

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO THE



# MODERN GOTHIC

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*Edited by Jerrold E. Hogle*



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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO THE  
MODERN GOTHIC

This *Companion* explores the many ways in which the Gothic has dispersed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and in particular how it has come to offer a focus for the tensions inherent in modernity. Fourteen essays by world-class experts show how the Gothic in numerous forms – including literature, film, television, and cyberspace – helps audiences both to distance themselves from and to deal with some of the key underlying problems of modern life. Topics discussed include the norms and shifting boundaries of sex and gender, the explosion of different forms of media and technology, the mixture of cultures across the Western world, the problem of identity for the modern individual, what people continue to see as evil, and the very nature of modernity. Also including a chronology and guide to further reading, this volume offers a comprehensive account of the importance of the Gothic to modern life and thought.

Jerrold E. Hogle is University Distinguished Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies and Honors in English at the University of Arizona. He is editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge, 2002) and author of *The Undergrounds of The Phantom of the Opera: Sublimation and the Gothic in Leroux's Novel and Its Progeny* (2002) and *Shelley's Process: Radical Transference and the Development of His Major Works* (1988).

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## PREFACE

This *Companion* is designed to introduce college-level undergraduates, as well as more advanced scholars and interested general readers, to many of the numerous fictional forms taken in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries by the “Gothic” mode. “The Gothic,” as it is often called because it stretches across many different forms of expression, has greatly expanded its reach from the “haunted” narratives and dramas of eighteenth-century England, where it began, to encompass a wide array of constructions, from the printed and the filmed to the televised, the computer-graphic, and the cybernetic, that have become pervasive in the modern-to-“postmodern” world. Each of the fourteen brand-new essays here, all by world-class experts in the areas they treat, focuses on a specific range of works and subjects within the vast mixture that the Gothic encompasses by now, though at times some of us have found it essential to trace the roots of some modern Gothic back to earlier examples of that mode in which more recent images and issues had their beginnings. As much as we have fashioned this collection to be approached on its own, it is, in fact, something of a sequel, or companion *Companion*, to *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (2002), still widely available. Seeing as the modern Gothic has become so varied and global that no one book can encompass it all, we therefore refer our readers, for basic accounts of the earlier Gothic, to that collection, as well as to other introductions to this mode (see Chapter 1), and we have chosen not to treat in detail the aspects of the modern Gothic that are emphasized already in Chapters 10–14 of that *Gothic Fiction* volume.

That decision, however, still leaves a great many areas of the modern Gothic to be defined and explained in these essays, often in the context of theories of culture and interpretation (which we explain, since we do not assume our readers already know them) that have proven revealing in accounting for the features of the Gothic and its many variations. Overall, these essays show that the Gothic in all its forms is not just a haunting and

unsettling – sometimes horrifying – sideshow in the development of modernity, but is in fact a distinctive conflation of symbolic figures vital for grasping the underpinnings of much of what we think of as “modern” in our world. To advance and contextualize that collective argument, this *Companion* opens with an orienting chronology of important appearances of the Gothic since it began, albeit one geared to what is emphasized in the essays themselves. Following all fourteen essays, this volume closes with both a guide to further reading and a guide to further viewing that highlight the primary and secondary texts, including films, television productions, and video games, that we believe our readers should turn to first, once they have considered our essays. These sections, like this whole collection, run the risk of not being able to encompass all the instances of the Gothic and Gothic studies that are worthy of attention. But we hope our readers understand that these added study aids are designed primarily to complement what is emphasized in the essays here, even though both sections do offer what we think are some good avenues for exploring the modern Gothic beyond the limits of this book. Indeed, all primary Gothic works of literature or visual media, as well as some major theories and studies of the Gothic, mentioned, but not quoted, in these essays are given full source citations only in these guides. The notes at the end of every chapter are reserved only for the sources of what is quoted directly in the main text or for sources essential for exemplifying what the main text claims.

