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Introduction for Students 1

Chapter 1  Why Do We Create Monsters?  13

Stephen King, Why We Crave Horror Movies 16
One of the most popular horror writers of our time examines the attraction of horror: why do we want to be scared? King argues that we need a release for the negative, uncivilized emotions that swim around in the basement of our psyche like alligators looking for fresh meat.

Mary Shelley, from Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus 20
On the basis of a challenge, a young woman created a story that has thrilled and horrified people for two centuries. In this excerpt, Victor Frankenstein wakes up to find, to his horror, that his efforts to control the laws of nature have been successful: out of dead matter, he has reanimated life—and created a monster.

Susan Tyler Hitchcock, Conception 23
A professional writer of biographical and literary histories tells the story of the summer of 1816, when the famous poets Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley; Shelley's young lover, Mary Godwin; and Byron's doctor, John Polidori, challenged themselves to write horror stories, leading to two of the most enduring monsters in literature: Dr. Frankenstein's creature and the vampire.

Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, Why Vampires Never Die 36
A popular filmmaker joins with a writer of vampire novels to describe why the myths of vampires are so prevalent across time and culture: because vampires, for good or bad, connect us to the idea of eternity.
Chuck Klosterman, *My Zombie, Myself: Why Modern Life Feels Rather Undead*  40
A pop culture critic argues that the appeal of zombies today is a metaphor for how we must fight unending battles in our everyday lives just as zombie killers fight relentlessly against zombies. The zombies are our daily struggles—and they will always be there.

Mike Davis, *Monsters and Messiahs*  46
An urban theorist describes how the Latino community embraces the myth of the chupacabra, a vampire-like animal that feeds on other animals such as goats and chickens. The chupacabra has turned into the community’s metaphor to help members cope with political and social issues of immigration and drought.

Peter H. Brothers, *Japan’s Nuclear Nightmare: How the Bomb Became a Beast Called Godzilla*  51
An actor and film critic details the motivation for and symbolism behind the original Godzilla (1954), made less than a decade after Japan experienced the horror of atomic war. Director Ishirô Honda shows Godzilla destroying Tokyo in actions reminiscent of World War II and creates a universal tale of what can happen when science outruns humanity.

A professor of philosophy argues that modern society has an insatiable need for monsters to symbolize our moral shortcomings, such as our failure to be more tolerant and inclusive of diversity. Monsters are also a response to crises within our society—including September 11—and can provoke our imaginations to examine our personal and social challenges.

**Chapter 2  Is the Monster Animal or Human?  69**

The great Latin American author, known for magical realism, describes some of the lore and magic connected with a collection of imaginary creatures that embody both human and animal features. According to Borges, the possible combinations may be virtually limitless, but only a relative few truly capture our imaginations.

Apollodorus, *The Birth of the Minotaur*  80
This classical text, mistakenly attributed to the Greek historian Apollodorus, describes the creation of the Minotaur as the result of an unnatural coupling of Minos’s wife, Pasiphae, and a bull—the god Poseidon’s revenge against Minos for not giving him a proper sacrifice.
Ovid, *The Battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs*  83
The ancient Roman poet Ovid, author of *Metamorphoses*, recounts the conflict that results when the centaurs—half-human and half-horse creatures—become drunk at a wedding reception and lose their self-control. The result is a pitched battle described in gory detail.

**Kenneth H. Simonsen**, *The Monstrous and the Bestial: Animals in Greek Myths*  89
A professor of ethics examines the relationship between humans and animals in Greek myths, analyzing why some mythical creatures are considered monsters while others are seen in a more positive light. The centaurs are a particular example of a type of creature that can at times act monstrously but can also act civilly.

**Bruce F. Kawin**, *Composite Monsters: Island of Lost Souls and The Fly*  99
A professor of English and film analyzes how monsters can be created by combining animal and human characteristics. Turning from classical creatures such as the Minotaur and the centaurs, Kawin instead focuses on more contemporary monsters, such as the part-human, part-insect creature in *The Fly* and the “things” created by Dr. Moreau in *Island of Lost Souls* that are neither human nor beast.

