieve "the faery way of writing." Both Dunsany and Tolkien masterfully achieve this mode in their works. Addison argues this form of writing is "more difficult than any other that depends on the poet's fancy, because he has no pattern to follow in it, and must work altogether out of his own invention" (419). The writer who embraces this tradition must rely primarily on his own imagination and cannot find a direct correspondence between our world and his created world. The writer must have a strong sense of fancy, and "be very well versed in legends and fables, antiquated romances, and the traditions of nurses and old women" (419). Addison argues that if the writer is not able to work within these areas, he is doomed to produce the false fantastic, with fairies barely distinguishable from humans. For Addison, "the faery way of writing" embraces both tradition and the natural. Traditions, and the wonder of the natural world, are central to Dunsany's work. The old and romantic, as well as nature's creations, are precious treasures for him. Tolkien, too, grounds his work in tradition, legends, and romance to achieve his own unique fantastic works. Nature, as well, is central to the works of Tolkien. Both men brilliantly achieve their own "faery way of writing" that fully embraces Addison's tradition and creates realms of terror and beauty unlike any other.

#### Buddhist and Taoist nuances in the Chinese translation of *The Silmarillion*

Eric Reinders  
Emory University

*The Ainulindale*, the creation myth of *The Silmarillion*, begins with a disembodied unity creating a series of successively less power and more physical beings. The first generation of such beings manifest as musical notes, which form chords, and hence harmony and discord. Eventually the elves and "men" are created. This descent into physicality (and mortality) is reminiscent of Genesis 1-2, but more particularly the inter-textually related account in John 1:1-18, in which God begins as "the Word." Both *The Silmarillion* and John depict sound and light surrounded by a vast darkness. So much would be clear to any Western reader. But how does this cosmogony appear inter-culturally? This paper examines the 2001 Yilin Press Chinese translation of *The Silmarillion* (*Jingling baozuan*, "The Elves' Jewels"), in comparison, first, to Chinese translations of Genesis 1-2 and John 1:1-18. Do the Biblical echoes remain in the Chinese text? But there are other sources for a language about the descent into form available to a Chinese translator, namely Buddhist and Taoist cosmogonies. For example, working with the English term "the Void," the Chinese wavers between the (arguably) Buddhist term *kongxu* (emptiness), and the explicitly Taoist term *hundun*, an untranslatable term usually glossed as a chaotic potentiality, a seething foment which allows no divisions. I will also focus on the treatment of "bring into Being" and "take Being." How much does the translation borrow from the Tao Te Ching and other Taoist classics? To what extent are there Buddhist nuances in the text? How do the Christian, Taoist, and Buddhist elements in the language interact? In this paper, I continue my examination of the ways in which Chinese religious culture percolates into the translation of Tolkien's works.

#### Social Fantasy, Political Change, and the Fantastic in Victorian Feminist Utopias

Taryne Jade Taylor  
University of Iowa

This paper will distill and present the critical framework underlying my dissertation on Victorian feminist utopias with an emphasis on the significance of the fantastic. I will center my paper discussion on seven primary Victorian feminist utopias. Though these works follow the major conventions of the utopian genre set by Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, the world-building techniques the authors employ to construct the utopian spaces are closer to those you find in high fantasy. I will argue that it is in analyzing the world-building techniques of the authors that the complexities inherent in analyzing these complex works from a modern feminist perspective begin to clear. It is undoubtable that these feminist utopists desired political change and, like all authors of utopia, developed social "fantasies." These were not, however, merely the escapist fantasies of women with no other outlet for their discontent as many scholars would have you believe about Victorian women writers in general. Rather, these intricate world-building techniques indicate that these utopias are much more than flights of fancy and even thought experiments. Instead, these authors are constructing rich alternative realities when describing their utopian spaces. Though these spaces are full of fantastic elements they also can serve as blueprints to possible futures by highlighting the possibility of change and providing a glimpse of that future. As literary spaces, these spaces are multidetermined—they exist both in their time and outside it. Understanding the way these authors employ the fantastic and world-building techniques positions the scholar of such highly political works a nuanced perspective. This perspective is most useful when considering the monstrous elements of these Victorian feminist utopias. For many contemporary feminists, feminism extends beyond gender and sex to include intersectional critiques of all forms of oppression—from sexism to racism—ableism to capitalism. The Victorian utopian feminist, however, often did not adhere to such values in the spaces of their utopias. While it would be unfair to judge their ideologies from the perspective of the ever evolving feminism it would be equally egregious to ignore the racism, classism, imperialism, and eugenicism inherent in these works. I will argue that a careful critique of these monstrous elements can be made without discounting these works value as feminist texts once the spaces of the utopia are understood through the perspective of the scholar of the fantastic, rather than a simple cultural critique.

## 74. (F/IF) Early Fantastic Texts and McKillop

Captiva B

Chair: Edgar L. Chapman  
Bradley University

### The Werewolf and the Transsexual: Prosthetic Monsters in the Medieval Imagination

M. Bychowski  
George Washington University

While exploring “the Body Hybrid”, *Of Giants*, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen describes the monstrous as “a body enraptured by an unstable, nonteleological process of transformation.” Trans-formation becomes a prominent issue when considering the body of medieval werewolves like *Sir Bisclavret*, *Bisclarel* and *Melion* whose humanity, gender, and subjectivity are dictated by prosthetics: a specific ring and set of knightly clothes. For these werewolves, these inter-species transsexuals, their clothes literally make them men. When unclothed, they are separated into animal and object, opening up the question: who or what is the knight? Traditional scholarship has regarded the beast as the stand in for the human, but taking Cohen’s suggestion seriously, we should look wider and see the multiplicity things that constitute the trans(forming) body. We see in the medieval imagination the potential for “form” to exist in a “trans” state; simultaneously between multiple shapes, places, and things. Putting it all together, a post-human, queer, crip vision of embodiment emerges in these pre-modern narratives. Despite the frame of the monstrous, this vision offers ways to conceive of and even accept those with a technologically constructed manhood into society. But the monstrous, like the queer, can never fully be understood or domesticated into the norm. The trans(forming) bodies of the were-wolves continually resist attempts to explicate or pin them down. Through silence, refusal to redress, and inscrutable acts of violence, desire, and despair the werewolves leave their narratives open to uncertain futurity, unknown transformations; all part of the monstrously “unstable, nonteleological process.”

### Mustelid Messengers: Weasels and Angels in Marie de France’s *Eliduc*

Haylie Swenson  
George Washington University

In his book, *Angels: A Modern Myth*, Michel Serres presents the reader with a vision of angels as “a turbulent array of messengers.”<sup>1</sup> Unconfined from monotheistic or polytheistic traditions, angels are translators, travelers who move messages back and forth between different domains and who can be both miraculous and monstrous. Through this wide lens, Serres is able to explore the possibility of nonhuman angels and ask, “How does the angel come to be an animal?” Taking this question as my starting point, I examine the miracle at the heart of Marie de France’s *Eliduc*, in which a grieving weasel revives his dead mate with a flower, thus enabling the subsequent resurrection of a human woman and the tale’s overtly religious conclusion. This enfolding of the animal into a Christian narrative is undercut, however, by acts of violence. In this paper I ask not only how the angel comes to be an animal, but how such an animal-angel then comes to be a target for violence. I argue that because of their status as the animal, *Eliduc*’s weasels can only be earthly angels, messengers not for a God who, as Karl Steel has noted, denies them salvation, but for the abundant and relational terrestrial world. The message they bring is of a living universe full of nonhuman angels who are constantly entering into meaningful associations with other bodies, a message that holds profound implications for both the tale’s Christian narrative and the concepts of human exceptionalism and singularity. It is this that makes the weasels both monstrous and fantastic. In a story that is solely concerned with *human* connections—and which, ultimately, rejects these in favor of one connection, to God—this message of proliferating relationships erupts and provocatively lingers in spite of the violence that intends to suppress it.

### The Monstrous Women of Patricia McKillop

Audrey Taylor  
Middlesex University

There are two distinct types of ‘monstrous’ women presented in the works of Patricia McKillop. The first type is the amoral, and beautiful, woman, exemplified by Nyx from the Cygnet duology, Sybil from *The Forgotten Beasts of Eld* and Luna from *Song for the Basilisk*. In contrast there is the more outwardly monstrous, like the grotesque Faey from *Ombria in Shadow*, Brume from *The Forests of Serre*, and the sisters from *The Tower at Stony Wood*. All of these women are powerful, and intelligent, but cold. The beautiful Nyx, Sybil, and Luna are contrasted with the equally amoral and formidable Faey, Brume and the sisters from *The Tower at Stony Wood*. The latter are grotesque, bodies changing and sometimes ugly in contrast to the cold beauty given to the others. The moral ambiguity of these ‘monsters’ is interesting. All these women are sorceresses, powerful, intelligent, and all are seen as a threat in spite of the fact that none of them actually commits an ‘evil’ act. McKillop is rightfully considered an author with a feminist predilection. In this instance however, powerful women are framed in a way that makes them seem monstrous. I intend to argue that it is their intelligence, and refusal to become involved in man’s petty conflicts that makes these women monstrous in the frames of their narratives, rather than inherent evil. If these characters were men, would they be cast in the same light? They strive for knowledge to the exclusion of all else, but they are not actively evil. Looking at theories of the grotesque, and drawing parallels with the use of beautiful, amoral women in cinema and other genres I will argue that it is precisely through this anticipated reception that McKillop chooses to ground her notion of the monstrous in her women characters.

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**Friday, March 23, 2012 2:45-3:45 pm.**

**78. (SF) Monstrous Spaces and Noir Sensibilities in *The City and The City***

Pine

Chair: David M. Higgins  
Indiana University

**Picturing *The City and the City*: A Topology of Noir**

S. C. Kranc  
University of South Florida

This paper suggests a reading of C&C as science fiction - not in the sense of a world of alternative physics, but an exploration of visual perception and cognition. The text generates a kind of visuality - from words alone - engaging the reader in an imaginative experience paralleling that of the narrator. The reader must however learn to "see with words" as Eco says, in order to grasp the literary topology of the Cities. In the past, the two cities underwent a cleaving, simultaneously a joining and a separation, producing the present environment. The contranym "Cleavage", along with other exceptional words, like "crosshatching" and "unseen" function to create two environments simultaneously, much like the three dimensional Necker Cube illusion, that derives a bi-stable image from a simple collection of lines on a flat page. Such verbal allusions capture not only the *film noir* style, a reading supported by oppositions, contrasts and inversions but also the essence of *noir* reality: the underlying problem of looking but not seeing what is "out there". Like the cube, only one structural realization can be held in the mind, yet the other is always just at the cognitive periphery. For Borlú, this perceptual separation will not be sustainable however, and his situation will change irreversibly as the two cities converge in his vision.

**Speculative Noir: The Future Out of the Past**

Veronica Hollinger  
Trent University

Noir and speculative fiction (including science fiction, slipstream, New Weird, and other such genre variations) have a significant history of interaction, as suggested by the popularity of films such as *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Dark City* (1998) and by the frequent use of terms such as "tech noir" and "future noir." My discussion will consider some of the generic tensions arising from the interactions of noir and sf in a variety of speculative novels. It is exactly in these tensions that speculative noir achieves its key aesthetic and narrative effects. Fritz Leiber's classic sf story, "Coming Attraction" (1950), William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984), Jonathan Lethem's slipstream noir pastiche, *Gun, with Occasional Music* (1994); K W. Jeter's bleak science-fiction detective thriller, *Noir* (1998); and China Mieville's New Weird murder mystery, *The City and the City* (2009).

**79. (IF/SF) Verne Revisited**

Oak

Chair: Amy J. Ransom  
Central Michigan University

**Jules Verne and Science Fiction: A Reappraisal**

Arthur B. Evans  
DePauw University

In contemporary SF scholarship, one question that has not been analyzed in any systematic way is Jules Verne's relationship to the genre. The once-taken-for-granted link between Verne and SF has changed dramatically during the past few decades, and today there is no longer a consensus of opinion on how this relationship should be defined. In fact, the conflicting views of the French public, the Anglo-American public, Verne scholars, and SF historians now seem more polarized and mutually antagonistic than ever before. For example, most English-language readers and movie-goers in the United States and Great Britain continue to identify Jules Verne—rightly or wrongly—as the legendary "Father of Science Fiction" and more recently as the inspiration for a popular SF subgenre called "steampunk." In sharp contrast, the majority of the French public and virtually all scholars and fans of Jules Verne (sometimes called Vernians) emphatically deny the author's association with "sci-fi," a genre they dismiss as paraliterary and juvenile. The French see him instead as a cultural and historical institution and an important part of their national *patrimoine*. The Vernians see him as a world-class writer who continues to be one of the most translated authors of all time and whose works are firmly anchored in the science and social realities of his time. As for those academic literary critics specializing in SF (most of whom have never read the "real" Jules Verne and base their judgments on poor English translations), they ironically view the *Voyages extraordinaires* in more or less the same way as the Vernians view SF, as paraliterary and juvenile. And many are now claiming Mary Shelley, H.G. Wells, or even Hugo Gernsback as the true inventors of this type of fiction. This paper will examine the current status of Jules Verne's perceived place in and relationship to the genre of SF.

### **In the Wake of the Sea-Serpent: Verne's Textual Monster, *Les Histoires de Jean-Marie Cabidoulin***

Terry Harpold  
University of Florida

*Les Histoires de Jean-Marie Cabidoulin* (*The Sea-Serpent*, 1901), is a textual monster. Like all of the *Voyages extraordinaires*, it is backed by an exacting documentary base, in this case of 19th century accounts of whaling and ocean voyages. Verne's sources for discussions among the novel's characters concerning the existence of sea-serpents are drawn from historic and folkloric records. There are obvious nods in the text to, among others writers, Herman Melville and Heinrich Heine. Closer to home, many of the names of the characters are those of real individuals from Verne's childhood home of Nantes. And *Cabidoulin* extends Verne's intertextual methods more radically, via repeated allusions to and citations from other Verne novels: *Vingt Mille lieues sous les mers* (*Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas*, 1870), *Voyage au Centre de la Terre* (*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, 1864), and *Maître du Monde* (*Master of the World*, 1904). The documentary apparatus of Verne's most technically-precise account of ocean travel is thus supported by the *general* textual imaginary of the *Voyages extraordinaires*. *Cabidoulin's* monster, I propose, is typical of the *Voyages'* canny, reflexive entanglements of representation and textuality.

### **80. (CYA) Monstrous Language Games**

Maple

Chair: Dorothy Karlin  
Simmons College

### **Monstrous Myths: Manipulation of Text and Suspension of Disbelief in *Octavian Nothing* and *The Knife of Never Letting Go***

Rebekah Fitzsimmons  
University of Florida

Contemporary young adult literature regularly addresses the monstrous. This paper compares the ways in which *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing: Traitor to the Nation* by M.T. Anderson and *The Knife of Never Letting Go* by Patrick Ness similarly represent the monstrosity of human behavior through the novel use of typography, formatting and other textually based visual techniques. This paper will assert that even though these two texts are diverse in terms of genre, setting, and plot, the effect of these visual disruptions is the same: a shocking and memorable depiction of monstrous emotions in the face of horrific conditions. In each book, the text explodes from the pages, breaching margins and expectations. These moments of textual monstrosity, of unexpected deviation from standard text, are designed to allow the reader to suspend disbelief and break out of standard ways of thinking. These visual markers shatter what the reader has come to accept as the truth when it comes to the text on the page. This process opens the young reader's mind and allows them to question the myths and authority that the texts lay out as fact: if the font in the book is unreliable, perhaps the "facts" are as well. Through the lens of speculative fiction and visual rhetoric, it is thus possible to argue that while *Octavian Nothing* depicts more realistic and historical events than the Ness's science-fiction novel, it takes a more radical leap of faith for American YA readers to accept the monstrous concept that the American Founding Fathers and Revolutionary War Patriots hypocritically condoned the subjugation and torture of slaves, even as they fought for "freedom from tyranny and equality for all."

### **Ethics of Nonsense in Lewis Carroll's Monstrous Language**

Yu-Chi Chiang  
National Taiwan Normal University

Carroll's literary nonsense is Hatter's mad language that "seemed to [Alice] to have no sort of meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English" (AW 56). It is the little crocodile in the nonsense poem that Alice recites with hoarse and strange voice. Never ask what it signifies because right after its cheerful grinning "welcomes little fishes in" (AW 16), its smiling jaws surprisingly snap shut to crush our cognitive souls from us. The study we present in this essay attempts to attest to the fact that the complex workings of Carroll's intuitive *déjà vu*, instead of giving meaningless gibberish, produce an abundant excess of meaning. In this paper, I will examine the inexhaustible mythical power of nonsense in Carroll's two Alice books. In contrast with Nonsense School's self-referential nonsense, Jean-Jacques Lecercle applies a detour reading through madness to beckon the demented linguistic monster lurking in the darkness of language to locate the source of intuitions embedded in the literary text of nonsense and their power of anticipating serious social institutions. From his synchronic account (resistance of intuition against urge of institution) to diachronic account (literature preceding theory), Lecercle's anticipatory prophecy of nonsense intuitions has gained a momentum to break through the language barriers and embrace life fully with its politics of monstrous resistance. My argument here is that language and life have the same self-dissolving tendency that a centrifugal resistance of intuition always dissolves the centripetal urge of institution by an excess of errors that not only fills to the brim but also tips over; therefore, the mythic power of Carroll's literary nonsense refers beyond language to an ethics of life.

## 81. (FTV) Those Damn Dirty Apes!

Cypress

Chair: June M. Pulliam  
Louisiana State University

### "Apes Together Strong": The Case for Socialized Medicine in *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*

Charles Cuthbertston  
Southern Utah University

My essay will explore how the recent "prequel" to the *Planet of the Apes* film franchise offers a strong, though implicit, argument for the adoption of socialized medicine in the United States and, in doing so, offers a potentially subversive argument to mainstream film audiences. *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* joins a long list of films designed to initiate or continue public discussion of important social issues. What makes *Rise* somewhat unique, however, is the subtlety of its argument. Many science fiction and fantasy narratives offer metaphorical social and political commentary. But while these metaphorical narratives are often easily recognizable, *Rise* presents its commentary indirectly, for a number of reasons. The primary concern of a Hollywood franchise film is to draw in an audience, and, as I will argue in my paper, politicized films are generally less commercially successful. Additionally, Hollywood film producers, in the current economic climate, are also more wary of politicizing what might be seen as a potential or ongoing film franchise. However, the films in the *Planet of the Apes* series have a tradition of social commentary, including Vietnam-era anti-militancy in *Beneath the POTA*, anti-racism and anti-establishmentarianism in *Conquest of the POTA*, and nuclear disarmament in *Battle for the POTA*. *Rise* continues this tradition, and includes many "Easter egg" references to fans familiar with the previous films in the series, including visual references, dialogue quotations, and diegetic cameos. I will argue that the political commentary of *Rise* is part of this referential homage to the other films in the series. I will preface my argument with a short discussion of the history of political and social commentary in Hollywood films, and discuss why the argument for socialized medicine in *Rise* indicates a new trend in contemporary Hollywood films to reduce or eliminate direct social and political commentary.

### Our Apish Other: Composing and Re-Imagining Those "Damn Dirty Apes!"

Charles Herzek  
Broward College

With its less than convincing costumes, over the top acting, and unrealistic plot (even by SF standards), why has *Planet of The Apes*, a cult film, not only survived but blossom into a multi-million dollar franchise spanning over half a century? Tracking the evolution of the apes from the original novel, *Monkey Planet*, to the 1960s and 1970s film pentalogy, to the modern remake and re-imagining, we see that despite their cosmetic changes they continue to exist as the uncanny. In short, the apes live on because they reflect our fears, and allow us to look back at ourselves and our culture. Despite their consistency as Others, the variances in the origin stories shift them from monstrous oppressors and aggressors, to sympathetic rebels. Focusing primarily on the 1970s films and the most recent re-imagining, this paper explores the cultural significance of the various changes: from B-movie to blockbuster; from the hokey, cyclical-time-travel premise to the (somewhat less hokey) focus on biological experimentation; from a world where a plague has killed our pets to a world where humans are being wiped out by plague; from nuclear war to viral pathogens; from Caesar as avenging monster to Caesar as liberator; from monster-ish apes to cruel and monstrous humans; from racial allegory to environmental and humanist statement. As we change, as we change our world, our concept of monstrous changes and we may even come to humanize these uncanny Others and vilify ourselves.

## 83. (VPA) Monstrous Media Adaptations

Magnolia

Chair: Sean D. Nixon  
University of Vermont

### Adaptations of Monsters and Yōkai in ZUN's *Touhou Project* Series

Joseph Brooks de Vita  
Rice University

This paper will address issues of humanity as they relate to the girls in the Touhou universe while studying the human-Yōkai tensions described in the series to see if these monsters are really as monstrous as they seem and examine what giving these monsters human forms does to change the reader's perspective on them, whether it makes them more approachable or relatable to the human viewer, and what it does to make these myths much less frightening overall.

### In the Panel No One Can Hear You Frag: Transmedia Resonance in Video Game Comic Book Adaptations

Stefan Hall  
Defiance College

There is much interest by the comic industry to adapt hit video game titles – such as *Halo*, *Gears of War*, and *Batman: Arkham City* – into comic book format, but this phenomenon is nothing new. This project looks at the history of game-to-comic adaptations beginning with the early days of Atari with releases like *Atari Force* and the *Swordquest* series to put the current industry practices into larger economic and genre contexts.

## 85. (SF) Twenty-First Century Speculative Fiction

*Captiva A*

Chair: Robert Gadowski  
University of Wrocław

### **The Ghostly Archive of Gene Wolfe's "Memorare"**

Joan Gordon  
Nassau Community College

Gene Wolfe has always been interested in the archive. Ghosts, too, have always haunted Wolfe's writing, those figures who form an archive of lives lost. In the 2007 novella "Memorare," which, of course, means "to remember," Wolfe explores an archive of lost lives through a documentary film maker's attempt to film memorials in space. In my paper, I will explore how the urge to memorialize and the urge to envision utopia combine in "Memorare" to question both desires.

### **Alternate Jewish History: Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* and Michael Chabon's *The Yiddish Policemen's Union***

Andrew Gordon  
University of Florida

The subgenre of fantasy and science fiction, the counterfactual novel or alternate history, is an especially powerful form of superhistory, a means of speculating on and reconceiving history. Recent award-winning novels by Philip Roth and Michael Chabon re-imagine twentieth-century Jewish history, showing both the imaginative power of fiction and the contingent nature of history. In *The Plot Against America* (2004), Roth, imitating a memoir, tweaks the American involvement in World War II to imagine an America sliding toward fascism and a potential American holocaust for the Jews. In *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* (2007), Chabon, imitating the hard-boiled detective novel, invents a post-Holocaust Jewish state, not in Israel but in Alaska. The implication of both novels is that, throughout history, it has always been and continues to be strange times to be a Jew.

## 89. (SF) The Science in SF

*Vista C*

Chair: Elizabeth Lundberg  
University of Iowa

### **Scientific Inquiry in Fantastic Literature**

Karen Burnham  
Locus Magazine

It is challenging to make science storyable even in the best of circumstances; most science fiction literature contains more engineering than actual scientific inquiry. One of the few to do so consistently is Australian hard sf writer Greg Egan, and he applies the same scientific rigor to his few fantastic stories, such as "The Safe Deposit Box" in which a person wakes up in a different body every day, as he does to his purely hard sf stories. Theoretically, any repeatable phenomenon is amenable to scientific analysis, yet very few magic systems, no matter how logical, apply this methodology. It may be that the unknown is easier to dramatize than the known. All myth, of course, is about creating narrative to explore the unknown. The drama of science comes from probing at the edges of what's known. In this paper I will explore how the mindset and process of the scientific method can exist comfortably, if rarely, in literature of fantasy and magic.

### **Utopian Air: the Rise and Dissolution of Aerial Societies in Air Pulp**

Alan Lovegreen  
UC Riverside

The "air pulps" of the 1930s came of age as a thrilling new medium for narrative in serials such as *Air Wonder Stories* and *Thrilling Air Stories*. With skies filled with planes, zeppelins and airshipmen, the sky came to be seen, for a brief period, as a venue capable of sustaining life on mobile floating cities and airships. These air pulps address not only anxieties about the air but fantastic, utopian possibilities for it, and too little attention has been given to this specific topography as a place where new opportunities for society and humanism emerge. An example of such wild airspace is the cover of the November 1929 *Air Wonder Stories*, whose frontispiece is dominated by the thick disk of an air city that hovers in a zeppelin-laden sky, and it is these "Islands in the Air" (as William N. Morrow's 1929 short story is titled in *Air Wonder's* first issue) that offer the potential for a singular construction of air culture. Sky cities never fully vanish from speculative fictions (e.g., Poul Anderson's 1959 novella, "The Sky People"), but they do suffer a decline by the end of the 1940s. This presentation will investigate how such escapist stories envisioned air-space as rogue arena quite unlike the reality of a sky over-girdled with trajectories of military, air-postal, and commercial airline flightpaths; I will address how the stories in air pulps counter the emerging spatial dimensions of national sovereignty, and then suggest reasons for the shift away from sky cultures in speculative fiction.

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**Friday, March 23, 2012 4:00-5:30 pm.**

**90. (SF) Three Approaches to Octavia Butler**

*Pine*

Chair: Florian Bast  
University of Leipzig, Germany

**Xenogenocide: The Oankali on Trial**

Gerry Canavan  
Duke University

Against a tradition of Butler criticism which has emphasized a postcolonial politics of cosmopolitan hybridity and which have consequently tended to view the Oankali as legitimate benefactors to humankind, this article insists instead on the extent to which the Oankali are genuinely monstrous. The surface humanitarianism of the Oankali belies the threat of genocidal violence on which their interactions with human beings are predicated; if this is a cosmopolitan Utopia, it comes only at the barrel of a gun. I trace Butler's allegorization of the colonial encounter as far back as the legal writings of Francisco de Vitoria, who argued that Spanish colonial violence against the indigenous peoples of North America was justified in the name of opening markets for free trade, as well as to pseudo-Darwinian logics of racial inferiority and superiority and the history of colonial/imperial warfare more generally. The Oankali claim of a constitutive flaw in the human genome that leaves human beings intrinsically unfit to govern themselves—an assertion for which they never provide even the slimmest evidence—is only the latest version of the lie familiar to any student of colonial and imperial history; it is no different than the call to “bring civilization to the barbarians” that loosed centuries of war, rape, and theft.

**Lynn Mortimer, What are You? A Question of Race in Octavia Butler's "The Evening and the Morning and the Night"**

Isiah Lavender, III  
University of Central Arkansas

Diseased bodies are often feared in society. Victims are marked as other and made to suffer by healthy citizens who often degrade and stereotype these people in ways that have similar social impacts to race and racism. Octavia E. Butler's story "The Evening and the Morning and the Night" (1987) investigates societal responses to genetic disease and fears of the other. Set in the near future, the story depicts people suffering with a hereditary disease who are forced to live apart from society in protective wards and are subject to discriminatory treatment because of a fearful general populace influenced by the mass media. The protagonist, Lynn Mortimer, gives a first-person account of her life as a sufferer of Duryea-Gode Disease (DGD), a latent genetic disorder that will end with self-mutilation and death. Ostensibly, this story concerns medicine and science. However, what if this story were also about race and the disease as a metaphor for blackness? How would an audience respond to a main character who is not racially marked in a narrative where the default setting is clearly not white?