One of the quandaries that these essays have faced, to be sure, is whether they should refer to the mode we examine as “Gothic” or “gothic.” The use of the capitalized “G” in the past has been justified by the reference of “Gothic” to the northern Germanic tribes of the early Middle Ages who have been group-identified as “Goths” or “Visigoths,” thus making these words proper names. But interpreters of the much later Enlightenment, Romantic, and modern “Gothic,” our focus here, realize that even linking the Goths to medieval church architecture and religiosity, let alone narratives and dramas much closer to modern times, is really an error that looks back to the misnaming of late-medieval buildings as “Gothic” by early-modern art critics inclined to see them as “primitive” compared to neoclassic structures descended from the designs of ancient Greece and Rome. Much as “Gothic” is therefore a floating signifier that has been moved from referring to older tribes or constructs to mislabeling buildings to classifying newer forms of fiction-making, however, this collection will still refer to the ongoing conflation of symbolic features that we analyze as “Gothic,” reserving lower-case “goth” or “gothic” for very local variations (such as social groups), which do not usually employ the full combination of key motifs that have come down to us from Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of*

*Otranto: A Gothic Story* (1764–1765). “Gothic” here is akin to “Romantic” or “Enlightenment” in referring to a lasting and interconnected, if somewhat unstable, set of conflicted assumptions and aesthetic devices that has survived as recognizable from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century across many different and changing venues. The authors of these essays, after all, believe that it is the floating variability of reference in the Walpolean “Gothic” mixture of ingredients that has allowed them to survive together as powerful tools of representation and to be as symbolic as they are of undercurrents in modern life from the late nineteenth century until today.

In any case, the editor of this *Companion* is deeply grateful to everyone who has had a hand in bringing our collection about. He is grateful most of all, of course, to the fifteen other contributors here, themselves writing from around the globe and thus true international Gothicists all, who have each provided outstanding expertise and insights by distilling these into concise accounts that still define, explain, and exemplify large areas of modern Gothic (or near-Gothic) works and ranges of reference. Each of these scholars, in fact, has surpassed the normal call of duty to work graciously with the editor in crafting these essays carefully to be just right for the purposes of a *Cambridge Companion*. In addition, all of us are grateful, the editor especially, for the tireless and extensive support provided to this effort by the editor’s research assistant, Peter Figler, at the University of Arizona. We also appreciate our staff associates and our fellow faculty or student supporters or mentors, along of course with our supportive families, at our different universities and in our individual lives. Ultimately, too, we are most grateful to the leadership in literary studies at Cambridge University Press – particularly Linda Bree and Anna Bond – for all the guidance, counsel, and work they have provided in enabling this further collection of studies on the richness of the Gothic and on the modern world to which this haunting mode still contributes so much.



## CHRONOLOGY: IMPORTANT "GOTHIC" EVENTS

- 1764-1768 Horace Walpole publishes the first editions of *The Castle of Otranto* and composes (without staging) the Gothic play *The Mysterious Mother*.
- 1789-1797 Ann Radcliffe publishes six increasingly popular Gothic "romances," including *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797).
- 1796-1797 Matthew Gregory Lewis publishes *The Monk*, followed by the writing and staging of his play *The Castle Spectre*.
- 1798-1800 Charles Brockden Brown publishes his American Gothic novels in Philadelphia, including *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly*.
- 1798 William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge publish their first *Lyrical Ballads*, including some highly Gothic pieces, such as "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."
- 1816 Coleridge publishes his heavily Gothic "Christabel" with "Kubla Kahn" (both composed 1797-1802); C. R. Maturin's play *Bertram* is first staged in London.
- 1816-1819 A "ghost-story-writing contest" proposed by Lord Byron near Geneva leads to the publication of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and John Polidori's *The Vampyre*, plus indirectly to Byron's "The Prisoner of Chillon" and his Gothic tragedy *Manfred*.
- 1816-1820 Walter Scott publishes the most Gothic of his historical novels, from *The Antiquary* (1816) to *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) and *Ivanhoe* (1820).

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- 1817 Jane Austen's satirically Gothic *Northanger Abbey* (written 1798-1799) is published with her *Persuasion* months after her death.
- 1819-1820 Washington Irving publishes *The Sketch Book* in New York in seven parts, which include "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."
- 1820 Charles Maturin's influential Irish Gothic *Melmoth the Wanderer* appears.
- 1835 Nathaniel Hawthorne publishes his "Young Goodman Brown" story.
- 1835-1846 Edgar Allan Poe publishes *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) and a series of Gothic tales, including "Legeia," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Black Cat," his 1844 poem "The Raven," and "The Cask of Amontillado."
- 1845-1847 James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney the Vampire* is serialized in England before and after the 1846 publication of Rymer's *The String of Pearls*, the "penny dreadful" that tells the Sweeney Todd story.
- 1847 Charlotte Brontë publishes *Jane Eyre*; Emily Brontë publishes *Wuthering Heights*.
- 1848-1870 Charles Dickens publishes his most Gothically inflected ghost stories and novels from *The Haunted Man* (1848) to *Bleak House* (1852) to *Little Dorrit* (1857) to *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (left unfinished at his death).
- 1851-1860 Hawthorne publishes *The House of Seven Gables* (1851) and *The Marble Faun* (1860); Herman Melville publishes *Pierre* (1852) and "Benito Cereno" (1855-1856).
- 1861-1862 Wilkie Collins publishes *The Woman in White*, an exemplary Victorian "sensation novel," shortly before Mary Elizabeth Braddon publishes *Lady Audley's Secret*.
- 1871-1872 Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu publishes the vampiric "Carmilla," first in *The Dark Blue* magazine and then in his *Through a Glass Darkly* collection of tales.

