Research Pathfinder for Horror Genre Fiction

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Abstract

This guide is intended to help researchers interested in doing scholarly research on either works within the horror genre, or on issues relating to the genre itself. It should also be of use to fans of the genre seeking a more scholarly understanding of the genre as well as to teachers and librarians seeking to develop an understanding of the genre. This document should be useful for research in any time period from the publication of the *Castle of Otranto* in 1764, generally agreed to have been the first horror novel (Fonseca and Pulliman, 17), to the present day, but does have a focus on more recent works.

Keywords: Horror, Horror Fiction, Genre Fiction, Literature

Introduction

This guide is intended for the use of academic researchers beginning their exploration of the horror genre. It does not and cannot claim to be a complete guide to resources on horror. Instead it seeks to provide a variety of access points for the exploration of the genre. The goal is to provide beginning researchers as many ways as possible to take the first steps towards a deeper understanding of a complex and wide ranging genre.

The focus of this guide was on print works rather than film. Some resources focusing on film are included either because they reflect on the print sources, or because they are provide an access point to a field of study that might otherwise have been missed.

Some historical sources are included, but the great past works of the genre have been studied in detail. Large bodies of work exist to explore the great historical sources and this guide does not attempt to replace those resources. Instead this guide principally focuses on more contemporary works.

It is worth noting in any scholarly discussion of genre fiction that some critics, like the New Yorker's Arthur Krystal, will argue seriously that genre fiction is inherently inferior to literature and that works that achieve a certain level of quality will transubstantiate, changing instantly from genre fiction into literary fiction. In many cases this attitude is translated into shelving and classification practices. While this guide is unlikely to be of use to those who believe that genre fiction is inherently of lesser value, any researcher into the subject should be aware of this bias as it may affect the location, availability and classification of genre resources. For the purposes of this guide the user

can assume that the definition presented by Fonseca and Pulliman in *Hooked on Horror*
applies to the genre as understood in this guide.

Search Aids

In Dewey Classification horror fiction would be classified in the 800s with most
English language works listed either under 813 or 823 depending on country of origin.
813.0873808 is the specific call for American Horror fiction and 823.0873808 is the
specific classification for English Horror Fiction, but it is worth noting that many works
defined as horror fiction may be shelved in other sections. For instance, Bram Stoker's
classic horror novel *Dracula* is typically shelved in 823.8 with English Fiction from 1837
to 1899. Also of note is that, while this guide deals primarily with English language
works, there are many significant works of horror fiction in other languages and that
those works would be shelved elsewhere. Under the Library of Congress system most
English language horror works will be classified under subclass PR or PS depending on
country of origin.

Bibliographies, Reader's Advisory and Book Lists

Hooked on Horror

A continuing series published as part of Libraries Unlimited's *Genreflecting*
advisory series, the *Hooked on Horror* books are a reader's advisory guide to the horror
genre. The books include clear definitions of horror genres and sub-genres, a brief history
of the horror genre, lists of the major awards given to works in the genre, a guide to web
resources, and an extensive annotated bibliography of notable horror books. The multiple

indexes are arranged by both subject and title. Additionally there is an index of short stories that makes finding which anthology includes a specific short story is located in much easier.

To date there are three volumes arranged chronologically. The first volume covers the period from 1764, when the first horror novel *The Castle of Otranto* was published, to 1999. The second volume covers the period from 2000 to 2003 and the most recent volume covers the period from 2004 to 2009. All three volumes include supporting documents in addition to the annotated bibliography and discuss current trends in the genre.

Fonseca, A.J. & Pulliam, J.M. (1999). *Hooked on Horror.* Englewood: Libraries Unlimited.

Fonseca, A.J. & Pulliam, J.M. (2003). *Hooked on Horror II.* Englewood: Libraries Unlimited.

Fonseca, A.J. & Pulliam, J.M. (2009). *Hooked on Horror III.* Englewood: Libraries Unlimited.