**Octavia Butler, Embodied Language, and Partnership**

Justin Roby  
Independent Scholar

In an interview, Octavia Butler reflects that one of her obsessions is "what's done with body knowledge." She clarifies, "What's made of biology is that the people who are in power are going to figure out why this is a good reason for them to stay in power." Addressing this concern in her fiction, Butler dramatizes familiar concepts: what control do humans have over their bodies when affected by apparently biologically determinant conditions such as disease? What power can oppressed individuals exercise when their oppression is also part of a thoroughly symbiotic relationship with another intelligent, sentient animal? Rather than insist upon a cure in the former case or out-and-out revolution in the latter, Butler instead considers what is necessary for negotiating such complex terrain. In "The Evening and the Morning and the Night," she stresses the importance of self-determination in the face of disease and disability, prioritizing community building and determining "what's normal for us". In "Bloodchild," Butler puts forward a complex argument for collaboration with a monstrous oppressor, as humans are used as hosts for the offspring of the Tlic, large insectoid animals. A mutual recognition of sentience leads to increasingly ethical treatment of the humans, but by focusing on the relationship between a Tlic, and a human boy, Butler delineates how desire between others becomes essential to negotiations over power. Further, such negotiations enable the fulfillment of imperatives we think of as purely biological. By privileging negotiation, I put forward the notion that considering the mind and body as integrated may overcome the oppression enabled by privileging the mind over the body. Butler's work requires biology not to be a determining factor but instead an active factor, one which constitutes what living beings have at hand to negotiate through life and with which living beings must negotiate.

## 91. (SF) Animal Studies, Plant Studies, and Ecological Ethics

Oak

Chair: Brian McAllister  
Albany State University

### The Dragon or the Egg: Hard SF, Ecological Ethics, and Thing Power

Sha LaBare  
UC Santa Cruz

Thinking ecologically is perhaps the most important skill of our times. As Timothy Morton argues, ecological readings need not focus on texts with blatant natural and environmentalist themes; like feminist, queer, and race critical approaches, ecological theory is also relevant for thinking about texts with no obvious environmentalist content. As with these other approaches, a radical ecological way of reading may open up thinking that was hitherto unimaginable, thinking with monstrous and transformative potential. With this in mind, "The Dragon or the Egg" draws on one classic hard sf novel – Robert L. Forward's *Dragon's Egg* (1980) – to show how technoscientific worlding might generate alternate ecologies. "The Dragon or the Egg" uses insights from an alternate reading of *Dragon's Egg* to explore what Jane Bennett calls "thing power", a depersonification project that reverses many Enlightenment values and opens the way for ecological thinking beyond its current incarnations. In the process, I will also further my argument that ecology is not only vital to sf, but also and more importantly that sf is vital to ecological thinking.

### Lives of the Monster Plants: The Revenge of the Vegetable in the Age of Animal Studies

Timothy S. Miller  
University of Notre Dame

The strain of posthumanist thought known as critical animal studies, human-animal studies, or simply animal studies has done much to advance our thinking about the place of animals not only in literature but also in their real embodied existence alongside our own. Yet the specter of the monster plant, lurking so often on the fringes of science fictional narratives, may itself challenge some of the unexamined assumptions of a critical formation like animal studies, just as surely as animal studies has effectively challenged the "speciesism" inherent in other critical formations. While this paper does not advocate for the development of a "plant studies," and acknowledges that some forms of deep ecology and ecocriticism position plant life as deserving of equal respect, it will invite further thinking about the implications of taking the word "species" in animal studies more literally, as the word so often seems to mean "mammal species" or "animal species": what happens when we think about the implications of plant *lives*, so often figured in fiction as monstrous lives? Does the monster plant speak to an unease about the boundary between kingdoms that even recent work done in animal studies can have difficulty navigating? Indeed, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, influenced by the speculative turn in critical theory, has recently undertaken a major project examining the "life" of stone, yet even Cohen, in reaching for, as he puts it, what seems "as inhuman a substance as can be found" (58), proceeds directly from animal to mineral and skips the vegetable. Plants, it seems, often get overlooked, walked over – and we must recognize that our daily trampling of the plant persists on both the literal and metaphorical levels. Accordingly, this paper will survey a few of the many monstrous plant narratives in speculative fiction in order to demonstrate how monster plants speak to anxieties as well as potential areas of cross-being communication located on the boundary between the animal and vegetable, for science fiction offers us not only the infamous triffids of post-apocalyptic nightmare, but also more misunderstood monstrous plants like the "ultraphytes" of Joan Slonczewski's recent novel *The Highest Frontier*.

### Packs, Singletons, and Animality in "A Fire Upon The Deep" (or 4 Legs Good, 20 Legs Better)

Bruce Lord  
Trent University

Using several of the perspectives yielded by recent work on animal studies and science fiction as well as Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "becoming animal", I will explore how Vernor Vinge's "A Fire Upon The Deep" examines and critiques standards of personhood and animality. Specifically, I will discuss the novel's negotiation of these categories through interactions between humans and the alien (and simultaneously animal) Tines, an intelligent race whose people are made up of "packs" of individual bodies which may enter and exit a Tinish subject over time. I argue that Vinge at once critiques a humanist delineation between person and animal which is distinctly Cartesian, as well as upsets views of identity and subjecthood (characterised by Deleuze and Guattari as molar) as being stable and inviolable through the Tines and their discourse on humanity. In the Tines, Vinge not only explores how Cartesian rhetoric on personhood might sound from the opposite side of the species divide, but also the possibilities offered by the molecular mode of being championed by Deleuze and Guattari.

## 92. (F) Leaving the Demonized Other Behind

Maple

Chair: Jude Wright  
University of South Florida

### Relativism and Fantasy: Ambiguous Morality in Erikson's *Gardens of the Moon*

Adrian Backmann  
University of Ottawa

This paper compares and contrasts Erikson's narrative to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche found in *Beyond Good and Evil* and how that relates to a greater literary tradition. I show how Erikson's technique creates a realistic world that has deeply linked emotional value and a powerful artistic commentary on the nature of humanity's flaws. By foregoing the classic structure of good versus evil, Erikson has set himself apart from a fantasy community largely devoted to the preservation of cultural values and beliefs. Due in part to Erikson's history as an anthropologist, as well as to the situations depicted in his novels, he seems to be in accordance with moral relativists such as Friedrich Nietzsche who reject short cuts to morality set up by religion and philosophy. Erikson does not employ a dominant moral standpoint to drive the story forward. Instead, the narrative creates sympathy for a large variety of characters, even from opposing factions. As a result, right and wrong only exist in an individual's perspective. There are no romanticized notions of Good and Evil that transcend the day-to-day lives of Erikson's characters. Also, since this is a fantasy set in a secondary world, there are no moral reference points for the reader. This moral ambiguity forces the reader to decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong, a struggle they share with the characters in the novel. This way, Erikson's novel participates in Nietzsche's noble/slave morality as it encourages moral independence. Also, by taking place during a war, Erikson shows the ugliest sides of humanity and shows how even regular people can become murderers. Instead of focusing on a demonized Other, Erikson focuses on the monstrosity of human history. However, *Gardens of the Moon* goes beyond the violence to use the same technique of perspective to affect sympathy and understanding rather than condemnation.

### Morphing Monsters: Orcs as Other in Fantasy Fiction

Helen Young  
University of Sydney

Orcs, are the staple humanoid monster of fantasy fiction. The word 'orc' was used to denote goblin-like creatures as far back as the 1600s but in the modern era, and in fantasy fiction in particular, orcs owe their existence to the imagination of J. R. R. Tolkien. If Tolkien had the first word on them, however, his was not the last. This paper investigates the development of the orc as monstrous Other and the ways that conventions are used, reused, and adapted to explore issues of race and difference. How do images of monster and human, evil and good shift as the genre develops in response to wider social and cultural changes around ethnicity, race, difference and diversity? The paper begins with a brief consideration of some of the sources for Tolkien's orc to illuminate the origin of the genre's conventions and demonstrate their inextricable link to the often monstrous Saracens in the western literature of the Middle Ages. It will then consider works which engage with those conventions directly, including Stan Nicholls' *Orcs* trilogy, and Terry Pratchett's *Unseen Academicals*. The paper argues that orcs have represented a useful, but often problematic Other. Tolkien himself was troubled by his own creation: were they corrupted humanity? Could they ever be anything other than 'evil'? Where had they come from and what ought their fate be in a world of triumphant 'good'? These types of questions are taken up in the later texts this paper explores; I argue that orcs are, in some cases at least, becoming less monstrous and more human.

### "Let's hunt some Orc!": Re-evaluating the Monstrosity of Orcs

A. P. Canavan  
Edgehill University

With the exception of Dragons, one of the most recognisable 'monsters' of genre fantasy is the humble Orc. Orcs, commonly found in hordes™, are the disposable foot soldiers of every evil wizard's army, and are useful opponents/victims for would-be heroes-in-training. They are evil, barbaric, ugly, brutal and, above all, monstrous. But given the trend of modern Genre Fantasy to move away from simplistic moral polarities to more complicated moral relativistic positions, can we still treat and react to Orcs in the same way? With some notable exceptions, Mary Gentle's *Grunts* (1992) and Stan Nicholls' *Orcs* (1999-present), the treatment of Orcs has remained fairly consistent ever since Tolkien popularised them as the enemies of the hero. Using established critical techniques already associated with the fantastic, in particular the monstrous other, otherness, and the psychological readings of monstrosity, the position of the Orc will be established in the context of the genre. Then, by examining how the Orc has been used in related fantasy media, such as the RPG, it will be shown how the function of the Orc has changed into a 'disposable' monster. Lastly, with the Orc as a cypher for almost every evil sentient monster deployed in Genre Fantasy, this paper will examine how we 'read' Orcs and suggest that the true monstrosity is the reader's casual acceptance of racial genocide rather than the Orc's position as Monstrous Other.

### 93. (FTV/H) Monsters and Morality

Cypress

Chair: Brian Rapp  
Independent Scholar

#### **Dracula the Anti-Christ: New Resurrection of an Immortal Monster**

Melissa Olson  
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

In his introduction to *Monster Theory*, Jeffrey Cohen argues that we are what we presently fear. The monster “is born only at this metaphoric crossroads, as an embodiment of a certain cultural moment – of a time, a feeling, and a place.” But if the monster personifies a certain moment in which it is born, what does it mean when a monster survives in popular culture for hundreds of years? Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* has never been out of print, yet it manages to remain relevant to Cohen’s self-described “method of reading cultures from the monsters they engender” by continually redefining itself through new interpretations, both literary and cinematic. Because these interpretations are legion, it is all too easy to overlook an entry into the *Dracula* catalog that actually contributes something original, a fate that has befallen the ill-received 2000 horror film, Wes Craven’s *Dracula 2000*. This film did embody a specific cultural moment, a breath that the world held between two millennia. In their attempt to modernize *Dracula* for the new millennium’s contemporary, cynical audience, the filmmakers incorporated a imaginatively brazen statement about the infamous vampire: that he is actually Judas Iscariot, betrayer of Christ. With this bold leap, *Dracula 2000* resurrects that which contributed to the original inspiration for *Dracula*: anti-Semitism. It has long been argued that Jewish stereotypes contributed to Stoker’s imagery of his title character. Now *Dracula* is cast as the most hated of all Jews, and a dark mirror-image of Jesus himself. Just as he drank the symbolic blood of Jesus at the Last Supper, Judas/*Dracula* now “drinks the blood of all God’s children,” giving them a new, damned eternal life. The cinematic *Dracula* even goes so far as to promise God that he will remake the world in his own image, bringing full-circle the myth of the Jewish threat to Christendom.

#### **"We're Them and They're Us": Zombies, Evil and Moral Agency**

June M. Pulliam  
Louisiana State University

Unlike other monsters such as the vampire, werewolf or mass murdering maniac—the zombie is not evil. Evil necessitates that one have moral agency to make a conscious choice to do right or wrong, to do good or to cause harm. Yet the defining characteristic of the zombie is a lack of moral agency. Zombies are slaves, either literally, as is the case in earlier works such as the 1931 film *White Zombie*, where they constitute an undead labor force, or figuratively, as in Romero’s films, where they are in thrall to an insatiable desire for human flesh. As slaves, zombies lack the will to have moral agency, and so cannot be evil, even when they commit acts that harm humans. Humans, however, are evil, which is revealed when they are in proximity to zombies. Zombie masters are evil because they deprive the living (or the dead) of their will. Yet humans who terminate zombies with extreme prejudice are also evil. While humans might have to defend themselves against zombies bent on cannibalism, their desire to exterminate zombies prevents them from seeing the creature’s humanity and affiliation with the living. In this presentation, I consider the zombie, from its beginning in Lafcadio Hearn’s “The Country of the Comers-Back” and William Seabrook’s *The Magic Island*, to more recent incarnations in George Romero’s *Night of the Living Dead* films, and in twenty-first century texts such as Max Brooks’ *World War Z* Seth Grahame-Smith’s literary mashup *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. In all of these works, the zombie tells us about human moral failings.

#### **From Monster to Hero: The Evolution of the Vampire in Fiction and Film**

Antoinette Winstead  
Our Lady of the Lake University

“From Monster to Hero. . .” examines how the image of the vampire has evolved from that of a monster to that of a romantic hero and the implications behind this evolution. Beginning with the image of the vampire presented in *Nosferatu* (1922) and *Dracula* (1931), the paper will provide a historical perspective on the initial concept of the vampire as a demonic figure. Moreover, it will show how this image gradually changed to that of a misunderstood anti-hero with the introduction of Barnabas Collins in *Dark Shadows* (ABC 1966 – 1971) and Lestat in Anne Rice’s *Interview with a Vampire* and how these changes reflected the cultural changes taking place in the late 1960s and the mid-1980s. In addition, the paper will address the latest incarnation of the vampire as seen in the *Sookie Stackhouse* and *Twilight* series, as well as in the British TV series *Being Human*, wherein all cases the vampire has evolved beyond merely sucking blood to actual intercourse, procreation, and, in the case of *Being Human*, eating food. As this paper will demonstrate, the vampire no longer represents an object of revulsion, but rather represents an object of desire – a deadly desire.



## 94. (FTV/CYA) Monstrosity and Deviance in Supernatural Teen Dramas on Television *Palm*

Chair: Victoria Byard  
University of Leicester

### **"I don't know whether to kill it or lick it": Sex, Love, and Power in MTV's *Teen Wolf***

Elson Bond  
Tarleton State University

MTV's series *Teen Wolf*, which debuted in the summer of 2011, does update the adolescent lycanthropy genre, but, on the whole, the teen drama retains more tropes than it modifies, re-skinning rather than remodeling the parallels between ordinary growing up and shape-shifting. In particular, it retains such elements as absent parents, work/school tensions, male athletic success, sexual anxieties, and physical transformation. Its innovations—which, I argue, are significant to this generation of teen viewers—include more lethal, self-reliant female characters, more sexually explicit content, a focus on lacrosse, and an increase in the male mentor figure, connected implicitly to a homoerotic element that seems new to the genre.

### ***Dawson's Creek* of the Undead: How the Television Series *The Vampire Diaries* Puts the 'Ick!' back in Gothic**

Deborah Christie  
ECPI University

This paper examines the ways in which the television adaptation of *The Vampire Diaries* incorporates traditional gothic elements in a way that revises the "vampire with a soul" element common in late twentieth-century vampire romances such as Anne Rice's *Lestat* series and Joss Whedon's television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and more recent works such as the *Twilight* trilogy. In particular, *The Vampire Diaries* resists the easy connection between love and redemption and instead allows its monstrous characters to be monsters, albeit dangerously attractive ones.

### **The Ties that Bind: Family Values in *The Secret Circle***

Margo Collins  
DeVry College

Ostensibly the story of a group of genetic witches in a small harbor town, *The Secret Circle* (a television series adapted from L.J. Smith's novels) focuses upon the ways in which a "bound circle"—a coven of six teen witches—must learn to work magic together in order to protect themselves from witch-hunters and to learn the secret of their parents' untimely demise. In its focus on family ties, both among genetically connected family members and among the members of the created family of the bound circle, the show takes the traditional gothic fascination with the past (particularly the decayed past) and imbues it with new energy.

## 95. (PCS/VPA) Monstrous Narratives

*Magnolia*

Chair: Eden Lee Lackner  
Victoria University of Wellington

### **Monsters and *Mass Effect*: Exploring the Fear of the Posthuman**

Amanda M. Schultz  
University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

Bioware's recent titles *Mass Effect* and *Mass Effect 2* explore the contemporary fears of artificial intelligence. Each sect of AI represents varying ideas based on the posthumanism concept, showing the player three different possibilities of AI potentially causing the end of the human race.

### **Sweetness and Night: The Lure of the Monstrous in Fan Fictions and Audiences**

Barbara Lucas  
Independent Scholar

Given the fact that popular media often casts the monstrous as tragically romantic, it should come as no surprise that a majority of fan works mirror that tendency and result in artifacts where the monstrous sparkles instead of stuns, where it is tamed and restrained within the comfortable confines of traditional romance genre tropes. In discussing the intersection of the monstrous and the erotic, Clive Barker, whose work has been called "a vast torture garden of forbidden delights," notes that "[w]e want the erotic experience to remove us from the mundane, the banal. We want eroticism to transfigure us." This impulse in which the dark erotic/romantic captures a loss of control and of self also exists within a much smaller subgenre of fan works, and by examining several fannish artifacts and fans' responses to them, we will explore the various pleasures offered by these artifacts.

### **Monstrous Controls: The Illusion of Control in Survival Horror Video Games**

Edward Howarth  
Longwood University

Clive Barker notes that “[Horror] shows us that the control we believe we have is purely illusory, and that every moment we teeter on chaos and oblivion.” In horror literature and film, it is this instability of control that lends itself to the fear we feel when, as mere observers, we look on helplessly at the characters fumbling through the dark. However, though this lack of control is true of literature and film, video games - where the observer becomes participant, the reader becomes player- prove the exception. Physically guiding characters through murky swamps, mouldering corridors, demonic classrooms, the control given to us in survival horror games is far from illusory. Instead, we are granted direct control over the characters, control that allows us to successfully combat the various fiends and horrors dealt to us throughout the game’s narrative. However, if fear is generated through a loss of control, a question is raised regarding how a horror video game can create fear if the player is constantly in control. This proposed essay will explore how survival horror video games use controls to make us feel out of control, pursuing the idea that, though we may seem to have control, we are never truly in control.

### **96. (H/FTV) Dirty Little Secrets**

Chair: Beth Feagan  
Longwood University

*Dogwood*

### **Sexing the Vampire in Gothic Literature: How Repressed Sexuality Shaped a Modern Monster**

Angela Still  
University of Southern Maine

In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, British society was restructured along unbendable gender lines. Overt repression of women and homosexuals not only intensified, but became the social norm, and was, in some cases, enforceable by law. Gender roles were strictly redefined, resulting in an idealized definition of family and family life. This definition was so confining, anyone who did not adhere to it became a social outcast. This environment spawned Gothic literature, a popular form of fiction that allowed the “other” to express its fears and frustrations in a safe but public forum through the use of highly stylized settings, family plots, and monstrous beings. Gothic fiction’s extreme popularity faded somewhat in the mid-twentieth century, though it never completely died out. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, the genre enjoyed a revival in America, where many of the same issues that originally gave birth to Gothic had resurfaced. In 1976, Anne Rice published *Interview with the Vampire*, and the Gothic novel once again reflected society’s anxiety about gender roles and their definitions. The success of Rice’s debut injected both the Gothic genre and the vampire myth with new life, providing the catalyst that would pave the way for the vampire to become the sociosexual phenomenon it is today – a preternatural creature who embraces a future without the limitations of gender – and for Gothic literature to regain its place at the forefront of popular fiction.

### **Female Abominations: Undermining Male Hegemony in H. Rider Haggard’s *She***

Gareth Hadyk-DeLodder  
University of Florida

Nineteenth-century monstrosity comes, fittingly enough, in many shapes and sizes. It is not surprising, then, that a historical period which witnessed a meteoric rise in evolutionary thought, degeneration theory, and psychological inquiry would have given birth to or popularized some of the archetypal monsters that we recognize and embrace today: the vampire, the doubled man (Jekyll and Hyde), Frankenstein’s original monster, and many more. There is a wealth of critical readings concerning each, which help us to map out many of the ways in which we can view the “monster” as an essential part of a nineteenth-century or a Victorian zeitgeist. Fewer readings are available, however, of some lesser known but equally “horrifying” characters, including, as I will argue here, a radically “Other” priestess figure who was prominent in some of the fictions of H. Rider Haggard and Marie Corelli. Over the course of this presentation, I will explore how the trope of the foreign priestess, whether located in a fantastical, alternative geography (Haggard) or a fictional history (Corelli), destabilized and, in some cases, violently subverted many established Victorian epistemologies. Specifically, I would like to outline some of the ways that Haggard’s *She* (1886-1887) and Corelli’s *Ardath* (1889) position their respective priestess figures—the iconic Ayesha in Haggard’s text and Lysia in Corelli’s—as a counterpoint to orthodox narratives of female ontology and agency. Published within two years of each other, both novels were extraordinarily popular, outselling many of their more respected (and now considered canonical) contemporaries. The two novels, then, are uniquely situated to help frame some of my questions concerning the nature of male horror after their encounters with the two women, and how Ayesha and Lysia embody Victorian anxieties about science, religion, and gender.

### **Weaponizing Seduction: Exploring Sexual Violence in Ghost Fiction**

Manuel Tejeda  
Barry University  
Noelle Bowles  
Kent State – Trumbull

Ghosts are at once the most ubiquitous undead as well as the most distant and secretive of their kin. They are culturally universal and as once living humans, are psychologically familiar to us. We can sympathize with their motives and circumstances at their death to rationalize their current activities and existence despite their poor methods of communication, through psychic mediums or weird electronic devices of dubious effect. Yet that familiarity extends only to the psychological as the physical experience is only available to ghosts as memory and to us only as imagination. As once living beings, we presume all undead types share the former sexuality of the living from which they were created. Yet that sexuality, particular the seductive elements of the sexual experience are overlooked in the fiction of ghosts. The corporeal undead have very clear reasons for corporeal seductive engagement with the living: vampires/blood. While other undead employ seduction for some form

of cannibalism, ghostly seduction is almost exclusively sexually violent. The seductive engagement of ghosts and the sexual violence accompanying that engagement are the central points of exploration of this proposal.

## **97. (CYA) Reflecting Reality: YA Dystopias and Their Real World Contexts**

*Captiva A*

Chair: Elaine Martaus  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

### **The Monstrosity of Humans in *The Hunger Games*: How We Got There and Why We're So Enthralled**

Andrew Seeger  
Concordia University Wisconsin

Imagine a game of Tribond where you had to uncover the common bond between reality television, the Iraq War, and the Greek myth of Theseus. What would you come up with? Author Suzanne Collins came up with *The Hunger Games*, a post-apocalyptic YA science-fiction trilogy. With this knowledge, one can certainly make connections not only with current reality TV shows like *Survivor*, *Amazing Race*, and *The Bachelor/The Bachelorette*, but also with stories like Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" and Stephen King's novels *The Long Road* and *The Running Man*. Other lesser-known works also share characteristics with the trilogy, including early reality show *American Gladiators*, Australian film *Turkey Shoot* (Escape 2000) and Japanese films *Battle Royale* and *Series 7: The Contenders*. *The Hunger Games* reflects not only connections with literature and other media, but also with society's real-life fascination with violence, all-too-real historic events, current protests and uprisings against authoritarian powers, and dystopian visions of the future. In this paper I would like to explore the different ways in which these novels capture the Zeitgeist and our addiction to violence that goes at least as far back as the Roman Colosseum.

### ***The Hunger Games* as Social Commentary: Monsters R Us**

Scott D. Vander Ploeg  
Madisonville Community College

The *Hunger Games* concept is being regularly referenced in relation to dystopian societies. Reviewers and critics are commonly caught up in measuring the degree to which Collins is presenting us with the new *Handmaid's Tale*, or 1984. While that is a reasonably true perception, it is also a distraction from the main lines of development that Collins is working from, the scarcity-strife story. Instead of focusing on utopic/dystopic tropes, a Marxist-reading of *Hunger Games* reveals a strategy that is two-pronged: a condemnation of totalitarianism and an underdog advocacy to build reader sympathy for the protagonists—who are emphatically class tagged. It seems clear in the first of the trilogy that Collins is more focused on establishing characters we care about, and jogging our sympathies by providing them with humble backgrounds, almost Dickensian—"please, sir, may I have some more...". The dystopic Panem government is a faceless monstrosity, no doubt, but the narrative is less focused on emphasizing this than it is in giving us the characters of Katniss and Peeta.

### **We the Monsters: Feeding the System and Devouring Ourselves in M.T. Anderson's *Feed***

Brandi J. Venable  
Rutgers University-Camden

This presentation will focus on the young adult novel *Feed* (2002), written by M. T. Anderson. In his novel, Anderson presents a futuristic consumer-driven culture controlled by corporations. Humans are implanted with "feeds" at an early age, which stream the latest trends and sway purchasing decisions. Natural resources are depleted or polluted, and environments are mere artificial creations. The plot follows the narrator Titus and his relationship with Violet, a girl who resists the feed. Anderson shows what happens to their relationship when Violet's feed ultimately malfunctions, endangering her life. In *Feed*, Anderson illustrates how the natural world, privacy, relationships, free will, and language are all susceptible to decay and destruction in a culture with a monstrous appetite for material goods. Although the book is geared towards a teenage audience, it is pertinent to more than one generation of consumers. The book serves as a fictional platform that encourages dialogue about the horrifying possibilities of capitalism, corporations, and technology if left unchecked. Approaching the text from a Marxist perspective, I will argue that the monsters of today are more ambiguous than the monsters of the past, and are often disguised behind human visages. In this dystopian novel, fetishizing material culture comes at the price of objectifying each other and eroding human relationships. Perhaps the most adept function of Anderson's work is to demonstrate the dualistic nature of media and consumption. It is at once inhumane—breeding corruption and greed—and also incredibly seductive and alluring (a dichotomy which is present in other monstrous beings). It is the latter characteristics that drive us to continuously feed the system. By doing so, we become our own monsters, consumed by an insatiable desire for material objects to such an extreme that we devour our humanity in the process of acquisition.

## 98. (F/SF) Medieval Tales Re-told

Captiva B

Chair: Timothy H. Evans  
Western Kentucky University

### Three Monsters in Transformation: Grendel, Grendel's Mother, and the Dragon of Michael Crichton's *Eaters of the Dead*

Marie Nelson  
University of Florida

The dragon of John Gardner's *Grendel* had it right when he told Grendel the reason for his existence was to scare men to glory, but he could have added that to succeed the monster had to be sufficiently fear inspiring — or monstrous — to accomplish his purpose. This reading of Michael Crichton's re-telling of the *Beowulf* story with reference to parallels from his source gives attention to the power of Grendel, Grendel's mother, and Korgon the dragon to inspire fear, and concludes that Grendel's mother, though she, as an *old* woman, is hardly the "terrible mother" as Jane Chance defines the type in *Woman as Hero in Old English Literature*, is the monster whose confrontation leads to the recognition Buliwyf receives from his people.