- 1886-1888 Robert Louis Stevenson publishes his *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, which soon leads to the first London stage adaptation and becomes connected in the public eye with the unsolved White-chapel murders associated with "Jack the Ripper" (1888-1891).
- 1890 Arthur Machen publishes "The Great God Pan."
- 1890-1894 Oscar Wilde publishes *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (twice) in London, followed by the French and English publications of his revenge tragedy *Salome* (banned from the stage in 1892, but finally first performed in Paris in 1896 with Wilde by now in prison for "gross indecency").
- 1892 Charlotte Perkins Gilman publishes "The Yellow Wall-paper" in *New England Magazine*.
- 1893 Bram Stoker publishes his Gothic story "The Squaw."
- 1896 Braddon publishes *The Good Lady Ducayne*; H. G. Wells publishes *The Island of Dr. Moreau*.
- 1897 Stoker publishes *Dracula*, Florence Marryat publishes *The Blood of the Vampire*, and Richard Heldman (as "Richard Marsh") publishes *The Beetle*.
- 1898 Henry James publishes *The Turn of the Screw*; Stephen Crane publishes his novella *The Monster*, reflecting both the legacy of *Frankenstein* and the ongoing problem of race prejudice in America.
- 1899 Joseph Conrad's semi-Gothic *Heart of Darkness* is published.
- 1910 Gaston Leroux publishes the novel *Le fantôme de l'Opéra* in Paris.
- 1915 Franz Kafka publishes *The Metamorphosis* in Austria-Hungary.
- 1916 James Joyce publishes his Gothically inflected *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.
- 1917 Virginia Woolf publishes "The Mark on the Wall."

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- 1919 Sigmund Freud publishes his essay "The Uncanny" in Austria; Pathé Frères releases the post-World War I film *J'accuse*, directed by Abel Gance, in France.
- 1920 H. P. Lovecraft publishes "Nyarlathotep" to begin a series of American Gothic tales; Philips Film releases Germany's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, directed by Robert Wiene; *The Black Mask* magazine begins publishing occult and crime stories by Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammet, and others.
- 1921 Woolf publishes "A Haunted House."
- 1922 Film Arts Guild releases silent *Nosferatu*, directed by F. W. Murnau; T. S. Eliot publishes *The Waste Land* and Joyce his *Ulysses*, both with Gothic ingredients.
- 1924 E. M. Forster publishes *A Passage to India*.
- 1925 Universal releases a silent *Phantom of the Opera*, directed by Rupert Julian.
- 1928 "The Fall of the House of Usher" is first adapted to film in America by MGM, directed by James Sibley Watson, and in France, directed by John Epstein.
- 1931 Universal releases *Dracula*, directed by Tod Browning, and *Frankenstein*, directed by James Whale; Paramount releases *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, directed by Rouben Mamoulian; William Faulkner publishes *Sanctuary*.
- 1932 United Artists releases *White Zombie*, directed by Victor Helperin; Universal releases *The Old Dark House*, directed by Whale; Faulkner publishes *Light in August*.
- 1934 Karen Blixen publishes *Seven Gothic Tales* (Danish-English) under the name "Isak Dinesen."
- 1935 Universal releases *The Raven*, directed by Lew Landers, and *The Bride of Frankenstein*, directed by Whale.
- 1936 Djuna Barnes publishes *Nightwood*; Faulkner publishes *Absalom, Absalom!*

