

The Wide World of Horror by Hollis Jay

Footsteps following you in the dark; something whispering your name; the revving of a chainsaw; scratching on your bedroom window. These are a few of the iconic images of horror. Horror is very much like a chameleon. It changes, and personalizes its formats in order to engage its audience. Fear is the key to experiencing horror. Fear is what makes us come back for more. It's that tingling sensation in the pit of our stomachs that makes us crave to be scared. But, what exactly is the horror genre and where can it take us in regards to not only the world of literature and film but how can we explore horror as educators? Throughout this paper, I will not only share my own experiences in the world of horror but I will give an introduction to the horror genre for I believe as we understand the horror genre we can see the fundamental reasons why it should be taught and we become interested in the few educators who have taken it upon themselves to make the genre not only a part of their lesson plans but a part of their lives as well.

To begin with let's take apart and try to understand the definition of the word genre. Genre, as defined by Kate Domaille author of the book "The Horror Genre Classroom Resources", can be explained in a series of illustrations. First of all, she states that genre is "a set of conventions-recognizable, usually through iconography, familiar narrative, mise-en-scene, actors and style of representation" (Domaille 1.1). Every genre has this set of "conventions." These are standards set by not only the writers, but the audience as well. For example, every horror movie has to have a villain and a hero. More than likely, the victim/hero is fighting against the villain who is trying to kill him/her. Much like romance, where there has to be a damsel in distress who eventually falls in love with the leading man.

Many writers and/or interpreters of these genres are trying to break their rules, and play with the traditional interpretations of these genres by not only mixing genres but undermining conventional stereotypes. As Domaille indicates “genres are not static but constantly renegotiated between industry and audience-a combination of familiar reassurance and new twists” (Domaille1.1). Thereby, we try to give the audience what they want in terms of story by offering them predictability but creatively we are always trying to push the envelope by changing and offering a more original plot. This leads us to Domaille’s statement that “a creative strategy used by film producers to ensure audience identification with a film” is “a means of trying to predict risk” (Domaille 1.1). This can be a tricky and often dangerous road to travel upon for any genre and even though the horror genre takes risks with its audience, there is also a high loyalty factor among its participants who are expecting and anticipating a particular storyline. Therefore, creative advancement could lead to disappointment among theatergoers because “genes offer” a “comforting reassurance in an unpredictable world” where “threat is quashed, outlaws become “civilized”, gangsters go to prison” and “romances end in marriage” (Domaille 1.1).

Domaille implies that “genre is a way of ”tidying up” the mess of life” in order to provide a sense of closure to it’s’ audience regardless of industry (Domaille 1.1). One cannot help but be reminded of the hero’s journey in which Joseph Campbell depicts the scenario of the battle of good and evil, where the hero concurs and saves not only himself but mankind in the process, and as he accept what is defined as “supernatural aid” or “once the hero has committed to the quest, consciously or unconsciously, his or her guide and magical helper appears or becomes known” (Levine 1). This nature of evolution and/or the enlightenment of characters can be explained by the fact that “genre is a way of working through important myths and fears by

repetition, variation, and resolution” (Domaille 1.1). So, in a sense the aspect of “genre functions like a language” providing “a set of rules and a vocabulary with which to organize meaning” (Domaille 1.1). It is this “language” that helps us not only to understand the specific meaning of the genre at hand, but helps us to learn and/or the understand the creative qualifications that we have to amass in order to break the rules and advance creatively in our chosen field.

This brings us to the question of what defines horror. In his book, “Horror Isn’t a 4-Letter Word” Matthew Warner defines the aspect of horror as such:

“Horror isn’t just a genre of stories but an outlook on life—one’s that focused on finding the fun in morbidity. If that sounds crazy, then I entirely sympathize. To study the horror genre is a bit like exploring an abandoned asylum. At any turn, you never know what awaits you: insanity, death, or the thrill of your life. As you reach the upper levels and see rusted bed frames and empty elevator shafts, you realize that peering into the shadows isn’t just about evoking the emotion of horror. It’s also about learning of the things that scare us. After all, the monster who’s known has less power than the one who’s not. And ultimately, of course, horror is about developing a cheerful acceptance of the fate that awaits us all” (9).