### "Our Good Days in Sherwood Are Done...": E. Charles Vivian's *Robin Hood* as a Lost World Fantasy

Kristin Noone  
University of California, Riverside

In his *Science Fiction After 1900*, Brooks Landon observes that, in contrast to the optimism and exoticism of the American pulps, British speculative fiction of the early twentieth century "was much less confident and adventurous," a more serious and even dystopian subgenre of pulp science fiction and science fantasy. E. Charles Vivian (Charles Henry Cannell), the editor of three British pulp magazines and author of numerous supernatural and "lost world" scientific fantasies from 1907 to 1947, stands at the forefront of this movement; but though Vivian has received some attention from science fiction scholars in recent years, his Robin Hood novel (*Robin Hood and His Merry Men*, 1927), tends to be critically neglected, or at most noted as one of the influences on the television series *Robin of Sherwood*. The aim of my project is thus twofold: to bring Vivian's Robin Hood tale into dialogue with his other works, especially the fantasies *A King There Was* and *Fields of Sleep*, written roughly around the same time; but also to read his Robin Hood as a complicating part of that science-fantasy, lost-world, dystopian tradition. In his *Medieval Identity Machines*, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen reconceptualizes medieval identity as assemblage: a knight, for example, is not just a man, but the man plus his armor plus his horse plus his weaponry and training: a hybrid, composite figure, much like the science-fictional post-human, or cyborg, described by Katherine Hayles. This connection offers a useful way to read Vivian's medievalism: Robin Hood becomes Robin Hood only when he is part of the forest, attached to his bow, and so on, in much the same way that the narrator of Vivian's *A King There Was* (1926) only identifies himself in terms of the stories he knows how to tell. *A King There Was* ends with an apocalyptic flood; *Robin Hood and His Merry Men* ends with the death of Robin Hood. But in both novels survivors remain to tell the stories of glorious deeds and great heroes; though the fantastic world itself may be lost, Vivian's stories argue, the memory need not be: the stories become pieces of our own assembled identities, and thus there is hope even in dystopia. Vivian's work thus takes an important step in the rewriting of Robin Hood as part of the fantastic tradition, particularly, in this case, as a form of lost world that nevertheless can be accessed through the act of fantasizing.

### Every Knight Has His Dawn: Victorian and Medieval Chivalric Traditions in *The Once and Future King*

Emerson Storm Fillman Richards  
University of Florida

T. H. White's quadrilogy *The Once and Future King* focuses on Arthur's attempt to codify chivalry, create a Round Table, unite his kingdom. Having written a thesis on Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* at Queen's College of Cambridge University, White was in a position to showcase his knowledge of strands of the Arthurian tradition, from the incipient Matière de Bretagne, to Malory's work, through to Tennyson's re-adaptation in *The Idylls of the King* in the nineteenth century. In this presentation, I examine White's quadrilogy as an example of the contrast of "Medieval" and "Victorian" elements of chivalric code and the narratives of the careers of knights in the Arthurian tradition, I also sketch the relevance of these elements for subsequent retellings of the tradition. In his letters to his mentor, White describes certain influences on his works. Using these documents, and my own analysis of primary texts, I will consider Sir Gawaine and his clan (his brothers Gaheris, Gareth and Agravaire) as "medieval" knights in contrast with Sir Lancelot and his 'family' (his son, Galahad, his lover, Guinevere and his wife, Elaine) as a "Victorian" representation of chivalry. The medieval aspects of chivalry will be informed primarily by Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur* and the "Victorian" concept will come from Alfred Lord Tennyson's *The Idylls of the King*. Through this categorization, I will consider the evolution of chivalry by dissecting this amalgamation of cycles, traditions and materials that constitute White's works. The endurance of Arthurian material is due in part to the ability to lend itself to ideological repurposings. *The Once and Future King*, for example, signifies more than a recapitulation of a medieval tradition—it is immediately relevant to the 20th and 21st century. *The Sword in the Stone* demonstrates White's socio-political critique of modern modes of government (Communism, Fascism, monarchy, etc). By understanding reuses of medieval narrative by a contemporary author whose education emphasized medieval literature, it is possible, I suggest, for modern readers to better understand how the broader and more varied Arthurian tradition has been received and reworked.

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**Saturday March 24, 2012 8:30-10:00 a.m.**

**102. (FTV/SF) *Doctor Who*(s)**

Cypress

Chair: Tom Steward  
Bournemouth University

**"Count the Shadows": The Intersections of Print and Digital Monsters and Archives in Steven Moffat's *Doctor Who***

Sarah Lozier  
University of California, Riverside

In *The Order of Books*, Roger Chartier claims that the dream of a universal library is one that "can be found throughout the history of Western civilization" (62). Following the advent of print, a physical universal "library without walls" became bound to the realm of dreams and fantasies, an impossibility in real life due to the sheer number of books made available by printing technologies. Instead of a building, the dreamers of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries did attempt to create libraries without walls, in the form of catalogues and anthologies, which were far from universal. With the current production of the digital archive, the dream of universality has again become a potential possibility, but with the sacrifice of a physical space. The dream of a physical universal library is reawakened in the 2008 *Dr Who* library episodes, "Silence in the Library" and "Forest of the Dead," where it becomes a nightmare. The Doctor and his companion travel to the library planet, which is literally without walls, and is home to "every book ever written." Upon their arrival, the pair notices that the library is suspiciously empty. This suspicion becomes fear upon the realization that the library is not just empty; it is essentially under attack by the Vashta Nerada – carnivorous, swarms of spores grown from wood, the material used to make paper and books. Essentially, the collection of printed materials has resulted in greater, more aggressive swarms, creating a literally print-based monster. In the second part of the episode, we learn that the Vashta Nerada have not succeeded in killing all of the library's visitors, but that the library has "saved" them as digital files in its databank. While they may have been saved from the print-monsters, the library's visitors are hardly safe and sound, but are instead "living" in a digital hell, populated by copies without originals, where "life" has collapsed into bits of coded events and time no longer exists. Considering this episode through the idea of Chartier's "library without walls," its 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries' print-based book catalogue, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century's digital archive, there is not only a clash of materiality, but also a clash of monsters. My paper will focus on these clashes to discuss the monsters we create as we move through media and technologies, and how these monsters affect our reawakened dreams/nightmares of a universal library without walls.

**The Monstrous and the Divine in *Doctor Who*: The Role of Christian Imagery in Russell T. Davies's *Doctor Who* Revival**

Jennifer Miller  
Valparaiso University

In his *Politics*, Aristotle claims, "He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god" (I.1253a27). Such a statement seems apt when considering the character of the Doctor in the long-running BBC series *Doctor Who*. He lives alone in his TARDIS, sufficient unto himself, with seemingly infinite knowledge, several high-tech gadgets, and the ability to regenerate—a combination that renders him nearly invincible. This description makes it easy to understand the Doctor as a god, a characterization that is linguistically reinforced by his designation as a Time Lord. Upon closer examination, however, the use of Christian imagery in the four seasons (plus special episodes) of Russell T. Davies' revival of the show, particularly as seen in the Christmas specials, suggests that the Doctor falls closer to the other end of Aristotle's spectrum; thus he is better described as a beast, or possibly even a monster. These episodes, including "The Christmas Invasion" (2005), "The Runaway Bride" (2006), and "Voyage of the Damned" (2007), pervert traditional Christmas icons, including angels, the Christmas star, and Santa; these "uncanny" images, as Freud would call them, highlight how close the Doctor's actions are to being a twisted version of godlike actions—that is, monstrous. Such imagery prefigures the dramatic events at the end of Davies' tenure on the show, thus connecting four seasons that in many ways could be thought of discretely. Paying attention to the use of Christian imagery is key to understanding Russell T. Davies' four *Doctor Who* seasons as a single narrative arc, despite changes in both the personality (and casting) of the Doctor and the identity of his companions.

**WHO is the Monster: Profiling *Doctor Who* as Antivillain or Antihero**

Novella Brooks de Vita  
Independent Scholar

The enigmatic Doctor Who is the salvation of many characters and worlds, but he is also the bogeyman that haunts characters, making them choose between their sense of safety and normalcy and sacrificing themselves to their own worst fears for the benefit of others. The nameless Doctor is a trickster figure. His personal vulnerability and power over others mirror that of the Fool of the classic postmodernist Italian film, *La Strada*. The Fool, true to form, uses such philosophical and pro-independent-choice words that he pushes the intellectually impaired Gelsomina back into the service of her abuser instead of into potential freedom with him. Then again, the Fool may have been aware that Zampano would probably have come after them both and beaten or killed Gelsomina for choosing the Fool over him. The Fool and the Doctor give their companions the power of making their own choices, and the tragedy of dealing with the consequences of either choice. To those counted among the Doctor's friends and fans, the Doctor is an antihero. To his enemies, however, the Doctor is the perfect antivillain. The enemies see the havoc the Doctor wreaks and the destruction of entire civilizations he causes, always with a reasonable excuse for his actions. The Doctor's newest enemy, as of the end of his season adventures in 2011, is the Silence, a religious order bent on saving the future from the Doctor's future conquests. To see the Silence in action, one may have the initial impression that the organization is simply evil. But when one realizes that the Silence is desperately and destructively pursuing what it believes to be a noble goal, making the members of the Silence accidental villains, one must wonder if, like Samurai Jack in the episode *Tale of X9*, the protagonist one has followed and rooted for so long is not really the good guy. Samurai Jack butchers X9, a loving robot blackmailed into pursuing him. If Jack is as honorable as viewers have been led to believe in three and a half previous seasons, why would he slaughter X9? Similarly, why would the Doctor have eliminated his own people? Why does he,

in so many episodes, allow entire species to meet their ends? Does the Doctor have no other choice? Is this favoritism of the human species over the rest of the universe? Do other lives not count? When an event is not locked in time, are the Doctor's choices really the best he can do? This essay explores the Doctor's roles as antihero, antivillain, trickster, and, maybe, monster.

### 103. (SF/FTV) Adapted Bodies

Oak

Chair: Maura Heaphy  
The Ohio State University

#### Virtual Victory and Real Defeat: Game Space in William Gibson's *Burning Chrome*

Kenton Taylor Howard  
Florida Atlantic University

William Gibson's "Burning Chrome" presents a virtual world that resembles single player graphical computer games of the 1980's; however, that space more closely resembles the text-based multi-user online games described in Sherry Turkle's *Life on the Screen*. Jack and Bobby, the young pair of hackers in Gibson's story, become deeply invested in the virtual "cowboy" personae they have created for themselves, much like the players of Multi User Dungeon (MUD) games Turkle describes in the chapter "Aspects of the Self." Turkle notes that deep investment in these online games can be beneficial for some of the players she studies, enabling them to create virtual personae to interact with others and improve their social skills within a safe space. However, Jack and Bobby more closely resemble a player named Stewart from Turkle's study, who believes he gained nothing from playing the games, that they "stripped away some of his defenses and gave him nothing in return" (Turkle 198). Like Stewart, Jack and Bobby are able to become powerful figures in the virtual realm they inhabit, but are unable to translate their success from the virtual world to the physical. Though they succeed in hacking into a network owned by a powerful information broker known as Chrome and become immensely rich in the process, neither are able to win the heart of Rikki, the young aspiring movie star who they both truly want. Gibson's "Burning Chrome" presents a world in which interaction with a gamelike virtual reality becomes a key component of the characters lives, becoming their model for all other interaction. Jack and Bobby believe that victory in this game world will allow make for success in the real world, but find that the victory has given them "nothing in return" (Turkle 198).

#### Hyperreality, Simulacrum and the Monstrous Reborn in P. D. James's *The Children of Men*

Matthew Masucci  
State College of Florida

P. D. James's *The Children of Men* demonstrates, in some ways, science fiction as cultural prophecy. While the novel itself chronicles a dystopic England dealing with world-wide sterility, there are various cultural reactions that have found their way into the culture of reality. One such item is the "reborn doll." Reborn dolls are highly detailed simulations of real babies. Several news documentaries brought attention to the collectors of these dolls. In James's novel, some women replaced the lack of children with very detailed dolls and treated them as real. This, in a way, draws some parallels between this type of behavior not only in fiction, but in reality as well. The goal of this essay will be to discuss the uncanny valley in relation to the reborn phenomenon in both *The Children of Men* and reality in relation to Jean Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality. As noted by Baudrillard in *Simulacra and Simulation*, the core of the hyperreal is the "liquidation of all referentials" (Baudrillard 2). In the novel, the dolls take leave the realm of simulacra and enter the world of the hyperreal as the dolls themselves become the signified. Ultimately, the discussion will examine how this "uncanny valley" becomes monstrous.

#### Peripheral Visions: Aliens, Monstrosity, and Posthumanism in Peter Watts' *Blindsight*

Adam Guzkowski  
Trent University

Canadian sf author Peter Watts' 2006 novel *Blindsight* is an alien contact novel wherein a crew that is mostly human – individually and collectively – is sent out into space to examine what seems to be an alien vessel. The crew's encounters with difference, as well as the representations of various members of the crew as at times other, monstrous and/or posthuman, allow for a reading of the novel that examines questions of humanity and otherness, not only in relation to the aliens, but also in relation to the vampire captain of the vessel sent from Earth, as well as amongst the crew in their various physical, technological and/or psychologically differences. Sf texts featuring aliens can be read as offering metaphorical engagements with the politics of human difference. Moreover, such texts can also be read as offering an engagement with the notion of difference in and of itself, and in doing so, providing opportunities for reflections on how difference is positioned in relation to what it means to be human, and on how otherness might be read as monstrous and/or posthuman. Through a critical examination of representations of difference in *Blindsight*, this paper explores the novel's complex engagements with the meaning and implications of otherness, as well as the rhetorical tension, mutual interdependency, and slippage between centre and periphery, self and other, human and alien, human and monster, and human and posthuman. In doing so, I will endeavour to illuminate the manner in which sf texts such as this can be read as creative reflections on and critical engagements with their cultural and political contexts and as useful texts for exploring the meaning and implications of difference in Canada and beyond.

## 104. (CYA) Classic Monsters, Reinterpreted

Maple

Chair: Katie Kapurch  
University of Texas at Austin

### Meeting the Monster's Maker: The Evolving Mad Scientist in Literature for Young Readers

Farran Norris  
Illinois State University

My presentation discusses the trajectory of the mad scientist in literature for children and young adults. Scholars such as Glen Allen, Roslynn Haynes, and David Skal have explored the mad scientist as an archetypal figure, particularly in science fiction, but most scholarship on the mad scientist focuses on texts and genres targeting adult audiences. My work examines the development of the mad scientist in children's and young adult literature, focusing on novels, illustrated novels, and picture books, none of which have been examined within the scope of the current scholarly discussion. I also argue that studying scientists' portrayals in texts for young readers is important because the texts encountered during readers' formative years establish how they view science and scientists. In mapping and analyzing the mad scientist's trajectory in children's literature, I draw from some foundational texts that contribute to the field of monster theory, such as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*. Monster theory is crucial to my investigation of the mad scientist because I argue that mad scientists are almost always defined by the monsters they create as well as their own monstrous actions. Some mad scientists who model this definition include those from Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. I show that these classics influence the representations of mad scientists that adults present to young readers in twentieth and twenty-first century texts. The sample children's and YA texts I have chosen demonstrate how mad scientists have evolved, beginning as mysterious brainiacs in YA mystery novels and then becoming comical, bumbling misfits in silly picture books. In more contemporary texts, this evolution continues with the dark wizard of the apocalypse in serious and often violent novels for young adults, such as the recent publications *The Monstrumologist*, *The Hunchback Assignments*, and *Atherton: House of Power*. By examining this evolution, I argue that ultimately, these depictions of mad scientists negatively influence the way science and scientists are constructed for our children today.

### Does Victor's Creature Still Belong to Shelley?: An Examination into the Creature Today in John Rose's *Monstergrrrls* and Adam Rex's *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich*

Shannon Cummings  
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

In *Frankenstein: A Cultural History*, Susan Hitchcock charts the movement of Mary Shelley's creature from literary monstrosity to pop-culture iconoclast. Hitchcock understands "[t]he story of Frankenstein's monster [a]s a myth of claiming long-forbidden knowledge and facing the consequences" (4), and it is this search for knowledge and its effects which has helped to ingrain the character Frankenstein in the public consciousness. The surprisingly short movement from Shelley's bone-chilling creature to the misnamed contemporary Frankenstein who clutters the shelves of the children's sections of book stores is framed by a character's search for knowledge. This search taps into, if not subconsciously relates to, the public's sentiment towards the Other, innocence, and the nature of responsibility. In comparing Mary Shelley's creature with the young adult Frankie in *Monstergrrrls* Book 1: *Out From the Shadows* and with the mischievous Frankenstein of Adam Rex, striking differences between the characters in their physical descriptions and educations are apparent. In *The Contested Castle*, Kate Ellis asks "Who would listen to the monster and give him the encouragement original thought requires?" (185), and Adam Rex and John Rose present this encouragement to the ailing creature that Shelley created. They each create a contemporary Frankenstein that resides within each side of the children's age spectrum, child and young adult, and attempt to explore the ailments and desires that control their creatures while grappling with their humanity as a Frankenstein. As Shelley crafts a fully articulate, emotional, and thoughtful creature, Rex and Rose create complementary Frankensteins who present an Othering attuned to modern sensibilities. However seemingly disparate, the creatures found in these modern children's texts still bear striking similarities to Shelley's original creature. The movement of the creature from a figure of horror to a whimsical buffoon is superficially done to soften his overt Otherness in Shelley's novel. In the children's texts discussed this Otherness is simply presented in a different way. Though all texts are marketed towards different age groups, the currents of similarity between them are more noticeable than their differences.

### The Slaying Siren: Monstrous Beauty in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

Rodney DeaVault  
Simmons College

This paper will explore the concept of Buffy Summers as a contemporary incarnation of the siren, whose deceptively innocent appearance enables her to alternately destroy and create monstrosity. Buffy, who appears to be a fragile all-American beauty, is deeply entrenched within the supernatural world and contains a monstrous essence that is the source of her power and a calamitous force to all around her. The entire concept of the Slayer involves exploiting the notion of feminine beauty as inherently deceptive and destructive. The slayer line was created when a group of Shadow Men infused a captive girl with the soul and spirit of a demon. Buffy's nubile body acts as a siren song to demons, attracting them to what seems to be an easy kill. In this way her beauty helps her fulfill her destiny and destroy monsters, but that same pulchritude also draws humans who come to love her. For these characters, Buffy's delusive vulnerability proves equally deleterious, drawing monstrosity out of them even as it helps her slay those considered "monstrous." This is most evident in the plight of Angel, a vampire with a soul who is Buffy's first paramour. Having transcended his bloodthirsty nature, Angel is almost human until he falls in love with Buffy. Their first kiss draws out Angel's vampirism and consummating their love makes him lose his soul entirely. Riley Finn, another boyfriend, tries discovering his inner-monster by letting vampires suck his blood in an effort to better understand Buffy's needs. Willow and Xander, her closest friends, are subsumed into and later deformed by the supernatural, becoming incapable of sustaining relationships with anyone outside the preternatural realm. In "The Puppet Show" as Buffy fights a demon trapped inside a puppet, she quips that it will never become human. The puppet retorts,

"Neither will you," recognizing the demonic element inside her. Though she battles monsters nightly, the greatest monster in Buffy the Vampire Slayer may in fact be Buffy herself.

### 105. (FTV) Dark Carnival: Burton, Russell Davies, Guillermo del Toro

Cypress

Chair: Regina Hansen  
Boston University

#### "There is always strangeness in things": the Monstrous in Russell T. Davies's *Dark Season* and *Century Falls*

Victoria Byard  
University of Leicester

Before his much-vaunted series *Queer as Folk* and the revival of *Doctor Who* in 2005, Russell T. Davies worked primarily in children's television. My paper will examine his two telefantasy series for Children's BBC, *Dark Season* and *Century Falls*, identifying not only the monstrous at the heart of these texts and how it is represented and contained, but also the wider role of the monstrous within British children's television. Children's television has traditionally been seen and constructed as a 'safe space'. Consequently, representations of the monstrous are more difficult to depict and negotiate. However, in *Dark Season* and *Century Falls*, monstrosity is shown as both manifest and in the process of becoming manifest, complicating the idea of childhood and children's television. By situating the child centrally as agent and viewer, and potentially as a figure of the Bakhtinian carnivalesque, the texts suggest that the child has responsibilities and responses in the face of monstrosity as well as to the society that produces it, thereby making those 'safe spaces' problematic. Gender and sly allusions to sexuality interact with the representation of monstrosity within both texts, as Davies acknowledges in his paratextual description of *Dark Season*'s female antagonist as a 'Devil-worshipping Nazi lesbian'. Spectres, cyborgs, and gestalt psychic projections also appear as liminal figures of monstrosity, problematising its identification. This paper will discuss these representations not only as they relate to gender and sexuality, but also in terms of transgenerational communication, pedagogy, and of social and ideological paradigms. All of these are complicated and made uncanny by what Davies suggests is always and already there, buried in the past or underfoot, haunting the present until it is disinterred.

#### The True Monsters in Tim Burton's Films

Deborah Aguilar Escalante  
Chapman University

For a fan of Fantastic cinema, it should come to no surprise that monsters are often featured as the hapless heroes in Tim Burton's films. These monsters include a multitude of misfit protagonists, whose physical deformities range from an unfinished creation with scissors for hands, to a human who transforms into a bat, to a skeletal king whose bones become weary of the same routine. But if these physically unusual 'monsters' are the protagonists of Burton's films, then one must question how Burton conveys their iniquitous antagonists. This essay argues that Burton utilizes Carnavalesque imagery to depict and portray a socially monstrous sense of decay in his films. This essay is divided into three parts; in the first section, I examine Mikhail Bakhtin's definition of the "grotesque body" as an ambivalent figure of birth and renewal, as well as of death and decay. I also refer to published articles which emphasize how the physically monstrous are considered 'freaks' in society, and discuss how these 'freaks' echo a human being's most profound desires and terrors. In the second section, I examine Bakhtin's account of the Carnavalesque by focusing on the symbolic expression of cultural unease that pervades society; more specifically, that of selfishness, manipulation, and evil. The final section turns to the films of Tim Burton, and studies how his protagonists' grotesque bodies are linked to an inner birth and renewal, whilst his antagonists' grotesque bodies are negatively linked to all that is sinister. These antagonists are conveyed via clown, circus, and carnival imagery, and function as mocking figures who serve to highlight the protagonists' lonely plight. From the nightmarish clown scene from *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure* to the chaotic carnival scene in *Beetlejuice*, Burton ultimately succeeds in separating and conveying the ingenuousness from ominous in his films.

#### Ofelia in *Pan's Labyrinth*, and a Renaissance for Fairy Tale Heroines

Amanda R. Von Der Lohe  
Hollins University

This paper examines how Guillermo del Toro's 2006 film *Pan's Labyrinth* utilizes fairy tale elements and offers a new, proactive heroine in the character of Ofelia. Part one of the essay examines Ofelia's mother, Carmen, and a housemaid, Mercedes. Carmen represents the traditional passive heroine (Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty) that has been passed down as a result of earlier Disney films and various male-centered fairy tale collections (Grimms', Lang). Mercedes represents the active heroine who, until relatively recently, has been overlooked. Part two of the paper explores each of Ofelia's three tasks and how each reveals Ofelia's characteristics: courage, ingenuity, independence, intuition, defiance, and compassion. She demonstrates the qualities of a proactive heroine. An in-depth discussion of the results of Ofelia's last task (sacrifice) demonstrates how Ofelia's death/rebirth is a reward. Interactions with Carmen and Mercedes offer Ofelia a choice between which of the two examples she would like to follow. The completion of three magical tasks reveals qualities that characterize Ofelia as a revived-type of fairy tale heroine. There are many active heroines in the less popular fairy tale canon that Ofelia more closely resembles (Kate Crackernuts, Molly Whuppie). In addition to drawing comparisons to fairy tale heroines, this paper utilizes a feminist perspective and criticism from fairy tale experts Maria Tatar, Kay Stone, and Ruth Bottigheimer, among others. Ultimately, both the passive and proactive heroine have a place in the fairy tale canon, providing options to audiences and readers of what type of heroine they would like to emulate.



## 107. (VPA) Monstrous Gaming Bodies

Magnolia

Chair: Concetta Bommarito  
University of Central Florida

### The Monstrous Inventory: The Spaces within Video Game Play Spaces or What's in the Box!?

Gabriel Riviere  
University of Wisconsin Baraboo/Sauk County

This paper explores not only the monstrous effects of play space upon the user but also what the avatar collects and carries around with them. How these game spaces are represented and the manner of interaction is the focus of this paper; however, the spaces in which these items and interactions exist also offer valuable insight to the subject matter at hand.

### Game Theoretic Principles Underlying the *Starcraft 2* Game Play and Narrative

Sean D. Nixon  
University of Vermont

This paper considers both the game play and narrative of *Starcraft 2* in a game theoretic framework as outlined in a series of papers by John von Neuman and Oskar Morgenstern from 1928-1944 and studies the narrative of the game's single-player campaign using game theory to analyze the strategic choices of the main faction leaders.

### How the Spector of Death Complicates the Image of the Nazi Bogeyman in Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*

Rachel Dean-Ruzicka  
Georgia Institute of Technology

One of the primary considerations of German characters and Nazi characters in terms of young adult Holocaust literature is the fact that it is necessary to not merely create a monolithic group that can be universally reviled. Creating a group of this sort does nothing to enable readers with a better sense of the complexity of the events of the Holocaust, and can cause muddled understanding of the events of the Nazi era. This has been a problem consistently in young adult literature, as Lydia Kokkala noted in her text *Representing the Holocaust in Children's Literature*: "Emphasis is placed on their physical attributes such as shiny boots, set jaws, polished belts, and shining weaponry. These are humans in disguise; they are Bogeymen" (134). I argue what this stereotype does is obscure the actual German population behind a terrifying monstrous caricature that can easily be reduced to an inarticulate "evil" in ways that can lead to misunderstandings and incoherency regarding historical facts. So, instead of looking at a cast of characters that are faceless "jackboots," literary critics must move beyond the mystification of genocidal desire in order to confront it face to face, often giving expression to perpetrators in order to strive for understanding, while withholding any sense of forgiveness. A book like Zusak's *The Book Thief* has the potential to highlight how not all Germans willingly participated in the persecution of their Jewish neighbors, and many German civilians died in various Allied attacks, particularly the night-time air raids. While I don't argue that Zusak's book is the perfect YA Holocaust text, I do believe it complicates the Nazi monster in interesting and useful ways. At the book's close there are several things about the German people made clear for the reader: attitudes toward the Nazis were many and varied, some Germans lost everything they had to senseless violence, and even the Nazi Mayor could make compassionate choices. *The Book Thief* complicates the vision of the Nazi monster in ways that are worth exploring in terms of the fantastic and what it can illustrate about historical facts.

## 108. (H) Exquisite Corpse

Dogwood

Chair: Robert Hursey  
Longwood University

### Cultural Surgery and the Criminal Body: "Jack" as Politicized fReemade Man

Franc Auld  
University of Wisconsin Baraboo/Sauk County

China Miéville's short story "Jack," published in *The New Weird* (2008) explores the politicization of the human body through corporeal punishment. Miéville's story offers a corporeal deregulation that both fragments and extends the body. A fine metaphor for corporal punishment and the ways in which prisoners' physical and psychic bodies are shaped by the justice system, "Jack" incarnates Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's thesis that the body of the monster is always a cultural body. In this short story, the author of that body is the story teller; a man whose engagement with the process is problematized even as it is defined. Miéville's story places the physical body of the criminal as the corpus (both story and fleshly site) simultaneously fragmented and expanded through a bio-magic that is both science and thaumaturgy. In the world of New Crobuzon, criminals experience the amputation of their limbs and organs, as well as the grafting of non-human parts into and onto their bodies. These are not the super-cyclical bodies of a Lovecraft story. They are neither catapulted backward nor forward in evolution. Instead, these tentacled or pincer human forms retain a contemporary humanity. One such criminal, Jack Half-a-Prayer of the title, becomes the embodiment of a decaying culture's penal creativity, as well as the marker of its dysfunctionality. His story of resistance is at once heroic and a result of his physical abuse. This text's structure is mimetic; as the reader empathizes with the Robin Hood-like nature of the criminal, the reader is implicated in the culture's philosophy of bodily disenfranchisement. The understated heroics of the character become a rationalization of the fragmentation/expansion of Jack. The borders of narrative, like the hero's body, have been corrupted and enhanced. Withholding the nature of the speaker, Miéville has crafted a short story that is liminal, both exultation in the "fReemade" man's status as monster and a graphic citation of the "remaking" of a criminal as a frivolous, exploitive, cultural surgery.