**Konstantinos**, *Birthright*  105
A practicing occultist and neo-pagan connects the werewolf transformation of human to beast not to the full moon, as is so often shown in popular culture, but to the Christian holiday of Christmas.

**Elizabeth A. Lawrence**, *Werewolves in Psyche and Cinema: Man-Beast Transformation and Paradox*  108
A former veterinarian and cultural anthropologist analyzes the relationship of attraction and repulsion that humans have had with wolves and discusses how that uncomfortable bond is portrayed in popular movies and legends about werewolves.

**Chapter 3  How Do Monsters Reflect Their Times?**  127

**Ted Genoways**, *Here Be Monsters*  130
A former editor of the *Virginia Quarterly Review* reflects on both the monsters of the ancient past, created out of the fear of the unknown, and the monsters of the present, which represent the fears sparked by the modern world.

**Daniel Cohen**, *The Birth of Monsters*  134
An American nonfiction author who specializes in writing about ghosts, UFOs, and the occult turns his attention to monsters. He
describes how monsters such as centaurs, griffins, and rocs entered
the human imagination based on real-life sources.

David D. Gilmore, *An Ancient Crypto-Bestiary*  140
A professor of anthropology looks at the fascinating origins of ancient
Greek and Roman monsters, focusing on composite creatures such as
the Chimera, manticore, and harpy. As unlikely as these creatures seem
to us today, the Greeks took them seriously, seeing them as evil forces
in the world that humankind needed to defeat.

Anonymous, from *Beowulf*  151
One of the oldest and most important poems written in Old English,
*Beowulf* recounts the story of a tribe of Danes who are afflicted by the
monster Grendel—the perverse offspring of Cain, the Old Testament
son of Adam who killed his brother, Abel, and then was exiled by
God. This excerpt recounts Grendel’s attack on Heorot, the Danes’
great mead hall.

Stephen T. Asma, *Alexander Fights Monsters in India*  156
A professor of philosophy examines Alexander the Great’s account of
his conquest of India and the many “monsters” he encountered there.
These monsters were simply animals he had never seen before, whose
descriptions were exaggerated most likely through misunderstanding.

Matt Kaplan, *Cursed by a Bite*  164
A science journalist investigates how popular monster stories—about
vampires rising from the dead and sucking the blood of the living,
zombies walking the earth, and humans turning into wolves—may
have some origins in truth.

W. Scott Poole, *Monstrous Beginnings*  176
A professor of American history writes about stories of monsters in
America dating back to Christopher Columbus, who reported on un-
familiar creatures in the New World, and in particular about how Eu-
ropean settlers’ biases influenced their determination of what was nor-
mal and what was monstrous—and therefore deserved to be feared and
killed.

Chapter 4  What Is the Attraction of Monsters?  187

Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Fear of the Monster Is Really a Kind
of Desire*  190
An English professor argues that “fantasies of aggression, domination,
and inversion” are given a space for expression through monsters that
is not allowed among civilized, good people. The monster becomes
our psychological escape.
Bram Stoker, from Dracula  196
In the novel Dracula, a mathematician and theater manager distills the legends of vampires into a single character. In this selection, young Jonathan Harker finds himself the object of the desire of three young but dangerous women during his stay at the home of the mysterious Count Dracula.

J. Gordon Melton, Sexuality and the Vampire  202
A religious scholar examines the history of sexuality and vampires—from Bram Stoker’s tale to more contemporary presentations in literature, theater, and film—tracing the evolution of the vampire from horrific monster to desirable romantic lead.

Karen Backstein, (Un)safe Sex: Romancing the Vampire  211
Drawing on pop culture representations of the vampire, particularly as shown in the Twilight series, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and True Blood, a film studies critic and professor explores the change from the evil sexuality of the male vampire to today’s vampire as hero. A critical part of this shift has been the movement toward greater female empowerment, in which the woman is no longer a passive victim needing to be saved, but an active participant in the story.

Declan McGrath, Life among the Undead: An Interview with Neil Jordan  221
A major Hollywood film director discusses the trend in movies away from the archetype of a male vampire with a female victim to one of a female vampire with a male victim—and the sexual empowerment of women it represents.

