Immortal Monster The Mythological Evolution Of

The field of monster studies has grown significantly over the past few years and this companion provides a comprehensive guide to the study of monsters and the monstrous from historical, regional and thematic perspectives. The collection reflects the truly multi-disciplinary nature of monster studies, bringing in scholars from literature, art history, religious studies, history, classics, and cultural and media studies. The companion will offer scholars and graduate students the first comprehensive and authoritative review of this emergent field.

From the early days of pulp magazines to contemporary works of science fiction, the subject of the alien has been a fertile and enduring--if not also the most vital--element of the genre. In Alien Theory, author Patricia Monk asserts that the creation of the alien in short fiction contributes substantially to humanity's understanding of its present status and future potential in the universe. By employing a Jungian and archetypal approach to these stories, Monk attempts to direct the attention of readers to the significance of the vast body of imaginative fiction about the alien, arguing that studying the alien will reveal why this archetype is necessary in the development of humanity's understanding of its own intrinsic nature as a sapient being. When a science fiction writer writes about aliens, Monk asserts, he or she is saying something that can--and should--be taken seriously by readers. Furthermore, it is being expressed in a particular story-telling mode that deserves to be treated with respect. By discussing the creation of the form of the science-fictional alien, its psyche and the context in which aliens and humans interact, Monk brings into focus a topic that has not been given the rightful discussion it deserves. In addition to examining the alien in the science fiction short story, novella, and novelette, Monk evaluates its role in pre-postmodernist and postmodernist criticism and theory. The author also draws on relevant writings by editors, writers, and fans--including editorial letter columns and reviews--to place the stories in the context of science fiction. By drawing on all of these sources, Alien Theory brings into focus a topic that will be of interest not only to academics and students, but also to the general reader.

Monsters figure prominently in classic works of literature as well as in films and stories intended for a wide audience. Since Darwin's time, most of these imaginary beasts have taken the form of natural creatures, rather than supernatural ones. This volume explores both literary and cinematic texts that are especially explicit in their depiction of beasts in Darwinian terms, though these same monsters retain an archaic mythological aspect. The myth of Leviathan and Behemoth, for instance, is at the heart of Jaws as much as it is central to Moby-Dick; indeed, Jaws inherits the myth directly from Moby-Dick, as does King Kong. These and other monster tales keep the myth alive by retelling it in the context of biological and cultural evolution. There is a pattern of alternating bestialization and anthropomorphism in many monster tales, suggesting that these images are being displayed in repeated attempts to define who we are in relation to animals. As fables of identity, these tales dramatize our anxieties and fears concerning our own animal nature and help us come to terms with our own evolution.

From the post-apocalyptic world of Blade Runner to the James Cameron mega-hit Terminator, tech-noir has emerged as a distinct
genre, with roots in both the Promethean myth and the earlier popular traditions of gothic, detective, and science fiction. In this new volume, many well-known film and literary works – including The Matrix, RoboCop, and Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein – are discussed with reference to their relationship to tech-noir and one another. Featuring an extensive, clearly indexed filmography, Tech-Noir Film will be of great interest to anyone wishing to learn more about the development of this new and highly innovative genre.

At the close of the nineteenth century, American youths developed a growing interest in technology. Once publishers and authors recognized this interest, they sought to create reading material to fill this market need. The result was science fiction for young adults, which bore certain similarities to science fiction for mature readers and at the same time explored themes of special interest to adolescents. This volume includes chapters by expert contributors on young adult science fiction in various countries and on topics central to the genre. The first part of the book surveys the history of science fiction for young adults both in the U.S. and in other places, such as Canada, Great Britain, Germany, and Australia. In the second section, chapters look at such topics as science fiction novels as coming-of-age stories, the portrayal of women in Robert Heinlein’s works, representations of war in science fiction, and the importance of science fiction to film and comic books. Extensive bibliographies conclude the volume.