Horror: 100 Best Books

Horror: Another 100 Best Books

Published seven years apart, these two volumes follow the same format. Each book is an annotated bibliography of one hundred recommended titles in the horror genre. Each entry includes a publication history, synopsis, biography of the author and a list of recommended additional reading. Each entry also includes a short biographical note on the recommending contributor. Most notably the volumes feature recommendations written by some of the genre's most respected writers. These volumes are a valuable bibliographic resource for two hundred key works in the genre. The second volume

features a foreword by Ramsey Campbell that offers a good overview of the horror genre

from 1985 to the date of the book's publication.

Jones, S. & Newman, K. (1998). *Horror: The 100 best books.* Philadelphia: Running
    Press.

Jones, S. & Newman, K. (2005). *Horror: Another 100 best books.* Philadelphia: Running
    Press.

The Horror Readers' Advisory: The Librarian's Guide to Vampires, Killer Tomatoes, and Haunted Houses

Part of the American Library Association's Readers' Advisory Series this resource

for librarians includes both lists of classic titles and discussions of genre and sub-genre.

While primarily useful for its intended purpose as an aid to librarians the researcher may

find it useful as a research starter.

Spratford, B.S. & Clausen, T.H. (2004). *The horror Readers' Advisory: The librarian's
    guide to vampires, killer tomatoes, and haunted houses*. Chicago: American
    Library Association.

Criticism and Critical Guides

Greenhaven Press Companion to Literary Movements and Genres: Horror

Published in 2001 *Horror* is an in depth introduction to the history and criticism

of the horror genre. The guide includes essays by some of the genre's most influential

authors and critics arranged in broad categories. These essays include critical

examinations of history of horror as well as discussions of some of the most important

authors and works in the genre. *Horror* is an excellent launching point to explore

scholarship related to the horror genre and provides a useful bridge both for scholars

exploring the genre for the first time and for fans of the genre attempting a more

scholarly appreciation.

Stuprich, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Horror.* San Diego: Greenhaven Press.

Horror Noire: Blacks in American Horror Films From the 1890s to the Present

Horror Noire examines a variety of horror films from the American mainstream to Nigerian "Nollywood" pictures. *Horror Noire* is a good example of the conventions surrounding social analysis of horror film and should be of use to those studying the societal framework of horror. Much of the material presented here is not widely available.

Means-Coleman, R.R. (2011). *Horror noire.* New York: Routledge.

Supernatural Horror in Literature

While the first version of this essay was published in 1927 in *The Recluse,* a free folio sized magazine, *Supernatural Horror in Literature* was not published in its extensively revised modern form until its posthumous 1939 inclusion in *The Outsider and Others.* Eventually published as a stand-alone text in 1945, *Supernatural Horror in Literature* traces the history and aesthetics of the supernatural horror story from the seventeenth century to the early part of the twentieth. A notable history of the genre by one of horror's most respected writers *Supernatural Horror in Literature* may be the best introduction to the study of the early history of the genre. The citation provided is for the widely available Dover Thrift edition.

Lovecraft, H.P. (1973). *Supernatural horror in literature.* New York: Dover.

Benchmarks Continued: F&SF "Books" Column 1975-1982

Benchmarks Revisited: F&SF "Books" Column 1983-1986

Benchmarks Concluded: F&SF "Books" Column 1987-1993

A three volume reprint of the *Fantasy and Science Fiction* reviews column written for almost twenty years by Algis Budrys. Published by Ansible Editions the last two volumes of this three volume collection were published in July of 2013. Collecting more than 450,000 words by one of the most respected reviewers of speculative and imaginative fiction of his age, these volumes should contain much of interest to the researcher. These columns are opinionated, contemporary to the works covered and provide an unparalleled glimpse into the history of speculative fiction. The print run was limited, and these volumes might be hard to come by, but their value to researchers dealing with the 70s and 80s is hard to overstate. Budrys won the 2007 Pilgrim Award for lifetime achievement in Science Fiction and Fantasy scholarship.

Budrys, A. (2012). *Benchmarks Continued: F&SF "Books" Column 1975-1982.* Reading: Ansible Editions.

Budrys, A. (2013). *Benchmarks Revisited: F&SF "Books" Column 1983-1986.* Reading: Ansible Editions.