### **Monstrous Sacrifices**

Jason Harris

Florida Institute of Technology

"There is no society in which cannibalism does not prey upon the mind as a phobia." It is a truism for cultural critics that monsters are projections of the human psyche. One connection between the monster within and the monster without is the tale of monstrous sacrifices. Whether it is the monster itself that is scapegoated as social excrement to be slain or the victim that is sacrificed, ritual sacrifices involving monstrosity entail a public text that emblazons the essential violence of human civilization. Rather than the patrolling legendary beast of folklore that is an intensified shadow of the wilderness distorted into a shape of fear that prowls along the metaphysical contact zone between the civilized and the uncivilized, and may be avoided, the monster that demands sacrifices is born from the hearts and brains of humanity, the dark recesses of the human mind and the equally dark corridors of churches and palaces, and there is no fleeing this darkness. Not only in mythic renderings, such as the sacrifices to the Minotaur or of Andromeda to Cetus, but also in folktales of the Wendigo where one possessed by that cannibalistic spirit must be slain for the tribe to prosper, and in those horror stories such as Sydney Bounds's "Down-Home Market," where an annual sacrifice to a hungry monster ensures prosperity for the local trader, or Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" where the community itself is its own monster, the socio-economic message is clear: civilization makes ugly sacrifices. Modern horror stories, from H.P. Lovecraft and his circle (Derleth, Bloch, etc.) to Thomas Ligotti, often use monsters to reveal a universe untethered to an anthro-sympathetic deity. Through monstrous sacrifices, the literal destruction of the human body by the monstrous body underscores the chaotic patterns of the cosmos while emphasizing the inherent violence in human civilization.

### **Blind as a Vampire Bat: Tanya Huff's *Blood Books* as Discourse on Monstrosity as a Symbol of Disability**

Derek Newman-Stille

Trent University

Contemporary 'dark' fantasy author Tanya Huff portrays traditional disability subject matter inscribed onto the extremified abjected other - the monstrous - in her *Blood Books* series. Huff situates her protagonist, Vicki, a detective who has a degenerative eye disease that has resulted in the loss of her night vision and resultant dismissal from the police force, in direct contact with Henry, a vampire who aids her in conducting detective work. Vicki, a person who is only able to see the world during the day, is paired with a creature of the night, unable to be awake or interact with anyone during the day. The two characters experience the world in seemingly direct contrast to one another: one unable to see at night, and the other unable to live during the day. Both characters are disabled in their own way, but compensate and help the other to accommodate to inaccessible environments: Vicki relying on Henry's vision in low-lit locations, and Henry relying on Vicki to get him to a safe space during the day. Huff contrasts the monstrous senses (abundance) to the disabled senses (perceived as deficit) in her two main characters, creating a dialectic narrative between disability and monstrosity issues. Like many disability narratives, Huff's novels represent a critical discourse around the concept of loss: of vision, job, humanity, daylight, and 'normalcy'. The juxtaposition and interplay between the monstrous vision of the vampire and the deteriorating vision of the woman allows for a rich metaphorical exploration of blindness as a social symbol. Sight and vision become personifications of loss, alterity, darkness, morality, and constricted viewpoint. Vicki's glasses become a lens through which she can see the world as it really is, rather than the appearances that shape the experience of everyone who does not believe in the monstrous. Ironically, her night-blindness lets her see the 'things that go bump in the night'. Her literal narrowing of vision actually allows her a metaphorical expansion of vision outside of the confines of 'normal' world view and her alterity, her embodied difference, allows her to be more receptive to the abnormal.

### **109. (CYA) Children's Fantasy in Its Historical Context**

*Captiva A*

Chair: Rebekah Fitzsimmons

University of Florida

### **The Real vs. The Fantastic: The Fight for Early Children's Fantasy**

Mike Levy

University of Wisconsin-Stout

I'm currently engaged in writing a history of children's fantasy for Cambridge UP and I'd like to read a paper based on the first chapter of the book. The paper will be called The Real vs. the Fantastic: the Fight for Early Children's Fantasy. In the paper I will discuss the history of the creation of children's fantasy, beginning with some of the reasons why fantasy literature was looked down upon in the middle ages and well into the 19th century. I will cover a number of classic early works of the fantastic as they relate to children's literature, most notably Reynard the Fox, the Nine Champions of Christendom, Beauty and the Beast and Gulliver's Travels, discussing ways in which they are and aren't children's literature and also the reactions of various contemporary theorists to these works, including John Locke, David Hume, Sarah Timmer and others. I will also discuss the ways in which such works reveal interesting information about class and gender attitudes at the times that they were written.

### **The Chaos Monster and the British Empire: The Subaltern in H.E. Marshall's Work for Children**

Janice Hawes

South Carolina State University

A popular Edwardian author whose works are still readily available online, H. E. Marshall earned a reputation as the "historiographer royal for children," as one reviewer in the November 7, 1908 issue of *The Journal of Education* notes. Particularly popular, even today, are Marshall's *Our Empire Story* (1908) and *Stories of Beowulf: Told to the Children* (1908). Marshall's 1908 publications were meant in part to support the imperialist cause of Great Britain by emphasizing a chivalric code as rendered through a British imperialist lens. In Marshall's version of history, those trusted with the role of securing British India follow the ancient chivalric code she associates with heroes such as Beowulf, while those

who challenge the order that the British wish to establish in this part of “Greater Britain” are both human heathens opposing chivalric virtues and demons attempting to bring darkness and chaos to the land. This paper proposes to explore how Marshall’s depictions of the Beowulf monsters compare and contrast with her depictions of the subaltern in British India. Although Marshall’s discourse appears to rely on the dichotomies of knightly vs. monstrous and good vs. evil, monstrosity becomes for Marshall increasingly difficult to define with exact precision. As historian Catherine Hall reminds us in her study of British imperialist discourse about Jamaica (a work that itself employs Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s use of Jacques Derrida’s notion of *différance*), “the mapping of difference” should be seen as “the constant discursive work of creating, bringing into being, or reworking these hieratic categories.” Marshall’s occasional, and perhaps unconscious, sentimental sympathy for the Beowulf monsters and her depiction of “almost British” colonized subjects who fight alongside their imperial leaders reflect what often happened in colonial discourse: attempting to establish clear boundaries between the “legitimate” imperial self and the Other becomes too complex to rely on mere binaries, problematizing nineteenth-century British self-imagining as civilized and chivalric guardians of order in contrast to the “monstrous” colonized.

#### **Never-Never Land: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Experiment in Mythos and Metaphysics**

Erika Lundahl  
Ithaca College

The purpose of this research is to identify “Never-never Land” within the story of Peter Pan and analyze the mythos it has generated since J.M. Barry’s play first appeared on stage and his novel in print. I argue, using Nietzsche’s essay “On Truth and Lies in a Non-moral Sense” and Plato’s cosmology of forms and the heavenly bodies as de-lined in Timaeus, that Never-never Land is a concept that refers to a manifestation of an individual’s Utopia in physical space. I will trace the etymology of the word “Never-never Land” to its aboriginal-austral roots in western civilization as that of a philosophical concept and of physical space, established several decades before J.M. Barrie wrote Peter Pan in 1911 (last year was its 100th anniversary). I will examine, using the biographical texts of R.D.S. Jack and Andrew Birkin, the forces that fueled J.M. Barry’s unique creation of the fictional location “Never-never Land” in Peter Pan. I will argue that the writings of Nietzsche inspired J.M. Barrie’s vision of Never-never Land as a place unique to every individual, and that while all Never-never Lands share certain characteristics - the absence of time, a mitigation or suspension of consequences, and freedom from responsibility- its predominant characteristic is that of irregularity. I will argue that Never-never Land is a trope you can see all over modern culture – explicitly through Michael Jackson’s Neverland Ranch and implicitly in the popularity of highly personalized video games and socially sanctioned alternate realities. Ultimately I will call into question why individuals need to create Never-never Lands to fully understand and experience their world.

#### **112. (SF) Sciences and Philosophies of Body, Mind, and Perception**

Vista B

Chair: David Farnell  
Fukuoka University

#### **Medusa to Slake-moth: The Neurobiological Basis of Hypnagogia, Paralysis, Hallucinations, and Other Magical Abilities of Literary Monsters**

Roby Duncan  
California State University  
Bradley Voytek  
University of California, San Francisco

Many literary monsters—be they mythic, modern, or technological—possess some manner of magical or wondrous ability that makes them superior to the average human. From the hypnotizing gaze of the vampire to the fascination attributed to the slake-moth, powers that work through the medium of vision abound. While these fantastic abilities are often magical (or fictional technological) in nature, there is a burgeoning scientific understanding of the neurobiology underlying hypnagogia, paralysis, and hallucinations, and some of the ways these phenomenon relate to hypnosis and the seizures found in epilepsy. In this paper we explore the possible bases of these abilities from a neuroscientific perspective. It is our intention in this paper to move past the purely fantastic “it’s just magic” level of description used in my much of literature, and to instead explore reasonable possibilities for what these “weird actions at a distance” might be doing once they reach the visual sensory field of the nervous system. Through discussion of the hypnotic gaze of historical vampires in fiction, the visual infection vector in Stephenson’s *Snow Crash*, and the paralyzing effect of the slake-moth in Miéville’s *Perdido Street Station*, we intend to provide some basic education on contemporary neurobiology as well as an entertaining examination of interesting phenomenon within SF and genre literature.

#### **Perception across Selected Science Fiction Texts**

Allen Head  
University of Alabama

Human beings are an example of a sapient creature that uses its mechanisms of perception to observe its environment. An example of a human in science fiction is Paul- Maud’dib , the protagonist in Frank Herbert’s *Dune* series. In Ted Chiang’s *Exhalation*, we are exposed to a race of being whose body is profoundly different than that of an organic human: a race of mechanical beings that have “brains” not made of organic nervous tissue, but of precisely tuned mechanisms that respond to fluctuations in air pressure. Another relevant race of entities granted the ability to perceive are the digients, beings who were created by humans and reside in the digital world in Ted Chiang’s *The Lifecycle of Software Objects*. The mental representation of what digients observe is one created through the processing of sensory data encoded in the binary computer language. Given the variety of perception mechanisms, a need to investigate the various similarities and differences between them arises, along with the question of which being’s perception mechanisms give it the clearest and most accurate mental representation of its environment. The human brain, the digient’s core processes, the air-pressure being’s brain; all are bastions in which a being’s consciousness resides. Due to human physiology, Paul-Maud’dib is not in complete control over the processes occurring within his brain. He is also subject to perception manipulation through the ingestion of organic compounds. The air-being is not in control of the processes occurring in its brain;

however, it has the ability to observe its higher processes occurring, due to the mechanical nature of its body. The digient is unique in that it has the potential to inwardly adjust its mental representation of what it perceives, as its consciousness is not contained in a fragile, physical construct.

#### **The Philosophy of Mind of Vernor Vinge's Tine Aliens**

Mark Biswas  
UC Riverside

This paper explores the minds of Vernor Vinge's tine aliens from his novels, *A Fire Upon the Deep* and *The Children of the Sky*. How would beings, composed of separate organisms yet united by telepathy, form a philosophy of mind? Would they gravitate to a materialistic or dualistic philosophy? The tines are an interesting species to pose this question because they have extreme aspects of each. For example, "broodkenners" are tasked with creating individuals of four or five compatible members united by telepathy, as well as choosing pups to join individuals who have lost members. They are, in essence, in the business of building souls, and this "constructing" lends itself to a materialistic philosophy. However, in an opposing sense, the material body is less important for the tines—over the course of their lifetimes, they lose members and add replacements, but despite this, the "essence" of their individuality remains. I will argue that it is the varying philosophies of mind in the texts, which are preexisting beliefs held—sometimes irrationally and despite evidence to the contrary—which sparks conflict. Beliefs aren't only held by the tines, of course. Humans place value on their single bodies that tines do not; as such, they find the tines' treatment of discarded members—not much different from the way humans treat cut hair—appalling. In all cases—tines, tropicals, and humans—characters exhibit cultural blinders, derived from their own philosophy of mind, which prohibit them to comprehend the other's point of view.

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### ***Saturday March 24, 2012 10:30-12:00 p.m.***

#### **114. (SF) Evolution, Rhetoric, and Revision in H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine***

*Pine*

Chair: John Rieder  
University of Hawai'i-Mānoa

#### **Monstrous Morlocks and Angelic Eloi: Reading the Evolutionary Signposts in Charles Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle* and H. G. Wells' *Time Machine***

Lisa Swanstrom  
Florida Atlantic University

In 1839 Charles Darwin publishes the *Voyage of Beagle*, a narrative account of his five-year journey around the world. Nearly sixty years after that, a mysterious stranger known only as the "Time Traveler" steps aboard a strange and motley contraption in order to explore the distant future in H.G. Wells' *Time Machine*. While the two works are not perfect parallels, a careful reading of Wells' book reveals Darwin's influence, especially in the way the *Voyage of Beagle* evolves from the traditional sea yarn, a hyperbolic adventure medium that Darwin adopts and challenges. With its departure from England, its encounter with the then-exotic environments of Tierra del Fuego and Tahiti, and with Darwin's triumphant return to England, where he is quickly elected to the Royal Society on the basis of his scientific discoveries at sea (Brown and Neve xi), the *Voyage of the Beagle* is a quintessential nautical adventure. And the *Time Machine*, while it does not literally embark upon a body of water, uses the metaphor of the sea to express its more speculative voyage through the ages. The Time Traveler, for example, at various points uses the stars to chart his navigation; he also has encounters in an exotic land (his own, but 800,000 years in the future) and meets strange "races"—the frightful Morlocks and the harmless Eloi. Additionally, he must endure a period of doldrums when the Morlocks hijack his vehicle before he can return to his own time.

#### **The Morlocks' Raw Deal: De-monstrous Rhetoric in *The Time Machine***

Lucas Harriman  
University of Miami

The true monster of H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*—by which I refer, of course, to the Time Traveller himself—tells a powerful story. The tale he relates to his audience of late-Victorian British professionals is, in the words of one Wells scholar, "a story that lies like the truth" (Crossley 19). Since the Time Traveller's subjective interpretations of the far distant future present the only truth of that reality for his hearers and for us, his eventual audience, those impressions prove tenacious in their ability to shape our judgments. One of the most prevalent examples of this phenomenon involves the question of Weena's gender or, more accurately, the lack of question in most readings. Although the Time Traveller merely guesses she is a "woman, as I believe it was" (66), his guess becomes reified, both in his own construction of Weena's role in his narrative as the ideal Victorian woman and in the tendency of nearly every subsequent reader to miss the ambiguity of this "queer friendship." Wells's text provides a perfect site in which to interrogate the relationship between rhetorical *demonstration* and *monstrosity*, its etymological cousin. The potential power of fiction to "lie like the truth" can have monstrous results, as revealed most clearly in imperial representations of colonial spaces. This paper will interrogate the sources of our tendency to view the Morlocks as monsters. When we probe the various things we "know" about the Morlocks—they are cannibals, they mean the Time Traveller harm, they are the "inhuman sons of men" to complement the gentle and angelic Eloi—we realize that all of these traits are as fictitious as Weena's femininity. Viewed objectively, Morlocks are merely curious weaklings, ruthlessly massacred by Wells's blundering intruder. Yet, as film adaptations of the novel reveal in the extreme, readers are likely to uncritically mimic the Time Traveller's prejudiced demonstrations

### **Reading Between the Times: A Critical Analysis of the Revision History of *The Time Machine***

Austin Sirkin

Georgia State University

*The Time Machine* was H.G. Wells' first major work and, as such, had a much different creation story than his later works, on which Wells spent very little time revising and editing before publishing, and only continued -- or some would argue began -- the editing process after publication. Yet on his first novel, *The Time Machine*, Wells refined and edited his story over the course of seven years, starting from the serialized publication of *The Chronic Argonauts* in 1888 until the 1895 publication in the *New Review*, from which point on it remained largely unchanged. Since this first novel went through an uncharacteristic number of published revisions (seven, to be precise, two of which have been lost) it is important to discern what those changes are, and to use those changes as a lens to examine not just existing scholarship of *The Time Machine*, but of Wells as a writer. What changed in the revisions, why Wells changed his editing habits and which changes are truly important will all be discussed in this paper.

### **115. (FTV/SF) The Monster in Men: Memory, Culture, and Identity in *Doctor Who***

*Oak*

Chair: Mike Marra

Independent Scholar

### **A Good Man in a Questionable Empire: *Doctor Who* and the Anglo-American Experience**

Julian Chambliss

Rollins College

The resurrection of *Doctor Who* in 2005 returned the longest running science fiction program in history to international television audience. A legacy program revamped in form, but not substance, the modern *Doctor Who* continues a tradition of cultural education that promotes a positive postcolonial standing for the United Kingdom. Critics and fans alike recognize *Doctor Who's* essentially British perspective and perhaps more than any other program created in the last fifty years, *Doctor Who* provides the framework for audiences outside the country to understand British socio-political agency. Airing in the United States since the 1970s, *Doctor Who* acts as a signifier of British identity to a U.S. audience that challenges assumption about power, identity, and agency. By examining the recent revival of *Doctor Who* within the context of the show's long history, a socio-historical contextualisation demonstrates how *Doctor Who* negotiates shifting global realities for domestic and foreign audiences.

### **Are Monsters Real? Men from the Military and Men in Rubber Suits**

Nicolas Pillai

University of Warwick

The Barry Letts-produced era of *Doctor Who* (1970-74) is commonly regarded as the most politically committed of the show's history, using the Doctor's exile on Earth to address contemporary social and environmental concerns. James Chapman has suggested that, in this period, '*Doctor Who* was at its most critical of British society'. In this paper I ask how the series articulated political thought through an archetypal figure of the sci-fi genre: the monster. By looking at moments from *The Silurians* and *The Green Death*, I argue that, in this period of the show's history, monsters invoke the programme's new commitment to the problems of Earth. In each story, monsters emerge from the soil, warning against human exploitation of the planet's resources. I suggest three categories to explore: (1) the articulate monster [the Silurians], (2) the mute menace [giant maggots], and (3) the technological threat [deranged computer B.O.S.S.]. In contrast, I posit the representatives of government -- men from the Ministry who evince the programme's deep suspicion of bureaucracy and militarism. Such figures reveal the monstrous qualities in human behaviour and I conclude by reflecting on the traits and representational meanings of monsters in this era of *Doctor Who*. How does one spot a monster, and what does it mean when we see one?

### **Time Monsters and Space Museums: Teaching History and Science through the Fantastic in *Doctor Who***

Tom Steward

Bournemouth University

*Doctor Who* (BBC, 1963- ) was originally conceived in part as a television programme that would teach young people about history and science. It was developed in the context of a broadcasting institution that included education in its remit. The series is regarded to have largely failed in its pedagogic purpose, said to have been identifiable only in exceptional sub-sections of its 58-year run such as the period-set historical stories made between 1963 and 1967 or the 'hard' mathematics serials made in 1981-82. In these cases, the assumption is that a movement away from fantasy and monsters towards facts and information made the programme educational. Furthermore, the BBC's educational emphasis has been questioned, with historians noting a decline in the formal teaching aspects of its television output after the 1960s and arguing that early BBC television was more popular culture-oriented than previously thought. This paper argues that *Doctor Who* became more educational and better at teaching when delivered *through* fantasy and science-fiction, and that the figure of the 'monster' was a pivotal learning resource. It looks across a range of fantasy and genre-based historical serials thought to be corruptions of the historical story, examining how they increased the pedagogical content of the series by adding science-fiction tropes and popular cultural references. It surveys several space-set and time-travel narratives, suggesting how the impact of scientific theory increases power when couched in the language of scientific impossibility rather than a lecture but also how the series kept its exploration of science within an academic context. It draws attention to the uses of monsters as devices for discussing historical and/or scientific issues such as war, totalitarianism, disease and mutation. *Doctor Who's* commitment to education through fantasy storytelling and monstrous imagery will be used to further argue for teaching impacts in popular cultural genres.

## 118. (CYA) Fairy Tale Monsters

Maple

Chair: C.W. Sullivan III  
East Carolina University

### Is the Fantastic Fairytale Grounded in Reality?: Searching Intertextually for Cultural Origins of the Fantastic Elements of Fairytales

Stella Reinhard  
Virginia Commonwealth University

The child reader of fairytales may view these stories' fantastic elements as inexplicably "magical," created in the mind of some long ago storyteller and not grounded in the real world these children know—for what reality contains transforming pumpkin carriages and impractical glass slippers? However, many of the most fantastic elements of classic fairy tales may actually be grounded in the historical reality of the cultures in which these stories traveled. If one views the ancient network of travelers, and the commercial hubs through which these travelers passed as an early, primitive and much slower counterpart to the worldwide web, then cities would have acted as server collection points for all the information that travelers would have shared about their adventures in far-off corners of the world. At these hubs, oral tales told at public fountains and pubs would have been sent forth in new directions. Since methods of travel and communication during this part of history were much slower than they are today, it would have taken months, years or even decades for information to travel from one region of the world to another. During that travel time, with primarily oral dissemination of stories, tales could inevitably have evolved and taken on some of the trappings of the cultures through which they traveled. It should be possible, theoretically, to examine a popular folk tale and trace the historical and cultural origins of some of its iconic fantastic elements by examining versions of the tale from around the world while simultaneously considering the cultural traditions of those regions. In this paper, I select a common variation of the Cinderella tale for examination and then review ancient versions of that variation from different time periods and cultures to attempt to determine the practical origin of the story's most fantastic motifs.

### Escaping the Monstrous Husband: Reading Heroine's Agency in Three Traditional Tales

Kate Goddard  
Hollins University

The Aarne-Thompson tale types 311, 312, and 955 (Bluebeard, Fitcher's Bird, and The Robber Bridegroom, respectively) share the common thread of the story's heroine discovering that her new husband (or husband-to-be) is secretly a serial murderer, then finding a way to both escape the fate of his other victims and expose him to the world. While the bulk of scholarship on these tales (in particular the "Bluebeard" tale type, 311) has focused on the heroine's transgressive actions which lead her to discover the murders, virtually none have discussed the tactics she then employs to survive and triumph. In this paper, I will argue that the heroines in these tales assume the role of trickster, allowing them to prevail against a foe they cannot match in physical strength alone. This study will focus primarily on three versions of these tales: "Fitcher's Bird" and "The Robber Bridegroom," both from the brothers Grimm, and "Mr. Fox" from Joseph Jacobs's collection *English Fairy Tales*. I will outline the ways in which the heroines use courage, resourcefulness, and quick thinking to save themselves from a dreadful fate and to expose their husbands or fiancés' murderous nature, and how their strategies parallel those employed by traditional trickster characters. In the vast majority of these narrow-survival tales, the heroines' tactics and actions are positive in their result and implicitly deserving of praise, with Charles Perrault's "Bluebeard" being the most notable exception. It is not mindless obedience of authority that they teach but rather the strength and cunning required for self-preservation in the face of evil.

### Monster, Monster On the Wall: An Exploration of the Monstrous Fantastic in Fairy Tale Picture Books

Melissa Schuit  
Simmons College

How are monsters illustrated in modern fairy tale picture books? Depictions of the fantastic monsters in fairy tales rely on the idea of the unknown, often blurring, obscuring, or shadowing that which the protagonist fears. However, these fantastic monsters can be classified into two major categories, the beastly monster and the human monster, and though there are strong similarities in their depictions there are also major discrepancies. The beastly monster in fairy tale picture books is often blurred, distorted, partially obstructed, or even silhouetted. Both Ed Young's *Lon Po Po* and Daniel Egnéus' *Little Red Riding Hood* obscure the wolf in their illustrations to heighten the mystery of the creatures. Young often uses the scenery around the wolf to heighten the sense of tension of the illustration and, because the wolf blends into the sky or is hidden behind a tree, neither the children nor the beholder can be sure of what the monster really looks like. Similarly, Egnéus' never shows the wolf in its entirety; rather Egnéus silhouettes his fantastical monster and depicts only parts of it at a time which creates an aura of mystery surrounding the wolf. Like those of the beastly monster, depictions of evil humans in fairy tale illustrations are highly ominous. However, rather than using the environment to obscure the story's monster, Paul O. Zelinsky's *Rapunzel* and Ai-Ling Louie's *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story From China* depict the monstrous humans with darker skin than that of the protagonists; shadows fall over the faces of the evil humans, obscuring and altering them beyond recognition. These distortions, as well as those of the beastly monster, serve to heighten the tension of the story and draw the beholder into the realm of the fantastical monster.

## 117. (FTV) Monsters and Superheroes

Cypress

Chair: Terry M. Weyna  
Independent Scholar

### Superman vs. Superman: The Juxtaposed Clarks of *Smallville* and *It's Superman!*

Haley Herfurth  
University of Alabama

At a basic level, Superman has been the same since his 1938 debut in Action Comics. There's always the super strength, the super speed, the innate morality, the chiseled jaw. However, two 21st-century re-imaginings of the hero—Tom De Haven's 2005 novel *It's Superman!* and the CW's 2001-2011 television series *Smallville*, created by Alfred Gough and Miles Millar—present interesting contrasts in the ways both Clarks interact not only with their friends and adoptive parents, but with their powers, their careers and their worlds. Most striking are the different ways Clark chooses to reveal his true identity to others. Clark in *Smallville* fears rejection by those who know about his superhuman abilities; Clark in *It's Superman!* fears rejection for exactly the opposite reason, his average intelligence and personality. These personality differences spring from different treatments of Clark's origin story. While the basic facts inherited from co-creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster remain the same in both texts, each associates Clark's advent with a larger disruptive phenomenon, ones strikingly different in nature and long-term effect. In *Smallville*, Clark's arrival on Earth is accompanied by a meteor shower that scatters across the entire town pieces of green Kryptonite, radioactive projectiles left over from the explosion of Clark's home planet. These meteorites have profound effects on the town, including fatal ones. This gives Clark ample reason to feel guilty about his association with the cataclysm; better to distance himself, and to be viewed as the average boy next door. In *It's Superman!*, on the other hand, Clark's adolescence coincides not with an extraterrestrial disaster, but an economic one: The Great Depression—which De Haven identifies in *Our Hero*, his non-fiction book on Superman, as crucial to the character's creation and early development. As De Haven's Clark explores himself, he simultaneously explores the striking, larger-than-life juxtapositions of the Depression landscape, from Hollywood make-believe to Art Deco skyscrapers, from small-town lynchings to big-city corruption. This gives Clark ample reason to feel his own inadequacies, his counterintuitive powerlessness in the face of such overwhelming forces of change. The wide variety of contrasts between *It's Superman!* and *Smallville* might lead some to argue they aren't worth comparing. However, the novel and the television series represent simultaneous modern reinterpretations of Clark Kent. These alternate Clarks serve as interesting windows into the adaptations and alternative storylines with which Superman writers and producers are experimenting with "Our Hero" in the 21st century.