Written by international experts from a range of disciplines, these essays examine the uniquely British contribution to science fiction film and television. Viewing British SF as a cultural phenomenon that challenges straightforward definitions of genre, nationhood, authorship and media, the editors provide a conceptual introduction placing the essays within their critical context. Essay topics include Hammer science fiction films, the various incarnations of Doctor Who, Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange, and such 21st-century productions as 28 Days Later and Torchwood.

Although the exploration of space has long preoccupied authors and filmmakers, the development of an actual space program, discoveries about the true nature of space, and critical reconsiderations of America’s frontier experiences have challenged and complicated conventional portrayals of humans in space. This volume reexamines the themes of space and the frontier in science fiction in light of recent scientific and literary developments. Included are the observations of noted science fiction writers such as Arthur C. Clarke, Gregory Benford, James Gunn, and Jack Williamson, along with contributions from leading scholars in the field.

Transrealist writing treats "immediate perceptions in a fantastic way," according to science fiction writer and mathematician Rudy Rucker, who originated the term. In the expanded sense argued in this book, it also intensifies imaginative fiction by writing the fantastic from the standpoint of richly personalized experience, as in the works of Philip K. Dick. This volume examines a variety of work from a transrealist perspective, including the writings of Dick, Rucker,
Kurt Vonnegut, J.G. Ballard, and John Barth. This book presents contributions from different authors covering the mythical basis for different religions. It also shows how psychology and philosophy have been influenced by myths. Throughout history, from at least as far back as the Epic of Gilgamesh, mankind has shown a fascination with physical transformation—especially that of humans into animals. Tales of such transformations appear in every culture across the course of history. They have been featured in the Western world in the work of such authors as Ovid, Petronius, Marie de France, Saint Augustine, Jack Williamson, Charles de Lint, Charaline Harris, Terry Pratchett, and J. K. Rowling. This book approaches werewolves as representations of a proposed shape-shifter archetype, examining, with reference to earlier sources, how and why the archetype has been employed in modern literature. Although the archetype is in a state of flux by its very definition, many common threads are linked throughout the literary landscape even as modern authors add, modify, and reinvent characteristics and meanings. This is especially true in the work of such authors examined in this book, many of whom have struck a chord with a wide range of readers and non-readers around the world. They seem to have tapped into something that affects their audiences on a subconscious level. Nushawn Williams, accused of deliberately infecting numerous individuals with AIDS, was subsequently dubbed an AIDS predator in the U.S. national media and is now incarcerated. His treatment by the media and the judicial system, argues Shevory (politics, Ithaca College), is unsupported by the evid

Film has taken a powerful position alongside the global environmental movement, from didactic documentaries to the fantasy pleasures of commercial franchises. This book investigates in particular film’s complex role in representing ecological traumas. Eco-trauma cinema represents the harm we, as humans, inflict upon our natural surroundings, or the injuries we sustain from nature in its unforgiving iterations. The term encompasses both circumstances because these seemingly distinct instances of ecological harm are often related, and even symbiotic: the traumas we perpetuate in an ecosystem through pollution and unsustainable resource management inevitably return to harm us. Contributors to this volume engage with eco-trauma cinema in its three general forms: accounts of people who are traumatized by the natural world, narratives that represent people or social processes which traumatize the environment or its species, and stories that depict the aftermath of ecological catastrophe. The films they examine represent a central challenge of our age: to overcome our disavowal of environmental crises, to reflect on the unsavoury forces reshaping the planet's ecosystems, and to restructure the mechanisms responsible for the state of the earth.

To what extent did mythological figures such as Circe and Medea influence the representation of the powerful 'oriental' enchantress in modern Western art? What role did the ancient gods and heroes play in the construction of the imaginary
worlds of the modern fantasy genre? What is the role of undead creatures like zombies and vampires in mythological films? Looking across the millennia, from the distrust of ancient magic and oriental cults, which threatened the new-born Christian religion, to the revival and adaptation of ancient myths and religion in the arts centuries later, this book offers an original analysis of the reception of ancient magic and the supernatural, across a wide variety of different media – from comics to film, from painting to opera. Working in a variety of fields across the globe, the authors of these essays deconstruct certain scholarly traditions by proposing original interdisciplinary approaches and collaborations, showing to what extent the visual and performing arts of different periods interlink and shape cultural and social identities.