Budrys, A. (2013). *Benchmarks Concluded: F&SF "Books" Column 1987-1993.* Reading: Ansible Editions.

<u>Encyclopedias</u>

Encyclopedia of Fantasy and Horror

The *Encyclopedia of Fantasy and Horror* is a one volume encyclopedia that is fairly typical of genre encyclopedias. At just under five hundred pages the *Encyclopedia of Fantasy and Horror* includes hundreds of author and titles arranged alphabetically and

including major works and authors in the genres of fantasy and horror. In some cases the

Encyclopedia of Fantasy and Horror makes decisions for inclusion that are obscure,

Charlaine Harris, who at the time of publication had just published the sixth book in her

bestselling *Sookie Stackhouse* series, is not included, nor does seven time Hugo award

winning author Poul Anderson have his own entry, and it has not been updated since its

publication in 2006 rendering some of the information dated. Even with these limitations

the book remains a useful reference point for researchers in the genre.

D'Amassa, D. (2006). *Encyclopedia of fantasy and horror.* New York: Facts on File.

Overlook Film Encyclopedia: Horror

Not updated since its original publication in 1995 the *Overlook Film*

Encyclopedia's single volume on Horror remains one of the easiest to use and most

comprehensive references to horror film from 1912 to 1992. The encyclopedia is visually

impressive and includes more than four hundred black and white images and twelve

pages of color stills. The *Overlook Film Encyclopedia: Horror* is an excellent resource

for those seeking information on the first eighty years of horror in film.

Hardy, P. (Ed.). (1995) *Overlook film encyclopedia: Horror.* New York: Overlook Press.

Yearbooks and Annual Collections

Mammoth Book of Best New Horror

Published every year in October the *Mammoth Book of Best New Horror* is a

respected source for the best horror short stories of the preceding year. Many of the major

horror authors of the 1990's and early thousands gained early exposure through

publication in the volume. The *Mammoth Book* is useful for keeping up on the state of the genre, or for taking the pulse of a year in retrospect.

Originally called *Best New Horror,* the *Mammoth Book of Best New Horror* is an annual anthology edited by World Fantasy, Bram Stoker, British Fantasy and International Horror Guild Award winning editor Stephen Jones. First Published in 1990 by Avalon Press the *Mammoth Book of New Horror* has been published by Running Press since Volume 20 in 2009. In 2011 the *Very Best of Best New Horror* was published including stories from the first twenty volumes as well as an index to the stories included in those volumes. Available only in a limited edition the index makes this volume a great resource for those studying the genre.

Jones, S. (Ed.). (2012). *Mammoth book of new forror 23.* Philadelphia: Running Press.

Jones, S. (Ed.). (2012). *Very best of best new horror.* Northborough: Earthling Publications.

Best Horror of the Year

A relatively new competitor to the *Mammoth Book of Best New Horror,* the *Best Horror of the Year* is edited by lauded horror editor Ellen Datlow. *Best Horror of the Year* features a mix of new stories by established authors as well as newer authors. While it lacks the more than twenty year history of the *Mammoth Book of New Horror* and cannot compete for retrospective value, *Best New Horror* is an equally valid source for the current state of the genre and includes further recommendations as well as lists of award winners.

Datlow, E. (Ed.) (2012) *The best new horror of the year- Volume 4.* San Francisco: Nightshade.

The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror

Another anthology edited by Ellen Datlow, usually with Terri Wilding editing the fantasy part of the anthology, *Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* has been on hiatus since the 2007 edition. While no longer a useful source for current material *Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* remains useful as a guide to stories printed in a given year. Lacking the invaluable index included in the limited edition *Very Best of Best New Horror* retrospective use of *Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* can be cumbersome if a researcher is looking for a specific story, but the anthology was a significant reprinter of quality horror and fantasy for twenty years.

Datlow, E. (Ed.) & Wilding, T. (Ed.). (2007). *The year's best fantasy and horror 2007.* New York: St. Martin's.