### Frankenstein on the Screen in the 21st Century: Adaptations of Shelley's Novel Since the Year 2000

Brian Rapp  
Independent Scholar

I would like to offer an analysis of how *Frankenstein* has been adapted to the screen since 2000. Obviously the novel has inspired and influenced a plethora of film and television adaptations in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries (e.g. the Hammer movies, the classic Universal films, etc.), so to do a presentation on all of this would be broad and could not possibly cover everything. But it is interesting how the story has been adapted over the past 11-12 years. I am not just referring to direct versions of the story, but also those that might be loosely based on the novel, or at least contain some of the characters (such as Victor Frankenstein's monster) or narratives. One of the films that would be discussed would be *Van Helsing* (2004), in which the monster is an important character. There was also a made-for-TV version of *Frankenstein* produced by Martin Scorsese in 2004 that merits discussion. Also in 2004, there was a television mini-series (the DVDs are now distributed by the Hallmark channel) that follows the book more closely. Also, *Frankenstein vs. the Creature from Blood Cove*, written and directed by William Winckler, was made in 2005 and has not received much scholarly attention, mainly because it was never released in theaters. Another made-for-television version of *Frankenstein* was produced in 2007 in the U.K. (though I am not positive whether I can get a copy of the DVD at the moment, but will try), which also might be worth analyzing. Finally, Frankenstein's monster shows up in Eben McGarr's *House of the Wolf Man* (2009), which also should be pointed out. (Though they will not have been out yet, it might be worth discussing or speculating about some of the future adaptations such as *I, Frankenstein* (2013) and *Bruce vs. Frankenstein* (presumably 2012).) In all of these films, I want to look at how Mary Shelley's story—and/or her characters—are depicted and how they differ from one another from a comparative standpoint. One interesting book is Costas Constantinides' *From Film Adaptation to Post-Celluloid Adaptation: Rethinking the Transition of Popular Narratives and Characters Across Old and New Media*. Also, it would be interesting to compare these versions to some of the traditional portrayals of *Frankenstein*. In doing so, I will review and analyze some of Caroline Picart's book, *The Cinematic Rebirths of Frankenstein*. I will also likely discuss some reviews of the films analyzed.

### "Let's Just Say I'm Frankenstein's Monster, and I'm Looking for My Creator": Mary Shelley's Mutant Progeny in *X-Men: First Class*

Kayley Thomas  
University of Florida

In the introduction to the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley "bid my hideous progeny go forth and prosper" and so it has, from nearly instantaneous stage adaptations to the earliest of cinema, from direct adaptations to more ambiguous descendants. Victor Frankenstein's Monster persists as an imposing figure not only in science fiction and horror but as a profoundly powerful part of a broad cultural mythos. Thus in the 2011 blockbuster reboot *X-Men: First Class*, Erik Lehnsherr (aka Magneto) is able to announce, "I'm Frankenstein's Monster, and I'm looking for my creator," and evoke a rich and popular rhetoric for discussing the film's exploration of what it means to be human – and what it means to be monstrous. In *Representations of the Post/Human: Monsters, Aliens and Others in Popular Culture*, Elaine L. Graham traces a genealogy of what she calls "boundary-creatures," monsters (among them Frankenstein's) that "mark the fault-lines" of the boundaries between humans and almost-humans that serve "also, subversively, to signal the fragility of such boundaries" (12). I posit that the mutants of *X-Men* serve precisely as such boundary-creatures, the emerging race of the *homo superior* somewhere between the human and the post-human. Matthew Vaughn's film in particular depicts the first public manifestation of mutantkind and the early partnership between Professor

Charles Xavier and Erik Lehnsherr – and, most importantly, the ideological differences that ultimately separate them, Xavier in favor of human and mutant peace and integration and Lehnsherr in support of the superiority and advancement of the mutants. Through the friendship that they do initially share and the differentiation between their life experiences and powers as mutants, the characters adopt and adapt *Frankenstein's* negotiations of nature versus nurture, reason and passion, science and humanism, and the politics of difference. My paper will explore how Xavier and Lehnsherr, along with other characters in the film, complicate the categories of human and monster, engaging contemporary concerns about the post-human even as the setting calls upon the events of World War II and the Cold War, the evocation of eugenics and nuclear mutation as potent an echo of Shelley's novel as Lehnsherr's bold statement. The mutant serves as a boundary-creature between the human and the monster that reflect both self and other, fear and identification, and the film's depiction of "a new future for mankind: evolution" that is as steeped in the past as it is the fantastic. Reading *Frankenstein's* textual and cultural influence in the film provides a useful and intriguing way to interrogate the importance and impact of the boundary-straddling, human/almost-human transitional category of the X-verse mutant.

### **118. (H) *The Last Werewolf*: Interpretations of 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Lycanthropy**

Palm

Chair: Jason Harris

Florida Institute of Technology

#### **The Abject Body in Glen Duncan's *The Last Werewolf*: Human or Werewolf?**

Sarah Benton

University of South Florida

In a 2011 interview with culturemob.com, the author of *The Last Werewolf*, Glen Duncan, states: "Myths last as long as they express something fundamental – fear or desire – in the human psyche. The werewolf embodies both the fear of our bestial side and our desire to sink into it" (Duncan). Likewise, the onset of werewolf transformation brings Jacob Marlowe, the protagonist of *The Last Werewolf*, to the point where he must negotiate an emerging identity involving his own humanity as an increasingly declining factor. Marlowe's wolf self stays with him as a kind of ghost, haunting his limbs and human reactions, and essentially breaking down the border between human and monster. Marlowe's werewolf self represents the loss of distinction between his human form and his monstrous self, thus embodying French critic Julia Kristeva's theory of the abject. Kristeva defines one aspect of abjection as that which "disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite" (13). Duncan's werewolf externalizes the abject as a monstrous body that fragments the human self into embodying both the human and the monster simultaneously, therefore becoming a manifestation of Kristeva's abject. This paper will discuss the werewolf as an abject body in the context of Glen Duncan's *The Last Werewolf* and the ramifications of the monstrous and the human existing in the same corporeal form.

#### **Monstrous Reproduction: One Step Closer to Human**

Chelsey Lucas

New College of Florida

Where Werewolf and Zombie once were "born" of infection via bite, the novels *The Last Werewolf* by Glen Duncan (2011) and *Breathers: A Zombie's Lament* by Scott G. Browne (2009) introduce monstrous reproduction in a method that is one step closer to human: through the act of biological sexual intercourse. What this paper resolves to discuss is the impact of suggesting such likeness between the social definition of "human" versus that of "monster" by analyzing sex through the model of Freud's Uncanny, and what it means that the creation, the birth itself is a direct association between these dichotomies. Taking this most fundamental concept--the very start of life--in a sense attempts to humanize the monsters; it advocates for a collective understanding, that "it's been us all along" (Duncan 119). But what does it say of the possibility of assimilation when the characters lose their children? In Duncan's novel, not only does protagonist Jake murder his human wife and unborn child, but he dies before the chance to know what becomes of his werewolf offspring who will, with luck, carry on the species. For Browne's zombie, Andy, his undead lover and fetal child are burned to death before readers can know what a monster born of natural means will be like. Here, Jeffrey Cohen's assertion that monsters are "a form suspended between forms that threaten to smash distinctions" (Cohen 6) becomes undeniably salient as fantastic literature progressively integrates modern human culture.

#### **Glen Duncan's *The Last Werewolf* and the Problem of the Paul Naschy**

Douglas Ford

State College of Florida

Glen Duncan's *The Last Werewolf* marks a significant moment in the canon of fantastic literature, for while most modern vampire literature can directly or indirectly claim *Dracula* by Bram Stoker or, to a lesser extent, *Carmilla* by Sheridan Le Fanu, as their originative (or perhaps restraining) foundation, writers of werewolf fiction have had no such obvious antecedent for their own works. Despite such notable novels like Guy Endore's *The Werewolf of Paris* (1933), Gerald Bliss's *The Door of the Unreal* (1919), and Jessie Douglas Kerruish's *The Undying Monster* (1922), as well as a rich body of folklore and legend, the werewolf canon has struggled to find its own text of consequence, a point of departure on which others can build. This stands as a crucial point because, even more so than other supernatural creatures, werewolves generally show obsession with the circumstances of their origin, whether from curse, pact with the devil, birth, or bite. This concern with origins becomes paramount in the narrative of *The Last Werewolf*, but Duncan sets his novel apart by intertwining the physical circumstances of Jake Marlowe's werewolf origin with a self-reflexive preoccupation with finding, or ultimately becoming, the absent text of origin. This paper will locate and analyze these concurrent threads in the novel by juxtaposing them with the series of Spanish films starring (and in many cases, written by) Paul Naschy as the doomed werewolf, Waldemar Daninsky. Each of Naschy's films, beginning with *The Mark of the Wolf Man* (1968), depict a new, often conflicting origin for Daninsky's curse, illustrating the fluid nature of a werewolf's origin, as well as a "problem" that Duncan ultimately strives to untangle with an intentional misnomer: a "last" werewolf who may really mark something inceptive.



## 119. (IF/H/PCS) International Mash-Ups and Math

Magnolia

Chair: M. Elizabeth Ginway  
University of Florida

### Mathematical Monstrosity: Lovecraft's Geometry, Borges's Infinity, and Beyond

Andrew Aberdein  
Florida Institute of Technology

Monsters lurk within mathematical as well as literary haunts. This paper will trace the pathways between these two monstrous habitats. Nineteenth-century mathematics was deployed in some twentieth-century fantastic literature as an intimation of the uncanny or the monstrous. Examples include Lovecraft's use of the fourth dimension and non-Euclidean geometry, and Borges's fascination with the infinite and the transfinite. The compliment is reciprocated by mathematicians and philosophers of mathematics. Imre Lakatos, in his account of the development of a proof for Euler's conjecture concerning the properties of polyhedra, coined the terms 'monster-barring' and 'monster-adjusting' to describe strategies for dealing with 'monsters': entities (here polyhedra) whose properties seem to falsify the conjecture. Later scholars have made explicit the resemblance between these mathematical heuristics and pollution taboos and investigated further strategies such as 'monster-assimilating' and 'monster-embracing'. Another mathematical monster is the Monster: the largest sporadic group, which acquired its name because of its vast size (an order of approximately  $8 \times 10^{53}$ ), and because its existence and unlikely properties were suspected long before they could be confirmed. Are the literary parallels in mathematicians' discourse of the monstrous superficial or profound? A provocative response to this question may lie in the 'speculative realism' movement, whose proponents have sought to integrate insights from both mathematics and such latterday Lovecraftians as China Miéville and Thomas Ligotti.

### The Monster Mash-Up: Rewriting the Classics of Brazilian Literature in the Horror Genre

James Krause  
Brigham Young University

With the enormous success of Seth Grahame-Smith's 2009 parody novel, *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, it was only a matter of time before we saw the same publishing trend in Brazil. Earlier this year, Lua de Papel published four novels in its series "Clássicos Fantásticos": *A escrava Isaura e o vampiro* (Bernardo Guimarães and Jovane Nunes), *Senhora, a bruxa* (José de Alencar and Angélica Lopes), *O alienista caçador de mutantes* (Machado de Assis and Natalia Klein), and *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores* (Machado de Assis and Lúcio Manfredi). In addition, Tarja Editorial published *Memórias desmortas de Brás Cubas* (Machado de Assis and Pedro Vieira). Part of the charm of *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* is the jarring juxtaposition of form and content—gory zombie attacks written in the style of Jane Austen. Grahame-Smith's adaptation includes roughly 85% of Jane Austen's original text and with his 15% the overall plot remains largely unaffected. In contrast, these Brazilian versions take the existing plot structure, incorporate elements of sci-fi and fantasy, and restructure, rewrite, and reformulate the original. The authors also tend to modernize the language and style, skewing it to a younger audience. The purpose of this presentation, therefore, is two-fold: First, while employing current remix and mash-up theory, I examine the image of Capitu's "olhos de ressaca" as an example of how the mash-up (*Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores*) rewrites and recasts the original (*Dom Casmurro*) within the horror genre. Second, I examine how these young Brazilian writers, in the anthropophagic tradition, consume the Brazilian literary canon and produce a product designed for consumption by contemporary Brazilian youth culture.

### Monstrosity in International Vampire Fiction: The Vampire as a Master Signifier

Jamil Khader  
Stetson University

In this paper, I argue that international vampire fiction uses the vampire as a site for staging the differences and homologies in the metaphysical, political, and cultural perspectives between dominant Western and the emergent transnational vampiric literary traditions. Drawing on Jeffrey Cohen's monstrosity theses, this paper reads the monstrosity of the vampire as a homomorphic trope, by which certain homologies among the different forms of vampiric monstrosity in international vampire fiction can be traced, while also foregrounding the ways in which vampiric monstrosity still serves different functions in its respective culture, depending on the historical context in which it emerges. However, drawing on Slavoj Žižek's analysis of the shark in Spielberg's *Jaws*, I'd like to propose an eighth thesis to Cohen's seven theses—namely, that vampiric monstrosity should also be read as a master signifier through which various ideologies can recognize themselves. In other words, vampiric monstrosity is what quilts these ideologies and makes them equivalent—"it is not what various interpretations seek to describe but what is retrospectively seen to fill out various interpretations."

## 120. (CYA) The Monstrous Self in *The Hunger Games* and *Rule of Rose*

Captiva A

Chair: Emily Midkiff  
Kansas State University

### Our Monsters, Our Selves: Humanity, Hybridity, and Liminality in *The Hunger Games*

Sharon D. King  
UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Speculative fiction has long explored questions of essential humanity: humankind's arbitrary separation from the animal world, fears of cloning and mutations, the porous relationship between predator and prey. Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games* trilogy uses the terrain of these questions to explore an even more terrifying possibility: human existence as a liminal, monstrous state in itself. In the Games' pitiless competition, protagonists Katniss and Peeta are under constant threat of death, must continually defend themselves against deadly foes, and are left with a basic need--food--denied. Numerous references stress the duo's connection to the animals they hunt for food, revealing how perilously slippery the slope is between consumer and consumed. The overarching plot shows the deep divide between humans forced to perform an intensified struggle for survival and those who consume such public spectacles as entertainment. The trilogy also presents manifold ways in which the monstrous, the hybrid, appears, from mutated animals both tame and savage to elite humans who transmogrify their appearance into that of animals. Indeed, the Games are only the most extreme manifestation of existence in a tyrannical dystopia in which the concept of human civilization is a cruel joke. Within it, both Katniss, whose name evokes both food and predator, and Peeta, savior-source of bread and creature-protector, construe their identity by impermanence, endlessly redefining their relationship to their various audiences and each other. At the end, there is no clear distinction between the human monsters--the despotic President Snow who orders the Games, the new President Coin who reinstitutes them--and humane characters such as Peeta, who has been brainwashed, or even Katniss, who slays Coin in cold blood. As monstrosity is defined by hybridity, the blurring of boundaries between self and other, then they themselves are now the monsters. The broken society may have reached a state of permanent liminality, in which the monstrous reigns supreme.

### Making Monsters: Performance and Self in *The Hunger Games*

Sarah Sahn  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

As a tribute in the nationally televised *Hunger Games*, Katniss knows she is always on camera; she performs self-consciously, knowing her survival hinges on her ability to do so convincingly, in and out of the arena. This paper explores the intersections of childhood, adulthood, monstrosity, and self in Katniss's multiple performances in Suzanne Collins's trilogy. Inhabiting the roles of ruthless killer, lovestruck girl, and revolutionary figurehead at the behest of authorities who seek to use her for their own ends, Katniss struggles to hold onto a sense of herself and to define her own conflicting feelings. The Games horrify her, but increasingly, they also come to define her; more and more, she sees in herself a monster forged in the arena, a "mutt" like the genetically engineered wolves that attack her at the end of her first *Hunger Games*, glaring at her with the eyes of the tributes who did not survive. The dystopian vision of the *Hunger Games* trilogy is in part a meditation on the border between humanity and monstrosity; overlying it is a meditation on coming of age, and the border between childhood and adulthood. As adolescents, Katniss and her fellow tributes are, I suggest, poised between both: childhood and adulthood, and humanity and monstrosity. Rather than reading these as parallel dualisms, I examine the ways in which Katniss comes of age and comes to understand, and take control of, what is monstrous within herself.

### Red Crayon Cruelty: Little Girls as Monsters in Punchline's *Rule of Rose*

Mads Haahr  
Trinity College Dublin

A defining characteristic of the survival horror genre is that the protagonists are underpowered compared to the monstrous encounters with which they are confronted. While most games feature adult (but suitably underpowered) protagonists, some games (e.g., the *Fatal Frame* series) satisfy this convention by casting young girls as the player-controlled characters and emphasizing their vulnerability through gender, age and cultural stereotypes. A notable exception is the cult game *Rule of Rose* (2006) for the PlayStation 2 by Japanese game developer Punchline. In *Rule of Rose*, the player controls a young woman (19-year old Jennifer) who, suffering from amnesia, finds herself in a spooky orphanage. Jennifer encounters a group of twisted orphan children, some of whom form an elite group of girls called the Red Crayon Aristocrats. While Jennifer, as an adult in the presence of children, ought to be more powerful than the younger girls, the power balance is reversed. The result is a type of subtle and disturbing interactive horror. While storytelling in other media (perhaps most famously, *Lord of the Flies*) has explored the cruelty of children, the theme rarely appears in interactive digital media, and *Rule of Rose* may be unique in this regard. The game also contains subtle erotic undertones, which caused moderate controversy and prevented its release in the UK, Australia and New Zealand. The paper presents a reading of *Rule of Rose* in which story, aesthetics and gameplay are deconstructed to show an uniquely interactive medium and what the emotional effects on the players are.

## 121. (H/FTV/CYA) Everything Old is New Again

Dogwood

Chair: Nenad (Max) Jakovljevic  
University of Wisconsin Baraboo/Sauk County

### The Wizard School of Hermannstadt: *Dracula* and the Gothic Nature of *Harry Potter*

Dorothea Schuller  
Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

Focusing on Stoker's *Dracula* as one of the series' pretexts, my paper will propose a reading of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* books as Gothic novels. Various parallels between the two works can be found regarding plot and narrative structure as well as themes (a preoccupation with pure/impure blood, literal and metaphorical vampirism, hybrid identities and uncanny doubles, the spectral presence of the past and, of course, death and immortality) and setting (the haunted castle, graveyards, forests). While the scholarly literature on *Harry Potter* is copious by now, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the Gothic nature of both the novels and films which are usually classified as fantasy. Interpretations of *Dracula* on the other hand have often failed to consider the element of witchcraft in Stoker's novel. Although explicitly mentioned, Dracula's magical education (and its Faustian nature) at the Scholomance, a school for wizardry hidden in the mountains near Hermannstadt, has failed to become a fixed part of the Dracula myth. This may be due to 20<sup>th</sup> century critics' and filmmakers' focus on the sexual subtexts and downplaying of the novel's religious symbolism. Yet Dracula's ability to influence the weather, communicate with and transform himself into animals associated not only with disease but with witchcraft, and to control the minds of his victims are all signs not so much of his vampiric nature but of his knowledge of the 'black arts'. He thus anticipates the equally undead Lord Voldemort in the *Harry Potter* series who also shares a mental bond with the hero similar to the psychic link between Dracula and Mina Harker. While Voldemort may be seen as a direct descendant of Dracula, the equally Gothic character of Severus Snape can be read as the more romantic type of vampire or hero-villain of the Female Gothic tradition.

#### **Exploring the Haunted Palace: Gothic Warped Space, Phantasmagoria, and the Evolution of the Haunted House from Poe to Danielewski**

Matthew Schumacher

Eastern Oregon University

Gaston Bachelard has written that the space of the house "constitutes a body of images that give mankind proofs or illusions of stability." During his classic *The Poetics of Space*, the French phenomenologist defines the house as a sanctuary and shelter that protects that most essential act and agency of human imagination: the formation of the poetic image. Bachelard's house, a bastion of psychic intimacy whose spaces guard our leisurely freedom to dream, has proven especially vulnerable to invasion and disturbance in the literary genre of the ghost story. As Terry Castle asserts in *The Female Thermometer*, phantasmagorical spaces multiply ghosts, allowing them to invade two spaces at once; consequently, specters may simultaneously assail both the house and the mind. Gothic castles and mansions, for instance, with their mad Manfreds and Ambrosios, traditionally disturb and undermine the stability Bachelard ascribes to the house, and become ill-tempered mansions more akin to Poe's haunted palace. Such fictions supplant the Bachelardian poetic image with phantasmagoria, and "warp" the psychic space of the house, according to the terminology of Anthony Vidler. Phantasmagoria and warped space thus function to nightmarishly alter and subvert the very interiority Bachelard posits. This paper will explore the warped spaces and phantasmagorias of the haunted house in Poe's seminal "The Fall of the House of Usher" and the modern experimentalist haunted suburban gothic abode of Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*. I will argue that the immeasurable uncanny dimensions of the American haunted house, introduced by the allegorical, dreamlike dwelling of Poe's groundbreaking tale in the nineteenth century, have grown and warped purposefully during the last hundred and fifty years, to showcase a haunted house more spatiotemporally representative of modern fears. A host of phobias and anxieties Vidler cites as consequences of modernity warp space in *House of Leaves* (including Karen Green's claustrophobia and Johnny Truant's agoraphobia). Among other trepidations looms the notion of the city growing uncontrollably, as if it were a dread and deadly disease. This deviant, inescapable, subversive version of urbanity, whose runaway surfaces, multidimensionality, and bewildering multiplicity are unable to be "read" and defy comprehension by any sort of expert, also subvert the mastery of architectural blueprint or urban plan. Thus, a terrible urbanity pursues the Navidson family to the suburbs. Danielewski's modern haunted habitation bespeaks the fear of a city of nothingness so sprawling and invasive that it has not only intruded upon and threatened to ruin the suburbs, but has floated above the blueprint to re-enter (and perhaps re-inter) the suburbanite mind.

#### **Cackling Witches, Laughing Medusas: The Triumphantly Monstrous Women of *We Have Always Lived in a Castle***

Andrea Krafft

University of Florida

In Shirley Jackson's final novel, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962), Mary Katherine (also known as Merricat) and Constance Blackwood occupy an exaggeratedly marginal position as the "witches" of their village. By making these women the monsters of her novel, Jackson dramatizes the way in which patriarchal society and domestic enclosure warp female identity. Furthermore, Merricat and Constance actively reclaim their weirdness, marking the emergence of a figure that Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik label "the empowered monstrous female" (117). This is especially true for Merricat, who, in the act of poisoning her entire family (with the exception of Constance), violently and unapologetically takes control of domestic space. I argue that Jackson writes a revisionist feminist Gothic, one that celebrates the monstrous woman's shattering of social constrictions. However, to focus purely on the Gothic elements of Jackson's writing ignores the importance of the jokes that pervade her text. What makes the monstrous Merricat particularly threatening to the surrounding community is not only her aggression but also her dark laughter, as she delights in destruction. In this fusion of the deadly and comic, Jackson participates in a larger tradition of woman writers who celebrate the subversive and violent potential of humor. For example, Hélène Cixous praises the comic monstrosity of Medusa because "she's beautiful and she's laughing" (885). Similarly, Merricat and Constance playfully embrace their roles as Gothic monsters, mocking the superstitious villagers, whose fearfulness allows the sisters to act according to their own desires. Ultimately, I argue that Jackson celebrates the monstrous women of *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, as they aggressively break away from society and demonstrate the possibility of a female-determined community.

#### **122. (F) The Monstrous in Miéville**

*Captiva B*

Chair: Siobhan Carroll

University of Delaware

#### **China Miéville's "Monstrous" Hybrid Genres**

Patricia Merivale

University of British Columbia

China Miéville's work belongs [and I hope will be found] in virtually every Division of this conference. His 'monstrous' amalgam of genres is exemplary for the floating category of the New Weird [a critic's convenience, which I believe the writer has abjured]. Assorted science fiction and fantasy modes, including horror, the grotesque, and Gothic, can be seen in his works heading towards the widest 'crossover' of all: into, merely, mainstream literature. Miéville's *Un Lun Dun*, *The City and the City*, and *Kraken*, can be explored in contexts ranging from Poe through Lovecraft and Peter Ackroyd to Neil Gaiman. Lewis Carroll's *Alice*, Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, and many other writers of fiction for young readers of any age, set the stage for *Un Lun Dun* [2007] and Neil Gaiman's *Neverwhere* [1996]. These two books share an 'underground' London, the surface London's opposite, or 'double,' its 'un' - doing, or its 'Un-dun.' Add nasty pairs of villains, marked by a sardonic, sadistic, very 'black' sense of humour, amid surreal disorientations flirting with the occult, and Mervyn Peake is close at hand. *The City and the City* is different again, being the most tightly structured and elegant amalgam in Miéville's work to date, thanks to the constraints of its 'political' police procedural, combined -- two genres occupying the same space -- with a fine pier of ontological science fiction, the 'thought experiment' of two cities in the same space. The detective's 'pursuit' of himself owes much to Poe, and to the 'temporal' [rather than, as in *Un Lun Dun*, 'spatial'] division of 'London' into two congruent cities, found in Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor* [1985]. *Kraken* blends a dystopia en route to apocalypse with Lovecraftian occult horror, grotesqueries à la Peake, a full serving of Londonian psychogeography, and some Pythonesque knockabout farce, bringing in its own kind of horror. New? And Weird? Yes, indeed. "New Weird"? Maybe.

#### **The Monstrous Sublime in China Miéville's *Perdido Street Station***

Howard Canaan  
Mercy College

As perhaps his most elaborately detailed and imaginatively conceived novel, *Perdido Station* provides an insight into how China Miéville uses the mix of alien life forms, mutations metamorphoses of bodily forms, and moldings of the human and the artificial to merge the monstrous with the sublime. After tracing the roots of Miéville's dystopian vision in the urban landscapes of other science fiction, I will turn to *Perdido Station* as a canvas on which to explore the complex relationship between the monstrous and the sublime in the novel. Melville evokes shades of different responses to the assorted non-human entities that appear in the novel. This variety of responses adds to the richness and complexity of characterization in the novel and Miéville's evocation of alien consciousnesses presents his vision of the sublime. Like the vast landscapes of Piranesi or other Romantic painters that often dwarf the human figures in them, Miéville's construction of a world inhabited by so many alien – and often terrifying forms – minimizes the human figure and evokes the Romantic sublime. Finally, I will examine the how Miéville's mix of alien forms in a world of urban decay, besides evoking the sublime, reflects on his own role as artist and creator of his world. The romance between Isaac and Lin, the scientist-magician and the artist is a romance between the human and the alien that lies at the core of the novel. The Weavers, the ultimate aesthetes and perhaps the ultimate alien entity in the novel, like Lin, form an alliance with Isaac, the protagonist and are transpositions or reflections of Miéville as artist... The key role that the Weavers play in the resolution of the plot, and the Weavers' sublimely alienated consciousness drive home the sublimity of the monstrous in the novel.