An important contribution to the growing interdisciplinary field of monster studies

The human mind needs monsters. In every culture and in every epoch in human history, from ancient Egypt to modern Hollywood, imaginary beings have haunted dreams and fantasies, provoking in young and old shivers of delight, thrills of terror, and endless fascination. All known folklores brim with visions of looming and ferocious monsters, often in the role as adversaries to great heroes. But while heroes have been closely studied by mythologists, monsters have been neglected, even though they are equally important as pan-human symbols and reveal similar insights into ways the mind works. In Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors, anthropologist David D. Gilmore explores what human traits monsters represent and why they are so ubiquitous in people’s imaginations and share so many features across different cultures. Using colorful and absorbing evidence from virtually all times and places, Monsters is the first attempt by an anthropologist to delve into the mysterious, frightful abyss of mythical beasts and to interpret their role in the psyche and in society. After many hair-raising descriptions of monstrous beings in art, folktales, fantasy, literature, and community ritual, including such avatars as Dracula and Frankenstein, Hollywood ghouls, and extraterrestrials, Gilmore identifies many common denominators and proposes some novel interpretations. Monsters, according to Gilmore, are always enormous, man-eating, gratuitously violent, aggressive, sexually sadistic, and superhuman in power, combining our worst nightmares and our most urgent fantasies. We both abhor and worship our monsters: they are our gods as well as our demons. Gilmore argues that the immortal monster of the mind is a complex creation embodying virtually all of the inner conflicts that make us human. Far from being something alien, nonhuman, and outside us, our monsters are our deepest selves.

The writers of Gothic literature reflect in their works the concerns and fears of the times in which they were created, not only making these tales cultural artifacts of a previous time, but also showing how some sources of dread remain constant over the passage of centuries. This book examines how H.P. Lovecraft, Richard Matheson, and Stephen King have used science and technology in their modern Gothic works to destabilize the reader; that is, to create the sense of fear and dread at the heart of the
Gothic genre. In doing so, these works force readers to ask disturbing questions about the society around them and to challenge long accepted notions and belief systems.

The Fiction of America juxtaposes classic literature of the American Renaissance with twentieth-century popular culture—pairing, for instance, Ralph Waldo Emerson with Finding Nemo, Walt Whitman with Spiderman, and Hester Prynne with Madonna—to investigate how the “Americanness” of American culture constitutes itself in the interplay of the cultural imaginary and performance. Conceptualizing “America” as a transhistorical practice, Susanne Hamscha reveals disruptive, spectral moments in the narrative of “America,” which confront American culture with its inherent inconsistencies.

Although Tolkien's literary works have, over the past few decades, attracted a considerable and varied body of criticism, much of this material is inaccessible, unreflective, and repetitive. Though various scholars have treated Tolkien's sources and his concept of fantasy, this study situates the author in a broad literary context that includes ancient metrical modes, medieval culture, Renaissance poetics, 19th-century social movements, and modern critical thought. Each chapter is written by an expert contributor and examines the literary resonances of Tolkien's works from a variety of informed perspectives.

Considers the importance of spirituality as a concern in Doris Lessing's writings.

This interdisciplinary collection brings together world leaders in Gothic Studies, offering dynamic new readings on popular Gothic cultural productions from the last decade. Topics covered include, but are not limited to: contemporary High Street Gothic fashion, Gothic performance and art festivals, Gothic popular fiction from Twilight to Shadow of the Wind, Gothic popular music, Gothic on TV and film, new trends like Steampunk, well-known icons Batman and Lady Gaga, and theorizations of popular Gothic monsters (from zombies and vampires to werewolves and ghosts) in an age of terrorism.

