

English 689.002 (83245), Independent Study: Horror Films: From Print to Screen
Fall 2013 / Instructor: Gerald Duchovnay

Description:

Independent studies most often develop as a result of a student's desire to continue studies pursued in a course or a new interest that is not accommodated by normal course offerings. This independent study has developed as a result of an interest in synthesizing literary studies with film and film theory as related to filmed adaptations. This independent study will involve, then, an understanding of how horror films move from the printed page to the big screen.

Plan of Study: The student and I will meet twice a week and discuss the readings and the writings on the topic of how horror films go from print to screen. Since this is an independent study, the student will work on readings and writings suitable to graduate level work.

Objectives:

- 1) To achieve an overview and understanding of the ideas related to how horror films are adapted from literature to film;
- 2) To understand how texts, fiction in particular, possibly of one writer or a group of writers focusing on similar themes or similar content in the genre, are adapted to the screen;
- 3) To examine adaptation processes by applying them to an examination of a particular filmed version (or versions) of a literary text or literary texts;
- 4) To complete a sustained written text (18-24 pages) based on these objectives or two shorter conference presentations (7-9 pages each).
5. To create a selective bibliography of scholarly, critical, and filmed materials related to this topic.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Student will demonstrate an understanding of key aspects of adaptation *theory* related to horror films;
2. Student will demonstrate an understanding of the *practical* elements involved in adapting horror texts to film;
3. Student will demonstrate a familiarity with ways of discussing and evaluating horror films as reflections of cultures or film history;
4. Student will demonstrate analytical skills in visual literacy and reading filmed texts;

Required Work:

- 1) A selective bibliography of scholarly articles, reviews, and films related to adapting texts to film;
- 2) a sustained written text (18-24 pages) or two shorter conference presentations (7-9 pages each) based on the topic of the independent study.
- 3) Time and circumstances permitting, a presentation and discussion of an adapted text to an undergraduate film and literature class

By doing this research and applying it to horror films that has been adapted to the screen, the student will go from the general (theory) to the more specific (adaptation of a text), to the very specific (application of theory and text to specific film). The focus, then, will be to merge theory with practical application.