- 1938-1940 Daphne du Maurier publishes *Rebecca*, soon adapted as a Selznick-United Artists film, directed by Alfred Hitchcock.
- 1940 Richard Wright publishes *Native Son*.
- 1941 Warner Bros. releases *The Maltese Falcon*, directed by John Houston, based on the 1929-1930 Hammet novel, solidifying film noir; Universal releases *The Wolf Man*, directed by George Waggner; RKO releases the often Gothic *Citizen Kane*, co-written and directed by Orson Welles.
- 1943 RKO releases *I Walked with a Zombie*, directed by Jacques Tourneur.
- 1946 Universal releases *The Killers*, directed by Robert Siodmark, beginning a succession of different films noirs based on Ernest Hemingway's 1927 story of that name.
- 1949 Selznick-London releases *The Third Man*, directed by Carol Reed.
- 1950 Paramount releases Gothic-noir *Sunset Boulevard*, directed by Billy Wilder.
- 1952 Ralph Ellison publishes *Invisible Man*; Javanese writer Pramoeda Ananta Toer publishes the story collection *All That Has Gone*; Flannery O'Connor publishes *Wise Blood* to launch a career of southern Gothic fictions, most of them short stories.
- 1953 Samuel Beckett publishes *The Unnamable*.
- 1954 Richard Matheson publishes *I Am Legend*.
- 1955 *The Night of the Hunter*, directed by Charles Laughton, is released by United Artists.
- 1957 Hammer Studios in England begins its Gothic color-film onslaught (lasting through to 1972) with *The Curse of Frankenstein*.
- 1959-1960 Robert Bloch's novel *Psycho* becomes the basis for a Paramount-Universal film, directed by Hitchcock; Shirley Jackson publishes *The Haunting of Hill House*.

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- 1960 Champs-Élysées Production releases *Eyes without a Face*, directed by Georges Franju; American International begins a Poe-based series of films with *House of Usher*, directed by Roger Corman; Eleanor Hibbert as "Victoria Holt" starts her four decades of Gothic romances with *Mistress of Mellyn*; Leslie Fiedler publishes *Love and Death in the American Novel*, establishing the Gothic as deeply woven into American writing.
- 1962 Warner Bros. releases *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, directed by Robert Aldrich.
- 1963 MGM releases *The Haunting*, directed by Robert Wise, based on *The Haunting of Hill House*.
- 1966 Jean Rhys publishes *Wide Sargasso Sea*, a Jamaican Creole's answer to *Jane Eyre*; Leonard Cohen publishes *Beautiful Losers*.
- 1967 Angela Carter publishes *The Magic Toyshop*.
- 1968 Philip K. Dick publishes *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*; N. Scott Momaday publishes *House Made of Dawn*; Paramount releases *Rosemary's Baby*, directed by Roman Polanski, based on the 1967 Ira Levin novel; Continental releases *Night of the Living Dead*, directed by George Romero, to set a major new zombie-film standard.
- 1970 Kim Sök-pöm publishes *The Curious Tale of Mandogi's Ghost*.
- 1971 Tomás Rivera publishes ... y no se lo tragó la tierra / ... and the Earth Did Not Devour Him.
- 1971-1973 William Peter Blatty publishes *The Exorcist* and soon writes the screenplay for the Warner Bros. film, directed by William Friedkin.
- 1972 Margaret Atwood publishes her Canadian Gothic novel *Surfacing*.
- 1972-1973 Oscar Zeta Acosta publishes his *Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo* and then *The Revolt of the Cockroach People*.

- 1974 Nadine Gordimer publishes *The Conservationist* out of South Africa.
- 1974–1975 Stephen King starts a popular run of Gothic novels with *Carrie*, then *'Salem's Lot*.
- 1975 First release (by 20th Century Fox) of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, directed by Jim Sharman, based on the 1973 British stage musical by Richard O'Brian.
- 1976 MGM releases *Carrie*, directed by Brian de Palma; Anne Rice publishes *Interview with the Vampire*; Alice Walker publishes *Meridian*.
- 1977 Leslie Marmon Silko publishes *Ceremony*; Stephen King publishes *The Shining*.
- 1978 United Film releases *Dawn of the Dead*, directed by Romero; Falcon and Compass release *Halloween*, directed by John Carpenter, which, under some influence from *Psycho*, sets a new standard for the Gothic-based horror film and has helped to establish the “slasher movie” as a popular form to this day.
- 1979 Herzog Films releases a *Nosferatu* remake, directed by Werner Herzog; 20th Century Fox releases *Alien*, directed by Ridley Scott, to be followed by sequels (1986, 1992, 1997) and a 2012 “prequel” (*Prometheus*, directed by Scott); Peter Straub publishes *Ghost Story* (adapted for film in 1984); Angela Carter's story collection *The Bloody Chamber* also appears.
- 1980 Warner Bros. releases *The Shining*, directed by Stanley Kubrick; Salman Rushdie publishes *Midnight's Children*; Chart Korbjitti's novel *No Way Out* appears, followed quickly by his *The Judgment* (1981); J. M. Coetzee publishes *Waiting for the Barbarians*; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick publishes *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions in America*, David Punter *The Literature of Terror in England*, and Julia Kristeva *Powers of Horror in France*, the stirrings of a newly burgeoning study of the Gothic in academia.
- 1982 Warner Bros. releases *Blade Runner*, directed by Ridley Scott, based on the 1968 Dick novel; Isabel Allende