Journals and Magazines

Fantasy and Science Fiction

http://www.sfsite.com/fsf/

Fantasy and Science Fiction(F&SF), originally *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction,* has been continuously in print since 1949. Currently published bimonthly, *F&SF* has been the first to publish some of the most significant works of horror literature including Stephen King's *Dark Tower* series, and still regularly publishes horror stories and reviews of horror literature. *F&SF* is available in either print or electronic format. Selected back issues are available from their website, and a more complete catalog is available through EBSCO databases including *Academic Search Complete*. Print anthologies of notable stories from *F&SF* have been published occasionally since 1952. The *F&SF* website includes a free alphabetical index of authors

and stories starting in 1998 and covering volumes 94 to 123.

Van Gelder, G. (Ed.). *Fantasy and science fiction.* Hoboken: Fantasy and Science
       Fiction.

Journal of Popular Culture

Published six times a year by Michigan State University, the *Journal of Popular Culture(JPC)* is a peer reviewed scholarly journal that covers a wide swath of popular culture and media topics. The JPC occasionally covers topics of interest to the horror researcher.

Hoppenstand, G. (Ed.) *Journal of Popular Culture.* East Lansing: University of
       Michigan.

Paradoxa

Published annually since 1995, *Paradoxa* is a scholarly academic journal that studies genre literature. While not every volume includes information on horror its scholarly nature and academic respectability make it of special interest to students of horror. *Paradoxa* is available by subscription or through the *Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media,* and is listed in the *MLA Bibliography* and the *American Humanities Index*.

Paradoxa. Vashon Island: Paradoxa.

Science Fiction Film and Television

Science Fiction Film and Television (SFFT) is a biannual journal produced by Liverpool University Press. *SSFT* is principally a film studies journal, but frequently touches upon issues of interest to the horror researcher.

Science Fiction Film and Television. Liverpoool:Liverpool University Press

Studies in Gothic Fiction

www.zittaw.com/index.htm

Studies in Gothic Fiction is a relatively new open access journal. Founded in

2009, *Studies* is a refereed journal published biannually and freely available online.

Studies aims to covers both literature and media topics. The usual care should be taken to

vet sources, but the articles included can be very useful.

Studies in Gothic Fiction. Zittaw.

General Information

Clive Barker's A-Z of Horror

Clive Barker's A-Z of Horror is a wide ranging, but idiosyncratic source.

Published in 1997 it is dated, but remains valuable. *Clive Barker's A-Z of Horror* includes

twenty-six short topical essays by Barker and alphabetical entries compiled by noted

editor Stephen Jones. The *A-Z of Horror* was an essential source in its day and still useful

for research on the period before its publication. The A-Z is notable for covering film and

print horror as well as basic concepts in the field.

Barker, C. & James, S. (Ed.). (1997) *Clive Barker's A-Z of horror.* New York: Harper
    Prism.

Vampire Universe

The Cryptopedia: A Dictionary of the Weird, Strange & Downright Bizarre

These two volumes by Jonathan Mayberry contain an impressive volume of information about the myths and legends that underlie and inform modern horror literature.

Vampire Universe provides a good basic reference to myths of monstrous creatures. The information is accessible and well arranged. While neither comprehensive nor complete it provides a good quick reference.

Winner of the 2007 Bram Stoker Award for nonfiction, the *Cryptopedia* contains information about the supernatural, paranormal and occult. The *Cryptopedia* is a good resource for researchers wishing to examine the mythological, real world, and occult basis for many horror works. Arranged in dictionary style the information is succinct and clear making this a great resource for first searches.

While neither of these sources is a definitive source, both are useful quick references.

Mayberry, J. & Kramer, D.F. (2007) *The cryptopedia.* New York: Kensington.

The Women of Hammer Horror

A biographical dictionary and filmography of the women involved in the seminal horror films produced by Hammer Studios from the 1950s to the present. Includes women involved both on and off screen in Hammer productions.

Cotter, R.M.B. (2013). *The women of Hammer horror.* Jefferson: Mcfarland.

<u>**Organizations**</u>

Australian Horror Writer's Association

http://www.australianhorror.com

Australia's version of the international Horror Writer's Association(HWA). The website is of interest to researchers for the index of Australian horror to 1960, the recommended reading list of Australian horror, the Australian Horror Writer's Association(AHWA) awards lists, and the list of colonial horror anthologies with tables of contents. Many of the resources provided are similar to those offered by the HWA. Unlike the HWA the AHWA does not have separate affiliate member status and accepts any citizen of Australia or New Zealand as a member.