Skye Alexander, Mermaids’ Attributes, Behavior, and Environments  232
A fiction and nonfiction author and devoted astrologist details how different tales have presented mermaids as either harbingers of doom or purveyors of good fortune.

Homer, from The Odyssey  239
In this excerpt from an ancient Greek epic poem, the hero Odysseus has his men tie him to the mast of their ship so he can hear the beautiful song of the Sirens but avoid being lured to his death by their beckoning call.

Karen Hollinger, The Monster as Woman: Two Generations of Cat People  243
A feminist film studies critic shows how depictions of female monsters treat women’s sexuality as a threat and thus in need of being controlled. Using psychoanalysis, she examines two versions of the movie Cat People, in which beautiful young women turn into killer panthers when engaged in a sexual act.
Chapter 5  Is the Monster within Us?  257

Adolf Hitler, Nation and Race  260
In this excerpt from his book Mein Kampf, one of history’s cruelest villains uses an analogy between different species of animals and different races of humans to justify treating Jews and other enemies as monsters—thus establishing the groundwork for the Holocaust.

Patrick McCormick, Why Modern Monsters Have Become Alien to Us  266
A professor of Christian ethics argues that the evil monsters of the past—such as Dracula, Jekyll and Hyde, and the monster in Frankenstein—have an element of humanity lacking in current monsters, such as aliens from outer space. He argues that when fictional monsters become too far removed from humanity, we lose our sympathy for people in the real world who are evil or misshapen.

Jason Huddleston, Unmasking the Monster: Hiding and Revealing Male Sexuality in John Carpenter’s Halloween  275
An English professor analyzes a popular horror film to uncover subliminal messages about male sexuality and the need to control female sexuality. The cinematic monster hides behind a mask—a blank, expressionless face that not only conceals the killer’s humanity but is also essential to the killer’s ability to control both himself and his victims.

Anne E. Schwartz, Inside a Murdering Mind  289
A reporter for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel who covered the trial of Jeffrey Dahmer relates both the dramatic discovery of Dahmer’s crimes and the psychology of this monster—a serial killer and cannibal living in Middle America.

Richard Tithecott, The Horror in the Mirror: Average Joe and the Mechanical Monster  300
In a critical examination of the Average Joe, the author looks at what serial killers like Jeffrey Dahmer mean in the culture and how their monstrous qualities pose a challenge to our own sense of self.

William Andrew Myers, Ethical Aliens: The Challenge of Extreme Perpetrators to Humanism  308
A professor of philosophy examines how extreme perpetrators—dictators like Adolf Hitler and serial killers like Jeffrey Dahmer—challenge our sense of self and of the Other. When we look at the worst as being outside our realm—that is, when we see them as monsters—we deny them humanity and avoid addressing the complicated question “How could anyone do that?”
Contents by Discipline

Film Studies
Karen Backstein, (Un)safe Sex: Romancing the Vampire  211
Peter H. Brothers, Japan's Nuclear Nightmare: How the Bomb Became a Beast Called Godzilla  51
Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan, Why Vampires Never Die  36
Karen Hollinger, The Monster as Woman: Two Generations of Cat People  243
Jason Huddleston, Unmasking the Monster: Hiding and Revealing Male Sexuality in John Carpenter's Halloween  275
Bruce F. Kawin, Composite Monsters: Island of Lost Souls and The Fly  99
Elizabeth A. Lawrence, Werewolves in Psyche and Cinema: Man-Beast Transformation and Paradox  108
Declan McGrath, Life among the Undead: An Interview with Neil Jordan  221

History and Classics
Apollodorus, The Birth of the Minotaur  80
Stephen T. Asma, Alexander Fights Monsters in India  156
David D. Gilmore, An Ancient Crypto-Bestiary  140
Adolf Hitler, Nation and Race  260
Homer, from The Odyssey  239
Ovid, The Battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs  83
W. Scott Poole, Monstrous Beginnings  176

Journalism
Matt Kaplan, Cursed by a Bite  164
Anne E. Schwartz, Inside a Murdering Mind  289
Richard Tithecott, The Horror in the Mirror: Average Joe and the Mechanical Monster  300