There is no cinema with such effect as that of the hallucinatory Italian horror film. From Riccardo Freda’s I Vampiri in 1956 to Il Cartaio in 2004, this work recounts the origins of the genre, celebrates at length ten of its auteurs, and discusses the noteworthy films of many others associated with the genre. The directors discussed in detail are Dario Argento, Lamberto Bava, Mario Bava, Ruggero Deodato, Lucio Fulci, Umberto Lenzi, Antonio Margheriti, Aristide Massaccesi, Bruno Mattei, and Michele Soavi. Each chapter includes a biography, a detailed career account, discussion of influences both literary and cinematic, commentary on the films, with plots and production details, and an exhaustive filmography. A second section contains short discussions and selected filmographies of other important horror directors. The work concludes with a chapter on the future of Italian horror and an appendix of important horror films by directors other than the 50 profiled. Stills, posters, and behind-the-scenes shots illustrate the book.

A Choice 2015 Outstanding Academic Title Throughout history, Muslim men have been depicted as monsters. The portrayal of humans as monsters helps a society delineate who belongs and who, or what, is excluded. Even when symbolic, as in post-9/11 zombie films, Muslim monsters still function to define Muslims as non-human entities. These are not depictions of Muslim men as malevolent human characters, but rather as creatures that occupy the imagination -- non-humans that exhibit their wickedness outwardly on the skin. They populate medieval tales, Renaissance paintings, Shakespearean dramas, Gothic horror novels, and
Hollywood films. Through an exhaustive survey of medieval, early modern, and contemporary literature, art, and cinema, Muslims in the Western Imagination examines the dehumanizing ways in which Muslim men have been constructed and represented as monsters, and the impact such representations have on perceptions of Muslims today. The study is the first to present a genealogy of these creatures, from the demons and giants of the Middle Ages to the hunchbacks with filed teeth that are featured in the 2007 film 300, arguing that constructions of Muslim monsters constitute a recurring theme, first formulated in medieval Christian thought. Sophia Rose Arjana shows how Muslim monsters are often related to Jewish monsters, and more broadly to Christian anti-Semitism and anxieties surrounding African and other foreign bodies, which involves both religious bigotry and fears surrounding bodily difference. Arjana argues persuasively that these dehumanizing constructions are deeply embedded in Western consciousness, existing today as internalized beliefs and practices that contribute to the culture of violence--both rhetorical and physical--against Muslims.

The writings of H.G. Wells have had a profound influence on literary depictions of the present and the possible future, and modern science fiction continues to be indebted to his "scientific romances," such as The Time Machine, The War of the Worlds and The Island of Doctor Moreau. Interpreted and adapted for more than a century, Wells's texts have resisted easy categorization and are perennial subjects for emerging critical and theoretical perspectives. The author examines Well's works through the poststructuralist philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. Concepts now synonymous with science fiction--such as time travel, alien invasion and transhumanism--demonstrate Wells's intrinsic relevance to the science fiction genre and contemporary thought.