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publishes the semi-Gothic/magical realist *The House of the Spirits*; Stephen King publishes *Danse Macabre*, his nonfiction account of the cultural meanings of Gothic fiction and cinema.

- 1983 Catherine Lim publishes *They Do Return ... But Gently Lead Them Back*; Pira Sudham publishes the partly Gothic *Tales of Thailand*; Rushdie publishes *Shame*; Fay Weldon publishes *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil*.
- 1984 William Gibson publishes *Neuromancer*; Orion releases *The Terminator*, directed by James Cameron, far more Gothic than its sequels; New Line Cinema releases *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, directed by Wes Craven, setting up a succession of sequels and a 2010 remake.
- 1985 Cecile Pineda publishes *Face*; Anne Rice publishes *The Vampire Lestat*; United Film releases *Day of the Dead*, directed by Romero; Gloria Naylor publishes the African American *Linden Hills*.
- 1986 De Laurentiis Group releases *Blue Velvet*, directed by David Lynch; Maryse Conde's *I, Tabitha* is published, retelling the story of the Salem witch trials from a slave's perspective; Andrew Lloyd Webber's stage-musical version of *The Phantom of the Opera* debuts in London, directed by Harold Prince, and eventually becomes the longest-running musical ever on the West End and (starting in 1987) on Broadway in New York.
- 1987 Toni Morrison publishes *Beloved*.
- 1988 Atwood publishes her story collection *Bluebeard's Egg*; Patrick McGrath publishes *Blood and Water and Other Tales*, among the earliest of his many Gothic works.
- 1989 Randall Kenan publishes *A Visitation of Spirits*; Jeanette Winterson publishes *Sexing the Cherry*; Jamaica Kincaid publishes her story "Ovando"; Top Shelf Productions begins the serial publication of *From Hell*, based on the Whitechapel murders and setting a new standard for Gothic graphic novels to come.



- 1990 K. K. Seet publishes *Death Rites*; Su Tong publishes *Raise the Red Lantern* in China; debut of ABC-TV series *Twin Peaks*, created and directed by Lynch; Annette Cutis Klause publishes *The Silver Kiss*, signaling big growth in the teen-Gothic market; Anne Rice publishes *The Witching Hour* to begin her New Orleans Gothic *Lives of the Mayfair Witches* series; Charles Johnson publishes *Middle Passage*, an African American recasting of Poe's *Arthur Gordon Pym*.
- 1991 Koji Suzuki publishes his first *Ringu* novel in Japan, launching a series of sequels and film adaptations; Ma Jian also publishes her *Noodle Maker* stories; L. J. Smith begins publishing *The Vampire Diaries* (adapted as a television series starting in 2009); Angela Carter publishes both *Wise Children* and *The Virago Book of Fairy Tales*, vol. 1; Orion releases *The Silence of the Lambs*, directed by Jonathan Demme, based on the 1988 Thomas Harris novel; Vietnamese author Bao Ninh publishes *The Sorrow of War*.
- 1992 Rebecca Brown publishes *The Terrible Girls* stories; Morrison publishes her *Playing in the Dark* lectures; American Zoetrope and Columbia release the lush *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola, with its "Love Song for a Vampire" by Annie Lennox becoming an international hit.
- 1993 Debut of *The X-Files* series, created and directed by Chris Carter, on FOX-TV; Alison Lurie publishes her *Women and Ghosts* collection; Chapman Productions and Miramax release *The Piano*, written and directed by Jane Campion, based partly on Jane Mander's *The Story of a New Zealand River* (1920); idSoftware releases the first version of the *Doom* video game, setting a new standard for game-video technology – and global popularity – using elements from the Gothic tradition.
- 1995 Helena Maria Viramontes publishes *Under the Feet of Jesus*; Vivian Vande Velda publishes teen-oriented *Companions of the Night*, while Mary Downing Hahn issues her similar *Look for Me by Moonlight*; Atwood