

Horror films



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Horror is an ancient art form.

For as long as we have told stories we have spoken of forbidden, strange and alarming events in order to terrify those around us, while captivating and entertaining. Horror films effectively centre on the dark side of life dealing with our most primal nature and its fears. Over the years the stories have changed revealing a mirror image of the anxieties of the time, the echoes of wars and sickness, disasters and depression, and presently, creating our own demise and the fear of the unknown. They are reinforcing the rules and taboos of our society as well as showing the macabre fate of those who transgress. For example one of the first horror films *Nosferatu* (1922) is not simply a tale of vampirism, but offers images of a town beleaguered by premature and random deaths, in a time shadowing the Great War and the Great Flu Epidemic fatalities.

We derive thrills from triggering the rush of adrenalin which fear brings, and through time the phenomenon has spread from the novels and poems of the 1800s to the hundreds of horror films that spill out of Hollywood each year. The technological change in our society sees the widespread access consumers have, to not only the movies themselves, but an extensive range of merchandise. From the ballads of the ancient world to modern urban myths, audiences offer themselves up to, usually sadistic, storytellers to be frightened, and they are happy to pay for the privilege. The association with commercial productsAs horror films became more popular a spread of commercial products were introduced, allowing further growth of the culture. Public awareness of horror films was raised through movie posters and previews, advertisement in newspapers and magazines, reprinting of books

that the movies were based on and the publication of books written about the movie, Halloween costumes and dolls, gothic clothing and school stationary, as well as food products such as monster shaped lollies. The development from local to national to global Horror films originated in Universal Studios, Hollywood.

These films were screened at local cinemas across the state. The films appealed to those in a time when everyone was at war and burdened by death, loss and disease. The films quickly became popular and branched out to all over America and then went worldwide. The widespread access of consumers Originally cinemas and theatres were the only places horror films could be accessed, however, as technology has progressed, consumers of the popular culture have been able to access horror movies through television, VCRs, DVDs, computers, internet downloading iPhone??™ s, iPod??™ s and Ipad??™ s. This is an example of continuity within change. The media has continued to provide constant attention to the newest trend through advertisement in magazines and on television. The ongoing change and evolution Horror films have changed. In the 1920s it was silent terror reflecting the visual style of the expressionist painters of the time.

The 1930??™ s introduced talking pictures and sound, movies like Frankenstein (1931) were created with echoes of the Great Depression. Extensive news coverage of the Vietnam war had brought graphic images into the home in the 1960??™ s and 70??™ s, redefining the nature of screen horror, reflecting an era when society believed science might be out of control. In the 1980s and 90??™ s, technology began to catch up with vision, introducing advanced special effects. Producers now create movies that the <https://assignbuster.com/horror-films/>

consumers want, scripting movies in order to satisfy society's changing trends and preferences. In a post 9/11 world, horror has again come to reflect our societal fears and world view. Creation of the Popular Culture Literature in the 18th century introduced the gothic revival. Novels such as Frankenstein (1818), highlighted the troubles facing the day's society through grotesquery and a gloomy atmosphere. In the early 20th century the iconography of Gothic entered popular culture and was a big influence on the early horror films.

At the time Germany was in political turmoil; the rise of Nazism caused many architects and filmmakers to flee from Germany. One was Carl Laemmle who founded Universal Pictures. With him he brought German expressionism which was an artistic movement that was characteristic of German architecture, painting and theatre.

In the 1930s Universal Pictures produced a series horror films which established the thematic preoccupations and iconography of the genre. Expressionism is evident in the use of shadows, black and white makeup, the use of exaggeration and distortion, low tilted camera angles and movements, and high-ceiling sets. Many of the horror genre's best-known conventions (the creaking staircases, the ruined castles and the mobs of peasants pursuing monsters with torches) originated in these films. The success of the early horror films depended on a fascination with grotesquery. This fascination with horror was a reaction to World War I. As returning soldiers who would have died from their injuries in the past, were kept alive through advances in medical science facing the people with scenes of grotesque mutilation and deformity. Control of the Popular Culture

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production company of the movie is under the control of the major network that supports and funds it.

The ratings of a film dictate the amounts of people that will see the movie, the places that will view it and the advertising made available through the media. Ratings therefore control the film and the money it makes. The amount of funding in the production of horror films has significant control over the special effects, actors used and script. This affects the money available, therefore the funding controls the direction and production of the movie.