Horror Writer's Association

http://www.horror.org

The Horror Writer's Association(HWA) is a professional organization for writer's of horror fiction, Founded in 1986 the HWA boasts almost 800 members and maintains an active online presence. While full membership is reserved for published professional writers, there is an affiliate membership level open to those who express an intent to become writers of horror.

The HWA annually presents the Bram Stoker Awards for Superior Achievement. These awards honor the best horror writing of the year in multiple formats including novel, graphic novel, poem and screenplay. The HWA website maintains both current and historical lists of Bram Stoker nominees and winners as well as an annual list of works suggested for consideration. This combination of lists is an excellent resource for

finding high quality horror work.

In addition to the Bram Stoker Award resources the HWA website offers recommended reading lists aimed at both young adult and general reading audiences. The site offers resources for librarians, a blog of horror related news, and extensive resources for writers and aspiring writers. The site also offers a directory of member's web presence at http://www.horror.org/mempages.htm. When using this directory it is worth noting that not all of the sites linked are by professional members, nor are all of the sites listed on the subject of horror fiction. The HWA site is informative and resource rich, offering a plethora of resources for those interested in the craft of the genre and related works. For researchers and students the Bram Stoker Award and recommended reading lists are impressive and useful documents.

Science Fiction Research Association

http://www.sfra.org/

A professional organization dedicated to researching science fiction and related genres. The website includes an archive of the organization's monthly quarterly *SFRA Review*, as well as conference and publication information, awards lists and other resources. Some of the resources provided are only accessible to members, but the *Review* is freely available back to 2001.

Web Resources

The Internet Movie Database

www.imdb.com

The *Internet Movie Database(IMDB)* is the best established and most comprehensive online database of motion picture information. *IMDB's* over two million listings include cast and crew listings, release details and in many cases synopses, user reviews and general information about a film under the heading of trivia. For the researcher of horror *IMDB* serves as a great tool for examining the many film and television adaptations of significant horror works. The information on *IMDB* comes from a variety of sources, but the same care taken with any wiki or user influenced tool should be sufficient.

Reader's Advisor Online

www.readersadvisoronline.com

The Reader's Advisor online is published by Libraries Unlimited and is based on the *Genreflecting* series that includes the *Hooked on Horror* volumes mentioned under Bibliographies. This freely available online resource includes a powerful and intuitive search engine capable of searching by genre and sub genre. Simple definitions of the genres and sub genres are provided by the site. Additional search options allow searches by award or reading level. While the site is updated weekly the addition of new titles lags behind publishing dates so the database will often not include titles of current interest. The blog portion of the website includes frequently updated best seller lists, forthcoming releases, and literary news. *Reader's Advisor Online* is a powerful tool for generating lists

of genre titles and finding works that fall in a given chronological range or that have won a specific award.

Directories

Australian Horror Writer's Association Directory of Member Sites

australianhorror.com/member_pages.php

A directory of websites for the members of the Australian Horror Writer's Association(AHWA). For further information on the AHWA and its membership see the organization's entry under the Organizations heading of this document.

Dark Markets

darkmarkets.com

Intended for writers, *Dark Markets* provides a database of publishers in the horror industry. Entries can be searched and are divided by material format and publication frequency. Submission guidelines are included in the database, as are contact details. Online and freely available since 2001 *Dark Markets* provides a useful directory of horror publishers and publications.

Horror Writer's Association Directory of Member Sites

www.horror.org/mempages.htm

A directory of websites and social media contacts for the members of the Horror Writer's Association (HWA). For further information on the HWA and its membership see the organization's entry under the Organizations heading of this document.

References

Fonseca, A.J. & Pulliam, J.M. (1999). *Hooked on Horror.* Englewood: Libraries

Unlimited.

Krystal, A. (2012, October). "It's genre, not that there's anything wrong with it!" *The New

Yorker.*