#### ***The Etched City and Kraken: The Monstrous Dreamland in Bishop and Miéville***

Heather Osborne  
University of Calgary

Early in K.J. Bishop's *The Etched City*, the bounty hunter Gwynn discovers that "as time could ripen, so it visibly could rot, and a prolonged moment deteriorate badly" (148). Gwynn's experience is no metaphor, but the substance of life in the city of Ashamoil. *Kraken*, China Miéville's exploration of a magical London superimposed on the ordinary city, similarly destabilizes time as the approaching apocalypse consumes all magical and spiritual energy. In these texts, causality disintegrates as the protagonists descend deeper into their cities' dreamscapes. As reality fractures, the monstrous substratum of these fantastical worlds begins to overcome the thin surface of reality. In Ashamoil, bodies are disrupted and rotted from within by dreams and fantastical growths. 'Knackery' tears down the veils between magical London and its quotidian counterpart as the apocalypse builds in *Kraken*. The new life that arises in both novels dissolves the boundaries of the real, proving that it is more illusory than the magical. As magic intersects with religious cults, technological levels, and scientific ages, the barriers between them erode as a symbol of the deterioration of the real. My paper will examine the surreal movement in *The Etched City* and *Kraken* from the false real to the monstrous dreamland. Magic in each universe draws its power from the immanent spirituality of the people in the world, and this power is indelibly marked on and through the body. Both Evil and Good are given physical expression, yet morality in these texts is ambivalent, and the embodiment of spirituality is depicted as macabre. These novels enter into Bakhtin's grotesque realism, in which spirituality manifests as powerful body-horror. In my paper, I will show how Bishop and Miéville meld the monstrous with the spiritual just as Bakhtin entwines degradation with renewal in his dissection of the grotesque.

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***Saturday March 24, 2012 2:00-3:30 p.m.***

#### **126. (SF) Science Fiction Monsters**

Pine

Chair: Sherryl Vint  
Brock University

#### **Monster Horses From Outer Space**

Jennifer Cox

Florida Atlantic University

Sheri S. Tepper's novel, *Grass*—named for the planet where the story unfolds—evokes images of verdant beauty, and implies a connection to nature—but on this secluded world, there's not much "nurture" in Mother Nature. *Grass* subverts conventional human relationships with animals, others, power, class, family, religion, and even knowledge: it is a nightmarish imagining of a planet full of Nature's own worst ecological psychopaths, while humanity's overcrowded home planet is governed by a militant non-denominational religious regime called Sanctity—like Presbyterians hiding the Death Star behind their backs, with their fingers crossed. This ersatz telling of the mythological Wild Hunt—which inverts human and nonhuman roles—focuses on violent relations of power and communication, and privileges embodied communication over mere words. Human words conceal and deceive; embodied communication, including the science of zoosemiotics, reveals the truth within messages. In order for humanity to survive, let alone *move forward*, we must learn to accept and value feedback from inter-special collaborations. The text balances pastiche and parody, but also contains elements of traditional sf, horror, and mystery within multiple story lines.

#### **Of Zombies and Language; or, The Shambling Signified**

Andrew Ferguson

University of Virginia

Today there is hardly a single academic field unmenaced by zombies. These ravenous corpses—in particular, the type created by George Romero in *Night of the Living Dead*—have escaped their original confines on the silver screen and infected nearly every medium and area of inquiry. In the wake of this plague, a cottage industry has sprung up, providing innumerable less-than-convincing answers to the question, What does the zombie signify? My paper focuses instead on the zombie as an embodiment of failed signification, the "lack" at the heart of language that has been hunting Enlightenment rationality since Kant's momentous critiques. Drawing on a range of zombie literature from Seth Grahame-Smith's *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* all the way back to Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* (as well as a variety of popular media), and grounding my presentation theoretically in Bruno Latour's compositionism and N. Katharine Hayles's literary complex-systems dynamics, I develop a model of the zombie as data degradation, as the ultimate victory of randomness over the chaotic patterning of information. I conclude by considering the task of the critic in a mental topography where signifiers float and flicker, but the signifieds shamble ever onward to oblivion.

#### **Dust and Guts: Matter and Affect in Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves***

Jesse Stommel

Marylhurst University

Rebekah Sheldon

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Recent turns to queer theory and postcolonial theory, alongside longstanding feminist and Marxist approaches, have moved science fiction studies beyond the taxonomic vocation of genre criticism. Yet while these culturally- and theoretically-inflected schools of thought have been enormously productive, they have underplayed two important considerations: the form or body of the genre and the effect of that form on its audience. The same, however, cannot be said of horror studies. Whether through the lens of psychoanalysis or film theory, horror criticism has taken the question of formal affect as its central critical exigency. At the same time, affect theory has become a pervasive school of thought in its own right informing philosophy, aesthetics, art criticism, and literary theory. As any reader or audience member already knows, horror and science fiction are monsters of affect, producing experiences whose predictability suggests some non-arbitrary relationship between the forms of the genres and the feelings they produce. In this co-authored presentation, we contend that science fiction and horror not only produce emotional experiences, they are forms of affect theory *avant-la-lettre*. Our work is not about what these genres are, but rather what they do, their instrumental value both as texts and as theories of texts. Through a reading of Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*, an ambiguous horror/sf hybrid, we attempt to generate a critical lexicon that might allow us to discuss how form elicits feeling. In short, this presentation takes science fiction and horror as privileged instances in which to ask after the causalities of representation. Such a broad and fundamental subject in a paper dedicated to paraliterary genres may seem like overreaching, but we insist that it is exactly in formulaic genres that the question of form might be most profitably interrogated.

### **127. (SF) Monstrous Imaginings in Early Science Fiction**

Oak

Chair: Lisa Swanstrom

Florida Atlantic University

#### ***Frankenstein*, *Sirius*, and The Queer Family of Man**

John Rieder

University of Hawaii at Manoa

What is it about *Frankenstein* that has made it one of the most often adapted novels ever written? What inspires the even more abundant proliferation of versions of the scientist-creature dyad? Shelley's plot speaks to the project of modernity by exploring the institutional framework of reason in the laboratory and the university, its methodological framework in the experiment, and its narrative framework in the plot of education and the professional career. Yet the most profound and enduring power of Shelley's plot more likely derives from its engagement of gender ideology. The atmosphere of anxiety that reigns over the entire plot finds no more powerful motivation than in its elision or repression of natural sexual reproduction, its "circumvention of the maternal," as Margaret Homans calls it. The crucial consideration, I will argue, is that Shelley did not invent *Frankenstein*'s circumvention of the maternal, but rather adapted it from the Judaeo-Christian creation myth. Her revisionary plot replaces the myth's divine agent with a human one, thereby rendering unto techno-scientific man what once was attributed to the mystical artisanship of Jehovah. Shelley's revision of the creation story in *Genesis* does not so much revise its gender

dynamics as point out how queer the story has always been. I will elaborate this thesis by analyzing how Olaf Stapledon's *Sirius* further explores and articulates the queer potential of Shelley's novel, both in its critical interrogation of hetero-normative sexuality and in its deconstruction of the categories of the person and the human.

#### **From Darkness into Light: Science Fiction, Horror, and H. G. Well's *The Island of Dr. Moreau***

David Bañuelos  
University of California, Riverside

Many works generally classified as science fiction also strongly demonstrate qualities of the horror genre. Such "borderline" cases can be particularly useful in understanding how these different genres function. One such borderline case is H. G. Well's *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, which combines elements such as cognition, estrangement, ambiguity, terror, horror, the monstrous, the grotesque, and the sublime. The content, structure, and style of this novel all combine elements of science fiction and horror into a complex, but unified, whole. The beast men are almost perfect examples of the science-fictional grotesque, except that their scientific origins are not revealed until the story is half-way over. This renders them more terrifying than cognitively estranging. When we finally understand what the beast men truly are, they become science-fictionally sublime, while remaining grotesque. Like Frankenstein's creature, the beast men are sublime in that they demonstrate the amazing power of the human intellect, to create beings so like humans, and grotesque in that they seem to violate the normal laws of "nature." Throughout the story, we see information omitted or concealed, while the protagonist, Prendick, unlike the typical science fiction protagonist, takes little initiative in uncovering the truth. He either chooses not to ask seemingly important questions, or if he does ask, his questions are deflected, answered with lies, or completely ignored. Prendick usually accepts these evasions rather than persist in his questioning. Thus, Prendick, and we the readers, are left in a state of terror, rather than cognitive estrangement. By combining science fiction and horror, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* produces intellectual and aesthetic effects that neither could achieve alone.

#### **The Dynamo Poets and the Monstrosity of Industrial Capitalism**

Brian McAllister  
Albany State University

This paper explores the development of a set of tropes employed by a group of leftist poets of the 1930's who were associated with *Dynamo: A Journal of Revolutionary Poetry* particularly Kenneth Fearing, Sol Funaroff, Edwin Rolfe, and Muriel Rukeyser. This is an under-appreciated group of writers who grew out of the so-called proletarian school of poets in the 1920's to form a school of poetics antithetical to the prevailing taste for imagism. As self-professed outsiders both in aesthetics and in politics they appropriated and expanded, sometimes to a fantastic extent, a number of beast metaphors found in progressive writing of the time. American literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially literature of progressive political stance, employed a variety of animal tropes to depict the evils of modern capitalism. For example, we are all familiar with the comparison of the railroad companies to an octopus most memorably deployed in Frank Norris's 1901 novel. An octopus was an apt metaphor for a corporation that spread its tentacles across the country and into every other business that it touched. Less well known is Vachel Lindsay's use of feline imagery to describe the machinery of big business—locomotives and pump engines, for example. Lindsay's machines are ominous crouching beasts with insatiable appetites that demand obeisance from those who serve them. These images and others were expanded in the hands of the Dynamo poets to create a monster of Industrial Capitalism. Especially culminating in the work of Edwin Rolfe, this monster becomes a kind of gargantuan zombie whose body is literally made up of the remains of workers it has first forced to do its bidding and then consumed.

#### **128. (CYA) The Line Between the Human and the Monster**

Maple

Chair: Leisa Clark  
University of South Florida

#### **"My, my, there are always monsters!": The Conflation of Monstrosity and Humanity in D.M. Cornish's *Monster Blood Tattoo* Trilogy**

Daryl Ritchot  
The University of British Columbia Okanagan

In D. M. Cornish's *Monster Blood Tattoo* Trilogy readers are transported to the Half-Continent, a neo-Victorian world where monsters of various shapes and sizes wander the wilderness and wreak havoc on humanity. Life on the Half-Continent revolves around these monsters and ways to protect humanity from the dangers they represent. However, when Rossamünd Bookchild, the founding protagonist of the series, leaves the orphanage to embark on his adult life both he and the reader learn that monsters and humans are really not as different as is generally thought on the Half-Continent: some monsters are shown to be helpful and harmless while some humans, specifically the monster hunters known as lahzars, are shown to be little more than the indiscriminate killers which they are supposed to hunt. In this paper I will both question our conception of monstrosity and explore how the monstrous alters our idea of what it means to be human. My exploration will be grounded in the theory of the monstrous put forth by Richard Kearney in *Strangers, Gods and Monsters: Interpreting Otherness*. Specifically, that while monsters are a representation of evil from without, they are also an externalization of the evils that humans themselves possess. Furthermore, I will supplement my examination of the lahzars by reading them through discourses from posthumanism, most notably the cyborg theory of Donna Haraway. As a result of the lahzars having artificial glands and organs implanted within their bodies to grant them "superpowers" to aid in their fight against monsters, many people fear the lahzars almost as much as they fear monsters: these enhancements turn them into pseudo-monsters. By examining the conflation of humans and monsters within these novels I will show that neither humans nor monsters should be judged on their race and appearance but on their actions.

#### **The Human Monster: Redemptive (Im)possibilities in *The House of the Scorpion* and *Rot & Ruin***

Dorothy Karlin

In the spate of recent Y.A. dystopias, novels often depict atrocities, but they credit people with effecting the monstrous. I wish to engage with Jonathan Maberry's *Rot & Ruin* (2010) and Nancy Farmer's *The House of the Scorpion* (2002); both novels include corporeal grossness but showcase repellent human behavior. While Baldick defines the horror story as one that "focuses upon the violation of physical taboos," both *Rot & Ruin* and *The House of the Scorpion* focus upon the violation of moral and ethical taboos. In the former, the bounty hunters inspire more repulsion than the undead, and in the latter, El Patrón oppresses all residents of Opium. The novels inspire revulsion less through rotting flesh and other trappings of horror than through their overarching discussions of human behavior in worlds without appropriate moral bases. Although these novels locate the monstrous in the human, they try not to make it inherent to humanity. Instead, they particularize evil. Each novel has a delocalized menace – the lawlessness of the Rot and Ruin and the dehumanizing potential of science enacted in Opium – but each distills that threat into more discrete, and therefore surmountable, enemies. Benny Imura can beat Charlie Pinkeye and *The Motor City Hammer*, and Matt Alacrán can help destroy El Patrón and dismantle his empire. Using Romantic plots, in which individual heroes defeat evil villains, the novels attempt to contain the monstrous and glorify the human. They compromise that containment, however, by having initially combined the two. Is it enough that Benny and his brother, Tom, have noble thoughts and intentions, if they slaughter zombies wholesale when threatened? As El Patrón's clone, can Matt escape inheriting his genitor's negative qualities? According to these novels, what does it mean to be human, and can that differ from being humane?

#### **The Passion of the Cullen: Blood(lust), Transubstantiation, and Mortification in Stephenie Meyer's Edward Cullen**

Amanda Firestone  
University of South Florida

Edward Cullen is a vampire with a moral dilemma. In his own words: "I don't want to be a monster" (Meyer, *Midnight Sun* 204). But that's precisely what vampires are, right? For centuries myths about unnatural, blood drinking fiends have followed humans, plaguing their nightmares. For the hero of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight Saga*, this simple fact causes a great deal of consternation. Edward's bloodlust, which he calls "the monster," is posited as a demon that he constantly battles (Meyer, *Midnight Sun* 10). In the diegesis of the text, Edward frames his bloodlust as something monstrous. His body craves human blood and drinking it would be well within the confines of his nature, but he consciously abstains. However, it's not enough to abstain; Edward must persistently punish himself for his bloodlust. He drinks animal blood as a substitute and participates in masochistic behaviors like remaining near Bella Swan's blood. Edward's behaviors speak to theories Kenneth Burke presents throughout his oeuvre concerning transubstantiation, guilt, scapegoating, and mortification. These concepts create a conversation about how people symbolically deal with guilt and the various methods for purgation and purification. Burke entreats readers to think of literature as "equipment for living," where novels act as extended proverbs (Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form* 293). We begin to recognize that literature functions as a prescriptive tool for teaching behavior (Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form* 293, 296). The struggle with Edward's bloodlust is the symbolic representation of sin. I analyze Edward's specific sin – lust – and his guilt cycle as it changes from a purification of general sin to one concerning the denial of sexuality. By tracing Edward's human and vampire histories, I shed light on the possibilities for his motivations pertaining to his morality; in turn, I speculate what the potential subtextual prescriptions are for readers pertaining to their own moralities as embedded in the text by Meyer.

#### **129. (FTV/SF) Monstrosity and Ideology in *Battlestar Galactica***

Cypress

Chair: J.P. Telotte  
Georgia Tech

#### **Giving a Human Face to Monsters: Violence and Ethics in *Battlestar Galactica* and *V***

Aino-Kaisa Koistinen  
University of Oulu

In my paper I aim to discuss violence and ethics in the TV-series *Battlestar Galactica* (*BSG*) and *V*, mostly concentrating on the re-imagined versions (*BSG* USA/UK 2003-2009, *V* USA 2009-2011). Both series represent a war between humans and their "alien others". However, as the series progress the reasons for the war become more and more complex, which blurs the boundaries between "us" (humans) and "the others" (the aliens/enemies). This is especially negotiated in the scenes discussing torture and violence. My analysis connects the series to theoretical debates that consider meeting others ethically, as put forward in the work of Judith Butler and Sara Ahmed. According to Butler, during war, lives are divided into grievable and ungrivable ones (Butler 2006: e.g. 28–39). Drawing on Butler, Ahmed has asked: "What happens when those who have been designated as ungrivable are grieved, and when their loss is not only felt as loss, but becomes a symbol of the injustice of loss?" (Ahmed 2004: 192). I argue that *BSG* and *V* both address this question: as the "alien others" – i.e. the monsters – appear human and sometimes even act more ethically – or *humanely* – than the humans, the "monsters" are truly given a human face and the distinctions between ungrivable and grievable lives become uncertain. I will discuss the series in relation to contemporary phenomena such as racism and xenophobia. Representations both reflect and construct the world they are produced in (e.g. Kellner 1995: 1–11) and the human-like others in *BSG* and *V* take part in the production of the signifying practices that mark what is to be regarded as human and non-human, and as such provide tell-tale signposts for identity formation in our collective social imagination. Thus, what gets to count as human, or not, in fiction is also telling of lived identities that are made possible in everyday life. (I will probably prepare a PowerPoint presentation.)

#### **Monstrosity and Ideology in *Battlestar Galactica***

Van Leavenworth  
Umeå University

Of all of the character transformations in the re-imagined television series *Battlestar Galactica* (*BSG*), Kara ‘Starbuck’ Thrace’s transformation from human being to monstrous ‘thing’ is the most remarkable production of otherness. The series depicts the ongoing conflict between humanity and the Cylons, an artificially created race of robotic soldiers and ships, cyborg-like Hybrids and organic humanoids. After the straightforward ‘human vs. machine,’ ‘us vs. them’ ideological positioning in the miniseries, the narrative in the following four seasons increasingly questions essentialist conceptions of identity. Within the complex web of relations that develops between humans and Cylons, many character transformations signal an interrogation of how beliefs in essential differences are naïve and promulgate untenable social structures—something audiences and critics alike have appreciated about the series. In contrast, Starbuck’s strange becoming renders her distinct from everyone else, human and humanoid Cylon alike, because it is never clear what she becomes. As she is the character in the series who has been consistently presented as human in her compelling combination of flaws and talent, her change prompts questions about the effects of her metamorphoses. In this paper, I argue that Starbuck is made monstrous in her transformation from human being to thing, and this monstrosity functions as a catalyst that allows *BSG* to move back towards an ideology of difference in which an individual’s essential ‘nature’ determines her or his personal and social identity.

### **Classical Reception in *Battlestar Galactica*: Myths and Monsters in the Third Millennium**

Beth Severy-Hoven  
Macalester College

Glen Larson based his 1978-9 TV series *Battlestar Galactica* on stories from the Hebrew bible inflected by Mormonism: following catastrophe, a patriarchal commander leads survivors across a void toward a promised land. These Colonials also use Greek and Egyptian names and imagery to hint at ancient contact with our earth. Appropriately for a Cold War story, the refugees’ enemies are godless – robotic Cylons created by alien reptiles. Intriguingly, in re-imagining this universe in 2003, Ronald Moore and David Eick dramatically redistribute ancient Mediterranean traditions. Egyptian and biblical allusions are stripped from the Colonials, who worship a largely Greek pantheon. The Cylons are both rebellious creations of humans and monotheistic, and their belief in one God drives the genocidal attack on their creators which launches the plot. Using a concept of ‘myth’ articulated by sociologist of nationalism Duncan Bell, I examine how the new series engages in myth-making, that is, how the past projected into a technologically advanced future explores issues of identity in North America immediately post 9/11. In myth, says Bell (2003:76): “Time and place combine and are encoded...shaping the feelings of community and the construction of an inside/outside distinction, framing national identity in terms of a story about history and (a specific, often imagined) location.” *Battlestar Galactica* manipulates the past to create complex, sometimes conflicting categories of us and them, members and monsters. In 2003 Cylon monotheists avowing holy war are implicitly Islamic, whereas the Colonials are Western via their exclusive association with ancient Greece, the ‘birthplace of Western civilization’. But another narrative about these traditions complicates that identification, namely that Christianity triumphed over polytheism, that monotheism is how ‘we’ evolved into ‘us’. Long before the finale cast the series as an origin myth, *BSG* was an active agent in what Bell would call the American mythscape.

### **130. (H) The Medium is the Monster: Peter Straub**

*Palm*

Chair: Edward Howarth  
Longwood University

#### **Monsters, Detectives and Prose Style in Peter Straub’s *The Hellfire Club***

Joe Sanders  
Shadetree Scholar

Following the publication of the Blue Rose trilogy and of *The Hellfire Club* [1996], commentators assumed dispassionately (*The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* [1997]) or jubilantly (Joshi’s *The Modern Weird Tale* [2001]) that Peter Straub had turned from writing dark fantasy to detective thrillers. Actually, Straub’s fiction has always been centered on uncanny intrusions into normal life, which his characters attempt to resolve in the least distressing ways possible. Detective fiction actually is a kind of anti-horror fiction because it assumes that a persistent person who concentrates really hard *can* resolve anomalies in our experience, can even correct unpleasant or threatening situations, while horror assumes that human understanding and control are impossible. But the detective’s assurance is frequently less than convincing. In fact, a lingering doubt of any person’s power to “solve” crimes and resolve doubts has always been part of detective fiction, from Sherlock Holmes’ errors in “A Scandal in Bohemia” to such modern stories as Chester Himes’ *Blind Man with a Pistol*. Such uncertainty is a rich breeding ground for horror, in works such as John Dickson Carr’s *The Burning Court* or John Connolly’s overwrought Charlie Parker novels. Straub’s “thrillers” lurk on the outskirts of this territory, at the borders of the supernatural. *The Hellfire Club*’s prologue, “*SHORELANDS, JULY 1938*,” sets up levels of perception for the reader. First, there are objects, physical things that can be put into lists; people would prefer to operate on this level, even if that means denying the implications of how they encounter such physical objects. Then there are other people, beings transformed by imagination into unsettling or “terrifying” creatures; encounters with them are to be put off as much as possible. This short narrative is presented as solid fact, valuable information that the characters in the novel will assemble only gradually in the course of the action. Still, Straub uses the word “uncertain” twice in the first paragraph to describe the immediate observer and her observations. Appearing later in the action, people who confidently offer interpretations are mistaken or lying. We are, in short, stuck in a world we don’t understand and are justifiably wary of understanding better. People in that situation are bound to be victims of others who see more and who aren’t afraid of exploiting their understanding. This is the condition of Nora Chancel, in the hands of preternaturally cunning Dick Dart. Eventually, Nora also learns to see and manipulate what she sees—but that does not change the threateningly inchoate nature of the world. In fact, Nora manages to conceptualize her situation in terms of ghosts, demons, and monsters. She could be right. Thus it is not a mistake to see *The Hellfire Club* in terms of dark fantasy as we respond to the uncertainty Straub’s writing encourages throughout the novel, continuing his exploration of the limits of human understanding. This hesitant, uncommitted style is perhaps the safest way to proceed in the presence of monsters.

#### **Machen a Mess: Deliquescent Monsters in Fiction by Stephen King, Arthur Machen and Peter Straub**

Bernadette Boskey



Independent Scholar

King's story "Gray Matter" and the end of Straub's novel *Ghost Story* are both arguably influenced by the fiction of Arthur Machen, especially "The Great God Pan" and "The Novel of the White Powder." In each, a creature – monster, semi-human, or human being under the influence of a corrupting substance – melts in some way, often to a slimy liquid, and the change is implicitly or explicitly framed in terms of de-evolution. What does this image of the liquescent monster convey about our fears, about the body and identity? I connect both the sexual nature of the viscosity and its formlessness to an underlying fear about the integrity and dependability of our bodies as individual agents. I'll use some of the feminist/fat-studies material that examine how our culture values hard, masculine, impenetrable bodies and both devalues and fears soft, female, vulnerably open bodies; this material explicitly links the body issue to one of identity and need to defend our individual consciousness, and I will also examine that in the stories. "The Novel of the White Powder" and "Gray Matter" also show a fear of, yet attraction to, substance abuse, while "The Great God Pan" and *Ghost Story* have more to do with gender and sexuality.

#### **The Gothic Heart of Real-World Horrors: Peter Straub's Trio of Non-Supernatural Novels**

Rhonda Brock-Servais  
Longwood University

In his 1998 ICFA Guest of Honor talk, Peter Straub speaks of creating a "fictional space," something "essentially unlocated...hover[ing] a little distance off the ground" (165). Within this space, "certainty of any kind speaks of what is unexamined, unfelt, imagined – it is the space between the received and the as yet unknown" (166). Clearly one could claim such a space and, thus Straub's works, as Gothic because of the emphasis on the parallel existence of the understood and the incomprehensible. The Gothic is further known for its focus on the imaginary and the supernatural. This, too, fits with Straub's works, except when it doesn't. The Blue Rose trilogy (*Koko*, *Mystery*, and *The Throat*) are not supernatural novels; one could easily argue that with regard to genre they aren't even horror novels, but rather mysteries or thrillers. Yet, these novels, at their heart, are Gothic, both by trope – the use of darkness, persecution -- and in philosophy and feel -- the importance of the past, the prevalence of fate. In these works "anything like conclusions, answers and finalities no longer exist...[they] dissolve before their own rigidity" (166). The Blue Rose trilogy demonstrates that perhaps the truest manifestation of the Gothic is not found in a haunted moor or castle, but rather in the everyday experiences of individuals, be they characters or readers, who are coming to understand the "mysterious promise" of the world (166).

#### **131. (IF/H) International Human-Animal Hybrids and Transforming Monsters**

*Magnolia*

Chair: Debbie Felton  
University of Massachusetts Amherst

#### **The Changing Shape of a Shape-Shifter: The French and French-Canadian *Loup-garou***

Amy J. Ransom  
Central Michigan University

Marie de France's late twelfth-century "Le Lai de Bisclavret," with its sympathetic werewolf, remains today the best-known werewolf text in French literary history; in contrast with the medieval tradition of the courtly *loup-garou*, however, a much more malevolent form of the beast crossed the Atlantic to thrive in the northern woods of New France, later Lower Canada, and now Québec. Like its French literary precursor, the French-Canadian *loup-garou* evolved from an oral tradition of folktales; it also engaged central questions of notions of civility versus barbarism and questions about sexuality and gender relations. Yet the French-Canadian werewolf developed in a completely new setting: that of colonizing a new world and the encounter with "savage" peoples and their lore about the territory now being explored and inhabited by European newcomers. Then, in the context of early French-language nationalism in Lower Canada at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, writers like Louis Fréchette, Honoré Beaugrand, Wenceslas Eugene Dick and Pamphile Le May began to publish literary versions of oral tales of the *loup-garou*, *la chasse-galerie* and other supernatural figures. At the same time that these writers were exploiting the oral tradition in their construction of a French-Canadian national culture and identity, others in the United States, like Caroline Watson Hamlin and Mary Hartwell Catherwood were documenting the fading presence of French-speaking populations in the Great Lakes region. Drawing on the ethnographical work of Carolyn Podruchny on the *loup-garou* in French-Canadian folklore and Carolyn Walker Bynum's theorization of the werewolf as a figure of change, this paper teases out the nuances of meaning for the *loup-garou* tales published in North America, in French and in English, in these two distinct but related corpuses.