One of the most prolific, honored, and widely read science fiction writers, Robert Silverberg has forged a professional career that began in the 1950s and has flourished in succeeding decades. After first gaining fame for his magazine fiction, Silverberg embraced the ideals and methods of literary science fiction in the late 1960s and crafted a number of novels marked by symbolism and irony. After a period of silence in the 1970s, he resumed his career. Despite the appeal of his novels, Silverberg's achievement still eludes easy assessment. This book offers a broad study of Silverberg's growth as a writer, following his career from his early apprenticeship period to his later, fully mature books. Examining not only his work but also the literary contexts that shaped him, Chapman captures well Silverberg's development as a writer. Anyone who reads the papers or watches the evening news is all too familiar with how variations of the word monster are used to describe unthinkable acts of violence. Jeffrey Dahmer, Timothy McVeigh, and O. J. Simpson were all monsters if we are to believe the mass media. Even Bill Clinton was depicted with the term during the Monica Lewinsky scandal. But why is so much energy devoted in our culture to the making of monsters? Why are Americans so transfixed by transgression? What is at stake when the exclamatory gestures of horror films pass for descriptive arguments in courtrooms, ethical speech in political commentary, or the bedrock of mainstream journalism? At Stake is an analysis of popular culture, a critique of a secularized religious discourse, as well as a plea for cleaning up the ethics of
public speech. Edward J. Ingebretsen explores the social construction of monstrousness in public discourse, examining the uses of transgression and deviancy in tabloids, mainstream press, television, magazine, sermons, speeches, and popular fiction. The two students who took aim at Columbine High School, for instance, were declared monsters by Time magazine. Like wise, on the eve of his execution, Timothy McVeigh was decried as a monster who deserved to die. These examples typify the inept way the word broadly eliminates the very humanity upon which ethical judgment must depend. Ingebretsen argues that monsters serve as convenient tokens whose narratives contain trauma as well as solution; they provide easy answers to intractable problems. Susan Smith, the South Carolinian who murdered her children, is thus thought to embody the crisis of maternal neglect; nonetheless, keeping focus on her leaves unaddressed larger questions about the crisis of marriage and single motherhood. Monster, then, return us to the ancient language that once termed them omens of the Gods. They show and tell; fright and point.

Studying the Star Trek myth from the original 1960s series to the 2009 franchise-reboot film, this book challenges frequent accusations that the Star Trek saga refuses to represent queer sexuality. Arguing that Star Trek speaks to queer audiences through subtle yet provocative allegorical narratives, the analysis pays close attention to representations of gender, race, and sexuality to develop an understanding of the franchise’s queer sensibility. Topics include the 1960s original’s deconstruction of the male gaze and the traditional assumptions of male visual mastery; constructions of femininity in Star Trek: Voyager, particularly in the relationship between Captain Janeway and Seven of Nine; and the ways in which Star Trek: Enterprise’s adoption of neoconservative politics may have led to its commercial and aesthetic failure.

"Highly readable prose.... Debus is a master at bringing together both the scientific and cultural aspects of dinosaurs, and this book will be warmly received by anyone with an enduring fascination with the prehistoric 'terrible lizards' Highly recommended"--Choice From their discovery in the 19th century to the dawn of the Nuclear Age, dinosaurs were seen in popular culture as ambassadors of the geological past and as icons of the "life through time" narrative of evolution. They took on a more foreboding character during the Cold War, serving as a warning to mankind with the advent of the hydrogen bomb. As fears of human extinction escalated during the ecological movement of the 1970s, dinosaurs communicated their metaphorical message of extinction, urging us from our destructive path. Using an eclectic variety of examples, this book outlines the three-fold "evolution" of dinosaurs and other prehistoric monsters in pop culture, from their poorly understood beginnings to the 21st century.
Through a detailed unpacking of the castaway genre’s appeal in English literature, Empire Islands forwards our understanding of the sociopsychology of British Empire. Rebecca Weaver-Hightower argues convincingly that by helping generations of readers to make sense of—and perhaps feel better about—imperial aggression, the castaway story in effect enabled the expansion and maintenance of European empire. Empire Islands asks why so many colonial authors chose islands as the setting for their stories of imperial adventure and why so many postcolonial writers “write back” to those island castaway narratives. Drawing on insightful readings of works from Thomas More’s Utopia to Caribbean novels like George Lamming’s Water with Berries, from canonical works such as Robinson Crusoe and The Tempest to the lesser-known A Narrative of the Life and Astonishing Adventures of John Daniel by Ralph Morris, Weaver-Hightower examines themes of cannibalism, piracy, monstrosity, imperial aggression, and the concept of going native. Ending with analysis of contemporary film and the role of the United States in global neoimperialism, Weaver-Hightower exposes how island narratives continue not only to describe but to justify colonialism. Rebecca Weaver-Hightower is assistant professor of English and postcolonial studies at the University of North Dakota.