Copyright is a set of exclusive rights granted to the creator of an original work, including the right to copy, distribute and adapt the work. Copyright owners have the right to exercise control over copying and other exploitation of the works. To an extent the public have control over horror films as their trends and preferences dictate the issues involved within new films.

Consumption of the Popular CultureThe level of consumption in horror films by its consumers varies. Some people are so immersed in this culture that they exclude others, the popular culture is the focus of their identity, examples include individuals trying to work as horror film directors and producers. The smallest levels of consumption are those who are not as interested in the Popular Culture itself rather the fashion, merchandise and paraphernalia.

Some of the larger film incorporations have become so successful that they are losing contact with the roots of the culture and we see consumers falling more into either the first or second category with little in between. Different

Perceptions of the Popular Culture There is always a form of resistance to popular culture. Generations who have suffered through the issues raised in the films can see them as disrespectful and corrupting the youth. However, different people like different cultural pursuits for different reasons.

Perceptions vary between individuals according to their depth of understanding or involvement in a particular popular culture.

The cultural perception of horror changed over time as it became more commercialised and mainstream. In the beginning people were exhilarated from the terror of the world in a way that had not seen it before. These days, filmmakers create horror films to the demand of the consumers and we perceive horror differently as we always have an idea about what is coming. Perceptions can also differ between directors, producers and consumers, example the cutting of scenes to make the movie how producers believe the consumers will like it.

Sales may reflect a degree of popularity, but in film, what appeals must always be a matter of perception. Contribution of the Popular Culture to change As horror films became to be considered a popular culture they began to raise political awareness and activity. The fact the films had echoes of the issues within society brought into question current values, beliefs and morals. Issues have become more widespread throughout society, for example, the effects of environmental issues (as seen in 2012, Resident Evil) have encouraged people to take action against climate change joining action groups, marches and demonstrations. This increased access and awareness has contributed to intercultural communication and understanding. There are negative examples of behaviour associated with horror films, but, generally

this popular culture has opened up many new areas and culture to our society, thereby contributing to social change. The Future of your chosen Popular Culture Horror Films have become incredibly commercialised over the past years.

They are constantly changing to reflect the trends of society and the wants of the consumer. Society is being incorporated into the mass media and peoples identities??™ are forming in different ways, leaving the true basis horror as a popular culture to disappear. The impact of electronic media has made popular culture more consumer driven. Technological change will have great effects on the future of the popular culture. Whether it is through access, special effects or an advance in screening such as the new 3D phenomenon. The future of horror is in the writers who continue to push the boundaries.

Not the boundaries of hype, or replication where publishers demand the ??? Next Big Thing??™ that??™s like the successful old big thing only different and bigger, but, the boundaries that reveal the truth of the light and dark within humanity. We all want to know what it means to be human, what it means to be alive, and what we stand to lose. When writers go back to the old horror films that have not been manipulated by money and greed and provoke a meaningful emotional response from the audience, horror will make a comeback as a popular culture. Horror films are unsettling movies that strive to elicit the emotions of fear, disgust and horror from viewers. Plots written within the horror genre often involve the intrusion of an evil force, event, or personage, commonly of supernatural origin, into the everyday our world. Like dreams, horror allows us to contemplate our fears

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without having to face them directly. Horror films represent a cathartic way to exorcise the anxiety unleashed by the issues within our society and within ourselves.

Over the years horror films have developed from a single idea to an international popular culture with merchandise and paraphernalia. The ways it has been accessed, consumed and controlled has been changed and manipulated as it evolves within society, contributing to and being affected by social, political, economic and environmental change. Even today, peoples levels of involvement in the popular culture and the generational perceptions are vastly different due to the growth of other popular cultures, subcultures, persisting identity and time. The importance of the popular culture lies in the fact that through its cultural products and cultural consumption many people are gaining the values, attitudes and beliefs that shape their lives. BibliographyBibliographyWebsites * www.commercialproducts.net * www.clark.com.au/products/commercial-products * www.opendemocracy.net/media-copyrightlaw/article_20 * <http://cinemaroll.com/cinemarolling/great-horror-movies-from-universal-studios/> * <http://www.filmsite.org/horrorfilms.html> * <http://www.slideshare.net/jontowilson/the-horror-genre-an-overview> * www.universalstudios.comBooks * Excel: Society and Culture by Louise Fleming and Yvonne FlemingPublished by Pascal Press in 2003 * Society and Culture: Second Edition by Bernie Howitt and Robin JulianPublished by Pearson Education Australia in 2009