#### **The Sphinx, Fauns, and Satyrs: More Than Yet Not Quite Human**

Don Riggs  
Drexel University

While the ancient Egyptians saw part-human part-animal beings as gods, like the bird-headed Horus and the lion-headed Sekhmet, the ancient Greeks and Romans saw the sphinx, fauns, and satyrs as demigods embodying the necessary but dangerous natural component of humans, sexuality. Freud had several antique images of the Sphinx in his study, of them, a Greek terracotta sculpture from south Italy, made in the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., shows two prominent breasts jutting forth assertively, or perhaps provocatively. Satyrs are shown on 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Greek vase paintings either chasing female followers of Dionysus, in one instance copulating doggy-fashion with a human woman or, in another, crumpling as a Maenad thrusts her thyrsus at his genitals. Fauns are similarly recorded as constantly in pursuit of nymphs, their goatish libido frequently frustrated, as in Mallarmé's 1876 poem *L'après-midi d'un faune*. This frustrated libido climaxed in the initial choreography for Diaghilev's ballet of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, where Vasily Nijinsky, dancing the part of the faun, masturbates—or simulates masturbation—at the end of the ballet. The Sphinx—at least, the Greek Sphinx associated with Oedipus and Thebes—and the two half-male, half-goat or half-horse bipeds known as fauns and satyrs seem to be liminal figures that emphasize the human connection with nonhuman nature through the sexual drive. Often ancient representations of fauns and satyrs, as well as some more modern versions, give them human

legs and feet; the “Dancing Faun” sculpture after which the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E. house in Pompeii—the House of the Faun—is named shows the faun with only horns and a short tail to distinguish him from other human males. The late-19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century fascination with these mythic beings from classical antiquity signal a fascination with humanity’s connection to what has often been thought of as the prehuman natural foundation of our species.

### 132. (H) Modernism and Beyond

Dogwood

Chair: Andrea Krafft  
University of Florida

#### “We have a cruel and dreadful task” – Dis/assembling Monsters as Narrative Strategy and Discursive Practice

Anya Heise-von der Lippe  
Freie Universität Berlin

As ICFA 2012 guest scholar Jeffrey Jerome Cohen points out in *Monster Theory*: “The monster’s body is a cultural body” (Cohen, 1996, p. 4). Its adaptability reflects changing cultural fears and allows us to explore what we otherwise suppress. Like few other theoretical concepts, the monstrous body draws attention to the discursive boundaries which underlie distinctions of the human and its others, as well as the cultural mechanisms employed to reiterate and reinforce these boundaries. Moreover, in a quite literal, Frankensteinian way, the monster also makes visible the stitches with which it has been patched together from various signifying body parts. This structural particularity of the monstrous body can also be traced in the fragmented patchwork structure of the monster text. It is certainly no coincidence that the two most influential Gothic novels of the 19th century, and perhaps of all time, show significant structural similarities. Both *Frankenstein* (1818) and *Dracula* (1897) rely on letters or telegrams, as well as diary entries and other documents to tell the monster’s story. In both texts essential information about the monstrous body and its creation/destruction has to be put together from a number of sources and perspectives by readers inside and outside the text to make sense of the narrative. Postmodern issues like multi-perspectivity, narrative as well as corporeal fragmentation and the use of modern technology to assemble (and disassemble) monsters are already at work in the original texts and are only enhanced and underlined by the further possibilities of new media. The monster’s uncanny ability to adapt to and represent various cultural discourses is certainly one of the secrets of its success. In contemporary culture, monstrosity has become an extremely influential concept, a patchwork of cultural issues revolving around different questions of alterity, both within and beyond the Gothic genre. In order to make sense of the monstrous as a culturally significant discursive practice, monster theory and Gothic criticism need to accommodate the fragmented form of the monstrous body as well as the structural peculiarities of the monster text. My paper will attempt to contribute to the discussion of monstrous corporeality and textuality by exploring aesthetic processes of monstrous creation, focusing on the parallels between monstrous body and monstrous texts in a number of examples from *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* to the early 21st century.

#### A Monstrous Moment: Temporality in Rider Haggard’s *She*

Leigha McReynolds  
George Washington University

In *She* (1887), Holly, a British professor, and his adopted son Leo travel to Africa to unravel Leo’s family secret. Their adventure takes them back into an archetypal land-that-time-forgot transporting them from the present time of England to an ancient time that exists simultaneously with the contemporary moment. Ayesha, or She, beautiful, immortal, all-powerful, and undeniably monstrous, is the locus of and reason for this monstrous geography and temporality hiding in the dark of Africa. According to Stephen Kern in his book *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1914* the multiplicity of times, or the recognition of simultaneity, present in Haggard’s texts and embodied in Ayesha is a feature of the changed understanding of time in the late nineteenth century resulting from developments in theoretical science - relativity - and technological advances like the wireless or the photograph, which allowed two presents to occur at the same time across large distances or allowed the past to visually continue in the present. Beyond mirroring modern views on temporality, narratives which feature movement in time, as Darko Suvin argues, question the notion of immutable Truth by presenting alternative existential structures. Phrased in the terms of relativity, there can be no absolute truth about human experience in the world because that truth is always relational rather than objective. This paper explores the monstrous temporal moment of Ayesha’s kingdom and life in order to elaborate how her monstrosity stems, not only from her race and sexuality, but her relationship to time. Paradoxically, the strange simultaneity that Ayesha and her valley represent insist through monstrous opposition that human presence and human identity has changed, will change, and likely is changing at the reader’s contemporary moment allowing the text to challenge epistemological orthodoxies through a temporality which accommodates multiple realities.

#### Monstrous Modernity: H.P. Lovecraft’s “Call of Cthulhu” as a Literary Interpretation of Modernism

Melissa Bianchi  
University of Florida

Written in 1926 at the height of the American Modernist movement, H.P. Lovecraft’s “Call of Cthulhu” offers an interpretation of modernism that depicts the freedoms of exploratory thought—scientific, religious, and literary—brought about by modernity. At the same time, the text also addresses how this freedom ultimately brings with it a fear of unknowable possibilities and uncertain futures that are represented, in part, by the monster, Cthulhu. Not coincidentally, Lovecraft’s writing incorporates themes from Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud’s works that seek to understand the human mind and its place in modern civilization, an endeavor that also mirrors Lovecraft’s own problematic existence in modernity. Given these characteristics of Lovecraft’s work, I will perform a close reading of “Call of Cthulhu” to broaden our perspective of the modern experience. This analysis will be modeled after Marshall Berman’s interpretation of Goethe’s *Faust* in his book *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*. With *Faust*, Berman aims to broaden our understanding of modernity and modernism by examining “distinctly modern” qualities exhibited by a wide-range of texts, subjects, and locations (13). Berman devotes much of his investigation to the socioeconomic implications of progress and development on our conceptions of modernity; however, in the preface of the Penguin Edition of his book (published six years after the original) he laments that he did not fully explore the modern sentiment of “widespread and often desperate fear of the freedom that

modernity opens up for every individual, and the desire to escape from freedom...by any means possible" (10). By not engaging this fear of freedom, Berman neglects an examination of the effects of modernity on philosophical thought and human psychology. By looking at "Call of Cthulhu" as an interpretation of modernism, I hope to build on Berman's project by examining this fear of freedom evident in conceptions of scientific thought and religious ideology during modern times.

### **133. (CYA) Playing with the Dragon Tradition**

*Captiva A*

Chair: Melissa Schuit  
Simmons College

#### **Tolkien and the Traditional Dragon Story**

C.W. Sullivan III  
East Carolina University

C.S. Lewis once wrote that we have ignored "story as story" as we pursued, among other approaches, the sociological analyses of fiction. In few instances has this been more evident than in the post-1966 attempts to delve into the "meaning(s)" of J.R.R. Tolkien's most popular works, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*; fewer such analytical assessments have been attempted with *The Silmarillion*—and for good reason. But as Brian Rosebury has argued, and I believe cogently, modern and post-modern critical approaches to Tolkien's fiction have yielded, at best, mixed results. Following Rosebury's argument, I would argue that we should return, building on the lead provided by C.S. Lewis, to the story itself and to Tolkien as a storyteller. This means looking at Tolkien not just as a storyteller but as a traditional storyteller. By traditional storyteller, I mean the creators of oral narratives, from the anonymous poets who recited or chanted *Beowulf*, *The Iliad*, and *The Odyssey* to the unknown first tellers of the Irish cycles and Welsh *Mabinogi*. As structural analysis has shown, these tales have essentially similar plots from era to era, from culture to culture, but as performance analyses of contemporary tellers and singers have shown, each traditional teller shapes his narrative in an individual way, creating a variation on a formula. In other words, to best understand Tolkien as a traditional storyteller, we should use the critical approaches that have proved profitable when applied to ancient, originally oral, narratives; for it is my argument that Tolkien was a traditional story teller in that ancient sense, the difference being that he was able to present his "oral narrative" in a modern medium—print. What such an approach will reveal, looking at the children's literature classic, *The Hobbit*, for specific examples (although the same approach will also work with the more adult-oriented *The Lord of the Rings*) is that Tolkien did, indeed, create a traditional story, a story with a structure similar to the structures of the ancient narratives mentioned above and that, at a certain point in his tale, he both fulfilled and departed from that ancient structure to create a narrative of his own, a traditional narrative that is also unique to its teller, its time, and its place.

#### **"No Idle Fancy": Dragons as the Monstrous in Children's Literature**

Emily Midkiff  
Kansas State University

J.R.R. Tolkien proudly declared dragons capable of bearing incredible significance to a work of literature in his famous essay on *Beowulf* in 1983. Since then many have studied the dragons of medieval writing, art, and modern fantasy, especially with a focus on the dragon's potential as a monstrous mirror for questions of identity, fear, and heroism. Dragons in the context of children's fantasy literature have been left relatively untouched however. This paper will argue that modern dragons in children's literature have evolved to appear deceptively simple, and yet many have strong ties to their literary ancestry that allow them to retain their mythical, universal resonance despite their apparent simplicity. The dragons in Pija Lindenbaum's *When Owen's Mom Breathed Fire* (2006), Boni Ashburn's *Hush, Little Dragon* (2008) and Cressida Cowell's *How to Train Your Dragon Vol. 1* (2010) serve as examples of seemingly simple dragons which really use centuries' worth of cultural significance to present basic stories that carry deep unspoken meaning intended for the conscious and unconscious interpretation of modern readers. These dragons all assume familiarity with legendary dragon qualities and are all recognizable as the creatures from legend, but they each reveal certain significant modifications in personality and behavior from the traditional dragon. Each book reveals active decisions on the part of the authors and illustrators concerning which legendary dragon traits to keep and to dismiss. With these choices each dragon suggests distinct questions of identity, fear, and heroism relevant for modern parent and child readers. As dragons are such prevalent literary figures in children's literature and show no signs of going extinct, determining their meaning and use in the above texts provides a precedent for studying other dragon-centered children's books with an awareness of their place in the long history of the dragon in myth, legend, and literature.

#### **"Your Kindness Quite Undragons Me": Gender (De)Construction in Nesbit and Grahame**

Nicole Brugger-Dethmers  
Hollins University

Gender has been widely acknowledged as a performative identity marker, and normative behavior associated with particular gender roles as culturally influenced. In this way, characters in children's literature represent either an adherence to or a rejection of socially established roles. This paper proposes that "dragon" as a category is also a performative identity marker, and the titular characters of E. Nesbit's *"The Last of the Dragons"* and Kenneth Grahame's *"The Reluctant Dragon"* function as reflective surfaces with which to examine gender construction. An analysis of these stories, with consideration for the historical background against which they were written, will seek to demonstrate that "dragon," in these examples, exists as a place of category crisis, calling attention to not only the unstable gender identity of the dragon characters but also of the human male and female characters. These stories similarly reflect two different eras of cultural, national, and technological instability. Ultimately, they ask the reader to question culturally accepted notions of normative gender identities, and seem to suggest that other markers of identity, normally thought to be inherent and fixed, may actually be performative as well.

### 134. (F/SF)Theoretical Building-Blocks of Fantasy

Captiva B

Chair: Robert von der Osten  
Ferris State University

#### Strategies of Folklore in Fantasy Literature

Timothy H. Evans  
Western Kentucky University

Many writers of fantasy draw on folklore, but they do so for a variety of reasons. Folklore can be a source of content, forms, ideas or settings, and a kind of literary strategy. My paper will begin by offering several definitions of folklore. I will then survey four major strategies for using folklore in fantasy literature, giving examples from the work of English language fantasy writers from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The four strategies are: 1) The use and manipulation of specific elements from folk narratives, especially folktale types and motifs, either in a straightforward way or reshaped in ways that challenge readers' expectations. Examples include literary fairy tales by Angela Carter and Jane Yolen. 2) The use of ethnographic models and invented "folklore" to create realistic invented cultures, which then may be used to explore a variety of cultural, philosophical and moral issues: an example is Ursula K. Le Guin's *Always Coming Home*. 3) The use of traditional beliefs and legends (for example, medicinal or magical beliefs, or supernatural legends) to explore the constructed nature of reality: an example is the short stories of Jewish-American writer Avram Davidson. 4) The mixing of actual and invented "folklore" to create a sense of authenticity for the author's ideology: works by H. P. Lovecraft and Neil Gaiman are examples. These four strategies are not mutually exclusive. Together, they give writers an effective way to subvert their reader's sense of reality, or of moral order (or both), by using the familiar (folklore) to explore the unreal.

#### The Psychological Epistemology of the Fantastic

Stacie L. Hanes  
Kent State University

Sociology and psychology recognize the importance of story, but the social sciences have traditionally been considered "soft" science, while physics, chemistry, and biology are "hard" sciences; however, advances in medical sciences over the past twenty years, especially such fields as neurobiology, increasingly indicate that cognitive psychology and its siblings are based on and supported by bedrock biology and chemistry. Some psychoanalysts hold the line that biology will always be irrelevant to psychology, or at least psychoanalysis—a more radical version of Freud's late nineteenth-century view that biology was not sufficiently advanced to be of much help in psychoanalysis. Other psychologists believe that this hermeneutic view (as opposed to what Eric Kandel calls the scientific view), which resists combining ways of thinking about the mind with ways of thinking about the brain, clinging to the mind-body divide, has held back the fields of psychology and psychoanalysis from advancing intellectually. Kandel writes that one issue "deserves a more detailed answer, and that relates to whether biology is at all relevant to psychoanalysis. ...this issue is so central to the future of psychoanalysis that it cannot be addressed with a brief comment. I therefore have written this article in an attempt to outline the importance of biology for the future of psychoanalysis" (505). In sum, biology is critical to understanding the human mind, and Kandel goes on to detail how and why. The plain conclusion, then, is that biology and literature—especially fantastic literature—are inseparable, or rather that they should be.

#### Immersion vs Estrangement: Fantasy, Science Fiction and Cognitive Literary Theory

Merja Polvinen  
University of Helsinki

Many of our most basic assumptions concerning the experience of fiction are rooted in notions such as life-like worlds and believable characters, which describe the general sense of verisimilitude that fictional texts give to their readers. But it may be that such notions obscure the way in which engaging with a work of fiction – however life-like – still is a coupling of mind with a crafted representation of unreal worlds, events and beings. In cognitive literary studies, readers' engagement with fiction has largely been seen in terms of an immersion in a life-like fictional world – a feeling of transportation that is understood specifically as an emotional engagement with the characters and events. That emotional connection has, for its part, often been theorised in terms of temporary belief or constructed illusion, with the central assumption that awareness of the fictionality of fiction is an obstacle to the immersive experience. But how convincing are such theories when they are faced with science fiction and fantasy, genres which can create both emotionally immersive and cognitively estranging effects? This presentation introduces the central theories of immersion and engagement in cognitive literary theory, and proceeds, with reference to the works of Christopher Priest, China Miéville and Jeff VanderMeer to show the problems they encounter when applied to speculative fiction. I will argue that the analysis of the narrative effects of SF show that our general understanding of imaginative engagement with fiction must develop ways to accommodate a more nuanced interplay between emotional immersion and estrangement.

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**Saturday March 24, 2012 4:00-5:30 p.m.**

**139. (SF) The Power of Language in China Miéville's *Embassytown***

Oak

Chair: Grace L. Dillon  
Portland State University

**Can the Ariekei Speak?: Language and Colonialism in Mieville's *Embassytown***

Catherine Siemann  
Cooper Union

China Mieville's *Embassytown* gained critical attention as a science fiction novel centering on linguistic concepts. However, as with most narratives of interplanetary travel and settlement, the theme of imperialism is a major theme throughout. Reading *Embassytown* through the lens of postcolonial theory, we find a text with a final twist that reverses the reader's previous sympathies and assumptions, to devastating effect. *Embassytown* examines the communication between English-speaking humans and an alien race (the Ariekei or "Hosts"), who process language so differently that signifiers have no meaning and metaphors take literal, physical form. The resultant cultural incomprehension leads to the destruction of Ariekei culture, when the human Ambassadors accidentally addict the Hosts to a particular performance of their Language (lying, which is completely unknown in Ariekei culture). They deliberately continue to feed this addiction, first for their survival, but then in service of their reshaping of the planet's society, in an echo of Britain's importation of opium to China. Though Ariekei rebels seek to drive out the humans, they are defeated with the help of Ariekei collaborators, resulting in a "happy" ending representing so many colonial histories. The surviving colonists form a new society along with Hosts who have lost their Language, and have learned to speak various "Anglo-" dialects. At the end of the novel, Language is on its way to being wiped out in the urban center, Ariekei have learned to lie, and "drug" addiction is the alternative to cultural assimilation. The reader must come to terms with the collaboration of seemingly sympathetic narrator Avice Benner Cho, and the disruption of narrative expectations, as a character portrayed as villainous turns out to be the novel's moral center, and Avice and her colleagues become triumphant imperialists.

**Monsters inside/outside Miéville**

Neil Easterbrook  
TCU

Late this spring, China Miéville finally published his first sf novel, or at least his first novel that is unequivocally sf, *Embassytown*. It is a novel built around uncanny reversals of the human and the alien, a familiar theme in twentieth century sf. But it also features an uncanny reversal in its conception of the nature of language, that medium that frequently remains "transparent" with literature, even much of the sort of postmodern literature that is highly self-reflexive concerning its status as literature. In this case the novel's crux, the double-business to which it is bound, is the inside/outside dialectic, a property that properly results from figurality, the thing that the novel's alien monsters manage to acquire, and the thing that transforms them from alien persons to familiar humans. Of course, from a certain point of view, monsters are entirely "natural," simply facts of the world (here I'm assuming an sf context), and however exotic really ought to be no more frightening than rocks, daffodils, or cheese doodles—ok, maybe we really should be afraid of something like a cheese doodle. But Miéville knows something about the philosophy of language, and from the traditional view, the view that would regulate and control thought (not merely for the admirable ambition of keeping thought rational, but more for the suspicious desire to regulate and control thought to what is permissible, to what is "normal"), then the real monsters are metaphors, figures. Drawing on three ideas of metaphoricity—those found in Derrida, Lyotard, and Lakoff—I will the inside / outside reciprocity that defines figurality, informs the central theoretical structure of "literary" sf, and results in the monstrous uncanny: the constant pressure in sf to examine the present and the personal, no matter how exotic and entertaining its wildest yarns, like *Embassytown*, maybe.

**The Monstrous Linguistics: The Use of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis in Science Fiction**

Mika Lopenen  
University of Helsinki

In this paper, I will explore the uses of linguistic relativity – and especially the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis – as a narrative element in science fiction literature. Criticized or discredited, the hypothesis offers an attractive vehicle for SF literature: language itself becomes a parasite or paradise, a prison or a pathway towards utopia. I will explore the applications of the hypothesis – and the evolution of its use – in several SF novels, starting from the pre-hypothesis novels of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (George Orwell, 1949) and advancing through *The Languages of Pao* (Jack Vance, 1959), *Babel-17* (Samuel Delany, 1966) and *The Sentimental Agents in the Volyen Empire* (Doris Lessing, 1983), and *Embassytown* (China Miéville, 2011).

## 140. (CYA) The Monstrous Self

Maple

Chair: Janice Hawes  
South Carolina State University

### The Inflicted "Self" in Robin McKinley's *Deerskin*: Implanted Memories, Fragmented Bodies, and Re-envisioned Identities

Kendra Holmes  
University of Florida

In both narratives and literary theory, trauma has had many denotations, representations and connotations. Freud explains trauma as the occurrence of a situation or circumstance too vast for our consciousness to process. Barthes relates trauma to the "punctum"—a sensory arrest that disallows any rational understanding of perceived circumstances. Jacques Lacan uses trauma to describe the meaning of his term, the "Real," which is a space that can neither be tamed nor named, a space that thrives on chaos and disrupts our everyday lives. Theorists such as Fredric Jameson and Nicholas Abraham, have suggested that spaces of the fantastical, in relation to trauma, are constructed in order to re-civilize the "inflicted" protagonist and re-institutionalize the bildungsroman. Using Robin McKinley's *Deerskin* (1993), I will argue that the space of the "fantastical" acts as a continuous space of re-constructed memories, trauma, and a compilation of identities; resulting in a change in identity and forgotten history. I will argue that the creation of the fantastical space or entity is the rupture in one's identity. As highlighted through McKinley's novel, I believe that "fantastical" fragments the body by conflating the "self" and the "other". Moreover, "implanted" memories become a process of sustaining trauma, while the magical creates traumas. I will conduct a Lacanian reading of the text, applying Lacan's Three Orders, The Symbolic, Imaginary, and Real to McKinley's novel. Thus, applying Lacan's structures to the growth and development of Lissar (the protagonist) in her journey to becoming a civilized, (un)fragmented adult. In my paper, the "symbolic" will be mapped onto the space of memory and the fantastical, the "real" onto trauma, and the imaginary onto Lissar's psychological and biological development from child to adult.

### The Mirror Self and the Dream Self: Recognizing Disparity between Psychic and Performed Identities

NaToya Faughnder  
University of Florida

Perhaps there is no greater recognized symbol of the outcast than that of the monster who is most often presented as that which is to be feared; it is the Other, the abject, that which brings discordance to order. In *Looking Glasses and Neverlands: Lacan, Desire, and the Subjectivity in Children's Literature*, Karen Coats notes that "[abjection] is the process of expulsion that enables the subject to set up clear boundaries and establish a stable identity." (140). Like the abjection of the monstrous figure in society, the abjection of the monstrous self is a means of establishing a stable identity construction, of establishing an identity performance recognizable as within society's boundaries of acceptance. This is a process present in adolescence, presented in the struggle to leave behind childhood and achieve maturity and adulthood. In Catharine Fisher's *Corbenic*, a contemporary YA Arthurian novel based upon the Perceval Grail Quest, the process of maturation and abjection is explored through the complicated intersections of trauma, memory, and the mythic past. Fisher's protagonist must confront the monstrousness of his traumatic past and his deepest fears for himself (including the knowledge that he may have inherited his mother's schizophrenia) in order to truly come to terms with who he is and the adult he is becoming. This essay explores the roles of trauma, melancholia, and memory in identity construction, asserting that sometimes what one wishes to expel is that very quality that makes one who s/he is. Fisher's novel, I will argue, represents that it is only through a confrontation with the self—with personal traumas, fears, and biases—that real psychological growth can occur. In this paper, I draw from children's literature scholars such as Karen Coats (above), Roberta Seelinger Trites, and Eric Tribunella, but I also closely examine the Arthurian literature from which Fisher draws her source material and much of the pertinent scholarship concerning those texts.

### Becoming the Dark Lord: Colonial-Cultural Rupture and Constructing Antihistorical Identity in Kage Barker's *The House of the Stag*

Shaun Duke  
University of Florida

One of the unique methods used by the colonial system to reproduce its culture is by controlling history. Dipesh Chakrabarty notes that by attempting—and largely succeeding—to make European historical model—linear, "fact"-based history—the "only" way by which culture can be relayed, colonialists managed to suppress indigenous culture. But such processes also created an acute sense of exile among postcolonial/subaltern peoples—what Yanick Lahens calls "internal exile." Since the colonial model sought to degrade or devalue non-European culture (i.e., reconfigure the indigenous as other), the feeling of exile had repercussions for identity formation. These processes form the basis of Kage Baker's *The House of the Stag*, a young adult maturation text. Gard, the protagonist, is doubly-exiled, forced out into a world of empires where he must construct a new identity for himself in a sea of cultural impositions. What lies at the heart of Baker's text is a drive for a subaltern figure to consume a historical narrative and to demand an identity that operates on their terms. Using postcolonial theory, thus, becomes a productive avenue for considering how subaltern figures such as Gard manipulate historical narratives to form new identities. For this paper, I will use theorists like Chakrabarty, Lahens, and Spivak to argue that Baker enacts a form of antihistorical narrative that eagerly seeks to recreate a connection to a lost history through the fabrication of an identity based on reshaping history/mythology and accepting internal monstrosity or otherness. The construction of Gard's identity, thus, arises from a colonial-cultural rupture that demands an antihistorical response, one which at once reconciles the processes of exile which make subalternity possible and makes manipulating historical narratives a constitutive element of resistance.

## 141. (FTV) Monstrous Masculinity

Cypress

Chair: Andrea Hairston  
Smith College

### Will Smith: Heroism and Sexuality in SF Film

Sharon DeGraw  
Michigan State University

Historically, sf film has followed the lead of sf literature in relying on an Anglo, masculine triangle of protagonist, audience, and director/author. In the 1970s, however, sf films began including secondary black characters. Black male protagonists have become more common over the past decade. A single actor, Will Smith, has made great in-roads in the Anglo male tradition of sf film. Over the past 15 years, through a series of films, Smith has become a leading sf actor in the United States. As Adilifu Nama asserts, "it is Will Smith who reinvigorated the status of blackness in SF cinema." Despite Smith's tremendous success, however, he still remains hindered from a full range of human portrayal, in that romance and/or sexuality are elided in his films. "If a movie is to appeal to a white [male] audience, the black actor must be neutered," argues Stephen Barnes. Romance is not a staple of sf film, but there exists a discrepancy between the sexuality demonstrated by white male leads and black male leads. Similarly, Smith displays greater sexuality in his non-sf films. Several techniques are utilized to circumvent black male sexuality. Comedy, a sidekick role, and being in a pre-existing relationship are general film techniques, while aliens, technology, sexism, and apocalyptic/sacrifice are specific to sf. In Smith's early sf career, comedy and the sidekick role dominate films like *Men in Black* and *Wild Wild West*. *I, Robot* offered Smith's first serious, lead role in a sf drama, but he remained a sexual object and the nascent romance between Del Spooner and Susan Calvin was safely repressed. *I Am Legend* solidified Smith's lead status, as he replaced the iconic Charlton Heston as Robert Neville. However, Heston's inter-racial romance in the 1971 version is completely cut. It is only in Smith's latest sf film, *Hancock* that some romance and sexuality are finally incorporated. While this budding romance too is quickly truncated by a pre-existing relationship and Smith's comedic role returns in full force, the movie offers hope for the future. Testing the racial acceptance of sf viewers, *Hancock* suggests that Smith's tremendous likability will finally overcome lingering racial prejudice against the expression of black male sexuality.

### Testosterone Overdose: Grendel as Monstrous Masculinity in *Beowulf* Films

A. Keith Kelly  
George Gwinnett College

Over the past half dozen years the *Beowulf* story enjoyed a flash of popularity among filmmakers. Robert Zemeckis's animated version was released with much spectacle and little acclaim in 2007, while 2005 witnessed the screening of "Beowulf and Grendel," shot in Iceland and starring Gerard Butler. While these two films were quite different in their depictions of the Anglo-Saxon poem and its plot, there was a marked similarity in one particular way Grendel was presented particularly vis a vis Hrothgar and Beowulf himself. Both monsters, and in fact both films, displayed a certifiable overdose of testosterone—and not simply in the hack-n-slash way one might expect. Ranging from the overtly Freudian presentation of the twisted and hideous Grendel (who in effect serves as a walking phallus), and a seductive Angelina Jolie as his mother in Zemeckis's production, to the rather sympathy-inspiring Grendel in "Beowulf and Grendel," monstrosity in both films is directly linked to masculinity. Furthermore, one might argue that masculinity gone wrong is in fact the source of monstrosity in both adaptations, and the motivations for conflict in the tale. In this paper I propose to look not so much at the success or failure of the screen adaptations of this great poem, but at the portrayal of monstrosity as twisted masculinity in each.