Over centuries, discoveries of fossil bones spawned legends of monsters such as giants and dragons. As the field of earth sciences matured during the 19th century, early fossilists gained understanding of prehistoric creatures such as Tyrannosaurus, Triceratops and Stegosaurus. This historical study examines how these genuine beasts morphed in the public imagination into mythical, powerful engines of destruction and harbingers of cataclysm, taking their place in popular culture, film, and literature as symbols of “lost worlds” where time stands still. Beginning with celebrated classics, the author locates King Kong (1933) within the era of lynching to evince how the film protects whiteness against supposed aggressions of a black predator and reviews The Wizard of Oz (1939) as a product of the Depression's economic anxieties. From there, the study moves to the cult classic animated Sinbad Trilogy (1958-1977) of Ray Harryhausen, films rampant with xenophobic fears of the Middle East as relevant today as when the series was originally produced. Advancing to more recent subjects, the author focuses on the image of the monstrous woman and the threat of reproductive freedom found in Aliens (1986), Jurassic Park (1993), and Species (1995) and on depictions of the mentally ill as dangerous deviants in 12 Monkeys (1996) and The Cell (2000). An investigation into physical freakishness guides his approach to Edward Scissorhands (1990) and Beauty and the Beast (1991).

This book brings together a group of international scholars, inspired by the scholarly perspective of Australian philologist Ian Proudfoot, who look at calendars and time, royal myths, colonial expeditions, printing, propaganda, theater, art, Islamic manuscripts, and many more aspects of Malayan history. Diasporic Identities and Empire: Cultural Contentions and Literary Landscapes explores traditional theories on hybridity, generated in
consideration of multicultural infusions, and at times profusions, of colonial migrations. Arguments on defining Englishness and the insinuations of a ‘fixed centre’ for the marginalised are now considered on a global scale as postmodernity defies imperial homogeneity. Although postcolonial studies have largely been Anglocentric and Western in focus, developments elsewhere have opened up theoretical applications on cultural shifters such as that of the diaspora. The Arabian world, the Caribbean, North and Latin America, Australia, and more recently, countries such as Ireland and Scotland, have emerged as regions confronted with comparable power struggles. Mass migration, exile, refugee reshuffling and diasporic repositioning provide neo-hermeneutics on the predicament of the global, which is undergoing major geopolitical and cultural transformation. This volume addresses how writing from the peripheries is developing a new worldview through diasporic modes of thought. By moving beyond the facile search for an imperial ‘centre,’ these contributions provide an understanding of the rupture in identity since there is a feeling of ‘being held back from a place or state we wish to reach . . .’ (Brooks). This volume is a unique collaboration by academic scholars from four different continents, and a vast number of regions, critically converging on the contemporaneous debate that problematizes the diasporic identity.

Literature often is central to individual maturation. It typically reflects, in one way or another, the experiences of the reader and the larger strains of society. This book examines representative works of science fiction, children’s literature, and popular culture as mirrors of what it means to grow up in the contemporary world. That world is permeated by technology, and technology thus figures prominently in the process of growing up and in these literary works. Included are chapters on Superman, the Hardy Boys, Star Trek, music videos, and other topics. Interweaving psychoanalysis, gender and cultural studies, and postmodern theories of geopolitics, this study of the monster in contemporary narratives demonstrates that the monster (and monstrosity) is largely a cultural and ideological production. Figures such as the serial-killer, the monstrous child, deformed bodies and spatially-influenced monstrosity will be considered through analyses of texts by Peter Ackroyd, Bret Easton Ellis, and Angela Carter (among others). The conclusion proposes that language itself becomes monstrous when it attempts, and fails, to articulate the monster.

Copyright: 87246baa910458f9beade033bce415e4