### From Final Girl to Initial Beast: Becoming the Male Monster in *Halloween 4*, *Haute Tension*, and Other Modern Horror

Mike Marra  
Independent Scholar

In her "Final Girl" theory, film scholar Carol Clover explores the connection between the antagonist and protagonist in slasher films, usually a male and a female, respectively. She has illustrated this connection in various papers and publications, most notably in her book, *Men, Women and Chain Saws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film*. However, there seems to be a very thin line between "becoming the final girl" and "becoming a mindless killer". This analysis will explore how far many of these "final girls" go in their quest for revenge and whether or not it is warranted. Are these outbursts of violence justified or have they become no better than the evil that originally stalked them? In this paper, I plan to analyze various texts (films, television programs, video games, etc.) that contain these thematic elements and draw connections between the characters, the circumstances, and the final girl theory. The method for this paper is textual analysis. With this method I will interpret the various texts at my disposal; in this case this includes the *Halloween* series of films, *Haute Tension*, and other applicable texts. By analyzing these texts through the lens of the final girl theory and other relevant theories, conclusions will be made. This paper is relevant for a number of reasons. First and foremost, this study has never been conducted before. This is fresh research that will enrich the pool of knowledge concerning the aforementioned texts. Also, this analysis will further flesh out Clover's original theory and expand upon it for even more research in the future.

## 142. (F) Maps, and Ankh-Morpork and *Game of Thrones*

Palm

Chair: A. P. Canavan  
Edgehill University

### Fantasy City Maps: The Cases of Erikson, Lynch, and Miéville

Stefan Ekman  
Lund University

Although the overwhelming majority of the maps that come with fantasy novels portrays the geography of a primary or secondary world, somewhere between two and twelve per cent of the fantasy maps are in fact maps of cities. Like all maps, the fantasy city maps reflect the choices (conscious and unconscious) of cartographers and mapmakers and a “close reading” of such maps can reveal a great deal about the underlying assumptions of the genre of fantasy city maps as well as about the how each map relates to the setting it portrays. In a previous discussion two maps from Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, I have demonstrated how paying close attention to fantasy maps as maps can reveal things about the maps beyond the elements used in their construction. In my paper for ICFA 2012, I propose to discuss some of the results from a close reading of the city maps in Steven Erikson’s *Gardens of the Moon*, Scott Lynch’s *The Lies of Loch Lamora*, and China Miéville’s *Perdido Street Station*. Even a cursory view of these three examples will reveal that they are thematically different from city map genre of actual cities. Rather than mapping specific locations and offering possible routes between these locations by inclusion of various roads and streets, the fantasy city maps mainly appear to focus on the spatial relationships between various areas. Taking this focus on relative locations of urban districts as my point of departure, I will use theories of map interpretation suggested by a number of map scholars (in particular Denis Wood) to examine what the three fantasy city maps can tell us about the places they help bring into being – and how they do it.

### “Because It Works”: Terry Pratchett’s *Ankh-Morpork* as Anti-Utopia

Annette Doblix Klemp  
University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Terry Pratchett’s Discworld novels, particularly those featuring the city state of Ankh-Morpork present a view that is decidedly anti-utopian. Unlike dystopian novels, which typically show how well-intentioned political schemes have gone awry, Pratchett’s underlying theme is that utopian impulses are themselves inherently evil because they are suppressive and life-denying. As Pratchett indicates through a large cast of comic eccentrics, the city “works” because it appeals to man’s inherent selfishness and self-interest. While Ankh-Morpork is a setting for many of the Discworld novels, my paper will deal primarily with *The Colour of Magic*, *Guards! Guards!* and *The Thief of Time*. *The Colour of Magic* introduces Ankh-Morpork, but in this novel, the city is primarily a background for Pratchett’s satire of “sword-and-sorcery” fantasy. *Guards! Guards!* deals in depth with the anti-utopian philosophy which governs the city state. Ankh-Morpork’s Guild system regulates crime by the paradox of catering to organized crime. Under this system, the Thieves’ Guild gets paid by the citizens for not committing crimes and, in turn, acts as a police force that discourages and punishes crime committed by non-guild members. While the majority of Discworld’s inhabitants are ruled by self-interest, Pratchett acknowledges the need for leadership. Ironically, the Patrician, the most powerful figure in the city is a comic rendering of many of the virtues attributed by Plato to his philosopher-king or H. G. Wells to his samurai. As a rational and intelligent leader, the Patrician’s most important characteristic is his ability to know “when not to use power.” Rather than try to improve and educate the populace, the Patrician defends and improves their city. While my focus is on the three novels mentioned above, one of the primary characteristics of Ankh-Morpork is the growth and development it displays as the series develops: the City Watch grows in size and effectiveness, acceptance of species diversity is promoted, a communication systems (the Clacks) is established, and a functioning postal system and currency are instituted. *The Thief of Time* presents the dangers posed by utopian idealism. The Auditors, who find human individuality too “messy and unpredictable,” wish to improve the world by stopping time and, thereby, eradicating any possibility of change or difference. Their desires precisely illustrate what many have found to be some of the major difficulties with utopia: its stifling of creativity and individuality and its static, unchanging quality. While Pratchett’s heroes help to defeat the Auditors, the human physical condition itself is largely responsible for their downfall. What the Auditors learn is that the possession of a body makes complete rationality impossible: they bicker among themselves, and physical sensation (particularly chocolate) eventually leads to their own irrationality and self-destruction. My paper will conclude by contrasting Pratchett’s comic satire to the seriousness of most utopian and dystopian fiction, whether found in the genres of science fiction or fantasy. Typically, the tone prevailing throughout the majority of utopian and dystopian works is somber. In contrast, Pratchett celebrates the eccentricity of characters existing in a world which sets few, but clearly defined limits upon their expressions of individuality.

### Monstrous Births and the Abject in Martin’s *Game of Thrones*

Elizabeth Kempton  
Saint Louis University

In this paper, I will explore the popular HBO television series, *Game of Thrones* and its inspiration, George R. R. Martin’s series of fantasy novels, *The Song of Ice and Fire*. Particularly, I’m interested in mapping the character of Daenerys Targaryen and her configuration as both a Lilith-like mother of monsters and a messianic ruler. Early in the television show and books, Daenerys conceives a stillborn and deformed child. After this child’s death, Daenerys goes on to experience a second monstrous birth. She walks into her stillborn child and husband’s pyre, holding three petrified dragon eggs and emerges, nude, clearly nursing three young dragons. This is currently the season finale of the television series. The moment appears empowering. The book series complicates Daenerys’s relationship to her dragons. She is consistently referred to as “the mother of dragons” and at first she is quite affectionate of and maternal with the dragons, but her horror grows as the dragons mature. This horror cumulates in a scene in which Daenerys learns that one of her dragons has killed a child. In terror, Daenerys orders the dragons confined underground. Yet ultimately, these dragons are clearly positioned by the prophecies of the books as a military asset which Daenerys must master if she is to assume her mythical role as a leader. What I propose interpretively, then, is that both the television show and the books are mapping a sense of coming to terms with Kristeva’s abject through the figure of the monstrous child. Daenerys is forced to confront and



ultimately make peace with her monstrous progeny, if she wishes to save the fictional world of the novels. The abject here, cannot be purified, but rather must be accepted, as death and a loss of self will be an inevitable part of Daenerys's prophesied return to power.

### **143. (IF) From Creation to Apocalypse: International Monstrous Fantastic**

Magnolia

Chair: Rachel Haywood-Ferreira  
Iowa State University

#### **From Amazons to Zombies: Latin America's Monstrous Fantastic**

Persephone Braham  
University of Delaware

The discovery of the Americas challenged long-standing hypotheses about the nature of the world and man's place in it, and the New World became the arena for an exceptionally transformative encounter with monsters, real and imagined. Faced with a perilous, awesome, and yet fantastically familiar landscape, Spanish explorers of the New World showed an extraordinary penchant for organizing their pursuits and perceptions according to popular images captured in millennial, fabulous and mythical narratives. Armed with the knowledge of the bestiaries and the certainty of locating an Earthly Paradise, they described their experience in terms of the fantastic and the monstrous. Embodying exoticism, hybridity, and sexual and other excesses, the monsters of the New World sustained the ongoing conceptualization of the unknown that was a prerequisite to conquest and control. Columbus's mermaids and cannibals, the anthropophagous landscape of Amazonia; Haiti's living dead; all loom in Latin America's literatures as incarnations of desire and dread, but also as avatars of autochthonous culture. A consciousness of ex-centricity with respect to Anglo-European culture is constitutive of Latin American intellectual subjectivity, and has led many of its best-known writers, such as Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez, Julio Cortázar, and Alejo Carpentier, to confront European concepts of the magical, the surreal, the uncanny, and the fantastic with alternative formulations such as the real marvelous and magical realism. This paper examines the mechanisms whereby Latin Americans transfigured and invoked the monstrous fantastic to reinforce Latin American ex-centricity while at the same time inserting Latin American letters into mainstream markets. Construed in terms of the real marvelous and magical realism, the monstrous fantastic is very much debated within Latin-Americanist criticism, as it exposes the problems of autochthony and cultural production in a highly syncretic postcolonial setting. The changing shape of this discussion over the years allows us to examine the development of the Latin American response to an ongoing epistemological crisis caused, ironically, by the drive towards self-recognition.

#### **Sense and Nonsense-Ability: Federico Schaffler González's *Brief Eternity***

Dale Knickerbocker  
East Carolina University

Frank Kermode has famously asserted that apocalyptic narratives, like their biblical model "Revelations," make sense of human history by looking at it from beyond its end. This essay attempts to demonstrate that *Brief Eternity* invokes and rewrites the biblical story in order to demonstrate that two of Western civilization's primary explanatory narratives, Christianity and humanistic, post-Enlightenment reason, are absurd. *Brief Eternity* consists of four short stories revolving around the destruction of Mexico City by twelve atomic bombs. The first explains the event by creating a mythology: Earth is created by a young divinity (hinted to be the Judeo-Christian God) tradition win a contest to see who in the pantheon can offer the most absurd). The second is a story of political intrigue describing the aftermath of the destruction, satirizing Mexico's history and its contemporary politics. The third offers a Clancy-esque thriller as an agent attempts to find three cylinders left by the outgoing President of Mexico that would explain the disaster. The final story offers an explanation that creates a historical narrative around the event, explaining in the rational, cause-and-effect logic employed by historians. The "rational" explanation turns out to be every bit as nonsensical as its religious counterpart: the President, bitter at being voted out of power and dying with AIDS, stole and detonated the weapons out of spite. *Brief Eternity* thus constitutes a critique of the metanarratives we use to understand reality, adopting the existentialist view that human existence is absurd.

#### **Monstrous Insinuations in José Saramago's *Cain***

Ronald Meyers  
East Stroudsburg University

The late, great Portuguese author José Saramago (1922-2010), awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1998, has been recognized and cited as a moralist with a wry, if not ironical and opaque style. Though noted for his historical depictions of his homeland, Portugal, he was perhaps the quintessential cosmopolitan author, incorporating major themes from Dostoyevsky to Kafka, to Orwell, to Sartre, to Ionesco, to Gabriel Marquez into his considerable body of work. His final novel, *Cain*, published a year before his death and brought out in translation in 2011, continues to demonstrate Saramago's intellectual curiosity and flair for the fantastic. Harold Bloom has noted his "Swiftian irony," all to clear in this novel, and the recent *The New York Times Book Review* cited its connection to the sensibility of Mark Twain. I shall seek further to show in my presentation, both the exuberant comic exaggeration of Rabelais, and Samuel Beckett's mordant irony and absurdist (atheistic, if not nihilistic) world view. In the very opening page of the novel, Saramago represents his peculiar sensibility in depicting the Lord's frustration with his newly created couple and his "grave oversight" over the inability of "his" human progenitors to express themselves--"be it a bellow, a roar, a croak, a chirp, a whistle, a cackle." In a Rabelaisian tour de force of heretical energy of language: "In an excess of rage, surprising in someone who could have solved any problem simply by issuing another quick fiat, he rushed over to adam and eve and unceremoniously, no half measures, stuck his tongue down the throats of first one and then the other. From the texts which, over the centuries, have provided a somewhat random record of those remote times, be it of events that might, at some future date, be awarded canonical status and others deemed to be the fruit of apocryphal and irredeemably heretical imaginations, it is not at all clear what kind of tongue was being referred to here. . . ." Cain, the fratricide and first murderer in the Hebrew Bible is the prototype of great monster villains in history and literature, which have included Medea, Oedipus, Clytemnestra, Joseph's brothers, Judah, Jephthah, Macbeth, Richard

III, Raskolnikov, Brutus, John Wilkes Booth and Judas Iscariot, to name but a few. The mark of Cain, which in the Bible is a talisman, granted by the Lord, a gift of grace to protect him in his ceaseless wandering for the necessary expiation of his monstrous crime, still is viewed, here too by Saramago, as the ultimate stigma. In his wry reversal, Cain, is a Jobian sufferer, who serves as a guide—like Don Quijote in his geographical travels on his sturdy donkey, to the illustrative fables of the Hebrew Bible in a way suggestive of a Monty Python or of a Mel Brooks comic exaggeration. Cain, after his crime against his brother, which was brought about by the fact that the lord preferred his brother Abel's offering over his own, traverses the Biblical narrative, at times impersonating his brother Abel, having affairs with Lilith and lust for her progeny, viewing the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the attempted sacrifice of Abraham's son, Isaac, and the tower of Babel, the golden calf and cruel destruction that accompanied the return to the Promised Land—all seemingly, in Milton's notable phrasing, "to justify" the lord's ways (lord is always in lower case) while suggesting, at the same time, the lord of the Old Testament's seeming inhumanity to man.

#### 144. (H/FTV) Army of Darkness

Dogwood

Chair: Jason Embry  
Georgia Gwinnett College

#### Necromancy: The Monsters and the Heroes

Faye Ringel  
U.S. Coast Guard Academy

Necromancy, "divination by the dead," refers to summoning spirits or reanimating corpses, presumably to gain knowledge or power. In the first Gothic revival, *The Necromancer* (1794) was a "horrid" novel Austen immortalized in *Northanger Abbey*. Necromancers were the most monstrous of wizards, their crime a capital offense. The best-known necromancer in horror must be Lovecraft's Joseph Curwen in *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*, who reanimates the famous dead from "essential salts" and seeks to make himself immortal, similar to his literary predecessor Victor Frankenstein. Necromancy is the horrific shadow in Tolkien's fantastic worlds; in *The Hobbit*, the shadowy presence haunting Mirkwood is called "The Necromancer." To link this earlier work to *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien revealed that "The Necromancer" was Sauron, and the dead subjects of his wizardry the Nazgul or Ringwraiths. But in myth and literature, necromancy is not always the province of the monstrous outcast or Gothic hero-villain: it may be practiced by the hero, *tout court*. Since Gilgamesh, the quest for immortality is the quintessential hero's journey. Odysseus visited the Underworld and became a necromancer by providing blood for the dead; Aeneas descended to Avernus to consult his dead father. And in Tolkien, it is not Sauron but Aragorn who most successfully summons the Dead: through his power, they are an unstoppable army. Peter Jackson, whose background was zombie horror, emphasized this dark side of Tolkien in his film versions. Today's popular culture reflects this double vision of necromancy: evil wizards who reanimate zombies and heroic mediums who comfort the living and help the dead "cross over." The necromancer is an emblem for all writers, especially creators of Gothic horror: perversely digging up the past, revealing buried secrets, forcing the dead to unnatural life, making the dead speak.

#### Through the Eyes of the Zombie: An Examination of the Contrast between Zombie-Themed Literature and Film

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In recent years, the popularity of "zombie culture" has increased significantly. Nearly every medium (film, television, publication, gaming, etc.) has come to adopt – or at least, acknowledge – the popularity of the living dead as welcomed addition to traditional supernatural and/or gothic fiction. However, as this branch of horror-fiction continues to develop, there is a noticeable gap that continues to widen. While cinematic portrayals of zombie fiction have grown at an increasing rate and even achieved a certain amount of legitimacy, zombie fiction within literature has remained somewhat stagnant; unable to become fully embraced by many of the same followers. Far from being an examination of the financial successes of either of these mediums, this paper intends to examine the potential cause or causes for the apparent failure of zombie literature to gain the same amount of prestige that is witnessed with zombie cinema. Despite a few exceptions, the overall consensus has demonstrated that celluloid has shown greater respect for the living dead. Using a variety of essays that examine the social and psychological episteme of zombie culture in both literature and film, the areas of concentration will focus on what common denominators exist within successful representations of zombie fiction. For example, the fictionalization of the danger of an overwhelming zombie population is something that the literary zombie fiction would have difficulty grasping in matters of spatiality. Also, two distinctions create immediate barriers between zombie film and literature. First, zombies are – perhaps more than other monstrous representations – less social in nature. They exist in society, but fail to interact with one another. How this representation can be presented in literature has not yet been answered. Also, zombies are – strictly speaking – visual creatures who require detailed description that generate visceral reactions, a distinction that cinema has a remarkable advantage for over literature.

#### The Plight of the Sentient: Zombie Protagonists

April Grant  
Independent Scholar

Mindless, cannibalistic undead have come to form the public face of zombiedom. "Zombie" is a cheap insult these days, and people who use the word mean the shambling, brainless lumpenproletariat of the undead. Mindless zombies are so alien and Other that their audience can forget the most terrible thing about zombies: they used to be people. Shamblers are only one of two distinct strains of zombie. The second, much rarer strain is the self-aware zombie. Such characters chill with their very closeness to humanity. They are eloquent, though they may not even be able to speak; humans can reason with them, though they may, instead, flee them or destroy them in disgust. The reader is forced to a disturbing intimacy with the monster, because the self-aware zombie is the zombie as protagonist. Three works of modern horror literature offer examples of the zombie protagonist. In the novel *Toothless* by J.P. Moore, the play "A Plague On Both Your Houses" by Scott Edelman, and the classic short story "The Outsider" by H.P. Lovecraft, dissimilar characters share the traits of sentient zombiedom. All three are animated corpses with complex agendas and more motivation than a simple lust for brains. The term "sentient" comes from *Toothless*,

where the almost-human sentient zombies look down on the “shamblers,” the mindless horde of undead. Sentients know enough to fear that they will degenerate into shamblers, and they claw and scheme to prevent it—and force the audience to see through the eyes of a creature struggling to stay human. In his article “Monster Culture,” Jeffrey Jerome Cohen proposes that “the monster’s body is a cultural body.” Eric Melin would have it that zombies are humans at our worst, our baser selves. Zombie protagonists—victims, villains, antiheroes, sometimes heroes—drive home the point that monsters are us.

#### 145. (PCS) Telling Tales: History, Text, and Audience

*Captiva A*

Chair: Barbara Lucas  
Independent Scholar

##### The Monstrous Reader: Edward Gorey and the Implicated Audience

Eden Lee Lackner  
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Edward Gorey's *The Neglected Murderesses*, and *The Curious Sofa: A Pornographic Work by Ogdred Weary* explicitly invite participation by the audience in their quests for meaning. The reader is a significant ingredient, substantially important to the creation of the text, for, in both of these works, meaning is held outside of the work in the act of interpretation. Indeed, both narratives go even further and create co-conspirators from the audience, implicating them in the crimes of the murderesses and the perversities of the curious sofa.

##### Tall Tales about Patagonian Giants: *cui bono*?

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Commodore Byron's mid 1760s revival of the legend about Patagonian giants, and most of the people who subsequently debated this report, are well known. Several potential motives have also been suggested -- during the 18th century and in modern studies, ranging from British government-promoted distraction from their Falkland Islands and Patagonian explorations, to simple tale-telling or calculated profiteering from publications of Byron's voyage. Other possible motives might include a fit of madness, self-delusion, or eccentric excess on Byron's part, subsequently indulged by the British Admiralty; or an elaborate English conspiratorial joke perpetrated against their rivals, the French. But despite this variety of hypotheses, questions remain concerning their likelihood, as evidence is sparse or unconvincing for most of these suggested motives. Byron was by no means the sole figure behind this famous ruse -- at least four other prominent British gentlemen (and many more supporting participants) were involved. Why would respected men in the British Navy and certain members of the Royal Society persistently attempt over the course of seven years to revive a very dated, highly dubious, and finally unverifiable story about uncivilized, 8-10 foot tall giants living at the far edge of the world? Do currently published explanations adequately answer the question, *cui bono*? This study evaluates these alleged motives, further investigates the backgrounds and connections between the known participants in this scheme, suggests some additional participants, considers long-term consequences of the highly publicized affair in relation to the subsequent careers of those involved, and finally suggests a new and political motive that underlay their joint activities. One much later report, written and published in the *Naval Chronicle* in England during the 1790s, is also investigated, to explore possible connections between it and the better known international story of the 1760s-70s concerning Byron's rediscovery of Patagonian giants.

##### Interfictional Dimensions: The "In Their Own Words" Project of Mary Renault LiveJournal Fandom

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Metafiction is self-conscious writing, i.e. fiction that, in one way or another, exposes its own artifice. Metafic (as it is more usually known to media fans) has been produced alongside more conventional fanworks almost as long as fans have put pen to paper (e.g. Jean Lorrain and Willard F. Hunt's *Star Trek* story, "Visit to a Weird Planet", *Spockanalia* 3, 1 Sept. 1968). It is a powerful genre, through which fans can expose clichés of their fandom (or fandom in general), using a perspective outside the story to comment on canon, fanon, fan fiction, and television production. It is in this light, therefore, that one must take the proposal made by the moderators of MRF on 4 February 2008 that members of the community ask questions of characters appearing in novels by Mary Renault. Although early responses took a variety of forms, there quickly emerged a dominant interview or dialogue format. The moderators therefore began to develop "the Interviewer" as a distinct individual, evolving a setting in which she could speak in private to each character in turn. By the end of the full "In Their Own Words" project, this had expanded from a room, to a clubhouse, to a world in which Renault's characters could rub shoulders with each other, even though they came from unconnected novels, some set in ancient times and others in mid twentieth-century England. (Indeed, members of MRF had also been written into some stories, as had Renault herself.) Through later projects and individual stories, the ITOWverse has been further elaborated: the perspective has been reversed to reveal the characters' view of the MRF community; and their introspection and interaction have raised questions about the nature of the ITOWverse itself.

## 146. (F) Challenging Genre Conventions: Wilde, Link, Bakker

Captiva B

Chair: John Pennington  
St. Norbert College

### Painting Dorian and Christening Jack: Identity and Fantasy in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*

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In my paper I argue that that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* have been inadequately read together and that *Earnest* should be viewed as a cousin to *Dorian Gray*. Both are in part about the art of "Bunburying" and take as their point fantastic narratives or objects which take over realist ones. Read in conjunction the two works address central issues in contemporary theory, particularly when examined in the critical lights of Jean Baudrillard and Judith Butler. Joyce Carol Oates and Nils Clausson both argue that *Dorian Gray* achieves its effects by mixing genres, mapping (in my phrase) the fantastic genre of the Gothic onto of another genre--for Oates it is a kind of restoration comedy, while for Clausson it is the Paterian narrative of self-development. Yet, I would argue, the novel's primary power is in the way that the Gothic overpowers the more ordinary world of the other genre. In *Dorian Gray* the narrative of Dorian's crimes becomes etched on the object. The art object and the reality it represents somehow switch places. Through this destructive mapping of fantasy narrative onto realism in Wilde serves as a precursor to Baudrillard who suggest that modern Western culture has replaced the signified with the sign. Baudrillard's arguments regarding over-signification and the creation of simulacra may be seen as objections to non-realist narrative elaborated upon the real. *Dorian Gray* seems to acknowledge and embrace this critique. However, *The Importance of Being Earnest* offers a response to this critique, pointing to the fact that while Baudrillard distrusts such usages of narrative, which ultimately function to create simulacra and undermine the signified, these fantastic narrative uses can also be creative and liberating. In this Wilde has understood both the destructive potential for the fantasy when linked to identity, but also its creative potential. Wilde's representation of this creative mapping of fantastic narratives onto daily lives in *Earnest* in some sense pre-figures feminist critiques of Baudrillard, particularly those of Judith Butler. For Butler, Baudrillard's formulation ignores the role that performance plays in identity, and it is this performance that is at the heart of Wilde's theories of identity and can be found in many of his major works. It is most prominent in *Earnest* where identity is entirely built around performance in a way which is itself fantastic.

### In Medias Genre: Genre as Fantastic Space in the Fictions of Kelly Link

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The distinct hybridity of Kelly Link's fictions, in which fantasy and science fiction mingle with the fairy tale and detective story, goes beyond mere allusion or homage. Link appropriates genre conventions in order to interrogate the narrative and cultural assumptions that inform literary realism; to the charge that genre fiction lacks verisimilitude, Link's stories respond through the limits and possibilities revealed when the ostensibly real is permeated by the conventionally unreal. Genre in Link is treated as space rather than text; her fictions brim with artifacts and settings associated with specific genres: magic shoes ("Travels with the Snow Queen," "Shoe and Marriage"); haunted houses ("The Specialist's Hat," "Stone Animals"); charmed beasts ("Water Off a Black Dog's Back," "Stone Animals"). While Link's stories often begin in realistic settings, they are frequently disrupted by the physical intrusions of genre elements into the discourse. Her plots begin not so much *in medias res* as *in medias genre*. This paper will explore Link's fiction through the critical lens of Mikhail Bakhtin. In his concepts of the chronotope, the distinct space and time associated with narrative, and the carnivalesque, the implications for narrative of the multivalent carnival, Bakhtin helps to illuminate a poetics fundamental to Link, a representative voice in the resurgence of the literary fantastic in contemporary American fiction.

### Passing as the Hero: Rituals of Moral Estrangement in R. Scott Bakker's *The Darkness That Comes Before*

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University of California, Riverside

I argue that R. Scott Bakker's *The Darkness That Comes Before* engages with Fantasy's moral and generic conventions by deploying a monstrous, inhuman protagonist. In contrast to common genre intervention strategies that problematize categories of Monster and Hero, Bakker's protagonist, Kellhus, is neither a sympathetic monstrous outsider, nor a romanticized anti-hero. His is a sociopathic, anti-humanist subject who enacts the heroic in bad faith. By portraying the monstrous as colonizing—but still effectively replicating—heroism, the text estranges readers from the genre's implicit moral investments. This monstrous hero collapses generic conventions of heroism Brian Stableford indexes in "To Bring in Fine Things." Stableford argues (673) that in Fantastic texts "the protagonist becomes a hero when the problem with which he is faced is not merely his own, but that of the larger group." Further, "a hero operates on behalf of others; his projects have a moral weight for the whole community." Bakker's protagonist splinters the logic that binds these assertions. While Kellhus "heroically" aligns himself against the enemies of humanity, he explicitly rejects working on behalf of others. Further, the "moral weight" he places on the community is strongly negative. In pursuit of his own ends, Kellhus only incidentally serves humanity, and the logics of heroism Stableford identifies run into issues of interpretation and intentionality the reader must attempt to resolve. Stableford identifies a related site of intervention when he argues Fantastic texts offer narrative pleasure by providing spectacles of good's victory over evil, which serve as "ritual[s] of moral affirmation" for the reader (672). By placing a monstrous amorality at the locus of "the good", Bakker's text offers instead a ritual of moral estrangement. Moral affirmation is displayed, offered, but withheld, implicating readers' own desires for the pleasure of moral clarity, desires made conscious and marked for critical reflection.