We could take this quote several ways. We could align the understanding of horror with our own inevitable demise, and how we are trying to control death by understanding the horror that surrounds our own fears. We could also approach the aspect of horror as much like being aware of the unknown and that which lies in wait for us. But, I tend to agree with Warner when he states that there is a certain “fun in morbidity.” Those of us who already are involved with the horror genre understand that there is fun and amusement in screaming at the screen when the axe

wielding manic approaches or when Frankenstein casts his monster to life because ultimately it's not real. For in this instant, we are allowed to play with not only our own mortality but others knowing in the end that everything is going to be alright. We control the material, not the other way around. For as Gina Wisker states in her book *Horror Fiction: An Introduction* "horror is both an everyday occurrence" as in "terrorism, the cannibal next door, torture and a way of dramatizing our hidden fears and desires through fantasy that takes the everyday that few steps further" (1). Wisker continues to write that:

"Horror, nurtured in the fears of pain and death, and in our dark fears of the unknown, is a taste acquired by those with sufficient imagination to see beyond, beneath, and through what we take for granted as normal and familiar, to the sources of their other "'real'", our imaginations and the "'imaginary'" of culture and our psychological, emotional, and intuitive elements of experience" (3).

It is the "everyday" and our day to day routines that usually prevent this type of thinking. We become busy and unassociated with the darkness of the world around us and of its menace. But, even as we take time out to ride a roller coaster we are led face to face with fear and the elements of horror that correlate with our own uncertainty and the uncertainty of the wheels beneath us as we travel along. I think that HP Lovecraft stated it best when he wrote that "the appeal of the spectrally macabre is generally narrow because it demands from the reader a certain degree of imagination and a capacity for detachment from everyday life" (*Supernatural Horror in Literature* 12). In order for this "detachment" to take place we have to not only understand that "horror disturbs our sense of what is comforting and normal" but that "horror" also "embodies" that which "is paradoxically both desired and feared"(Wisker 8). This, of course, explains our attachment to one of the most epic of horror villains--the vampire. For he/she is not only a

reminder of what is “normal”, but a leap into the unknown in regards to their desire for blood, their fangs, and many other of their vampire traits. But, the vampire is also “both desired and feared” by the audience. He/she is admired for their sexual prowess, and their confidence. We both want to be concurred by them, and want to run from them. This is just one of the elements of horror. For we secretly want to be corrupted by the unknown, and to leave our mundane existence and become a part of their fictional world.

This brings us to the point where we should be able to connect the two words of horror and genre together to bring together a cohesive understanding of not only the genre, but of the many types of horror and all of its’ themes.

“Horror is in everyday reality, but it is also a genre, a construction and a representation of what terrifies and disgusts, what we fear and secretly desire. Herein lies the difference, subtle and necessary to define, especially when discussing reception and the links between imaginative projects, embodiments, and literal actions, between the real and our projection from it, construction of it, and representation and interpretation of it in gene fictions. An event can be horrific and our response one of horror, recognizing in acts of terrorism and torture, characteristics of the monstrous, vile, violent, dehumanizing elements that the genre itself uses, manages, dramatizes, and represents in order both to entertain and comment. But, horror fiction is a genre and a construction, projection, and representation. Its’ elements have meaning, their roots in popular consciousness and the popular unconscious, their representation in popular fictional forms from fairy tale and parable (Grimm, Perrault) to full-blown Hollywood blockbuster (*Silence of the Lambs*, *Jaws*). Horror fiction draws attention to itself by being fiction, whether in written, visual, or film text. Horror fiction tends to gain its’ effects from its’ imaginative strategies-pace, characterization, narrative, setting, perspectives, and so on, and both

its tone and appeal lie along an axis from the very realistic to the supernatural, fantastic, and weird”(Wisker 5).

Horror leads us down different paths. We are usually the audience. We read and/or watch along on the screen with an avid interest in what may or may not happen. We hope for inevitable, and accept the controversial. Horror draws onto our deepest fears, and corrupts us with the knowledge that everything in our universe is not as simple as it seems. In an instance “horror is an emotion, extreme and shocking” and “while we might abhor and have an aversion to horror, we are also attracted to it. We want to read about horrors, and some of us want to write horror” (Castle 172). As morbid as it sounds, we want to celebrate our own existence through the sufferings of others, and be able to live another day with the realization that the end comes soon and without hesitation in it’s’ decision. Therefore, we are given the chance to face our own fears and to overcome them without the realization of them ever occurring in real life. Through horror, we are given a gift of the imagination one in which we can appreciate and finally return to our own lives after experiencing a shocking story or the funhouse at the carnival. We can fully face our own monsters without death, and in the end succeed.

There are several books and movies that follow this line of operation, but one that inexplicably comes to mind is the movie *Penny Dreadful* in which a young woman faces her fear of Amaz phobia or being the passenger in a car. We are shown, through flashbacks that she was once the victim of a terrible automobile accident that claimed the lives of several of her family members which led to her phobia. But, now she wants to face her fears and reclaim her life. She wants to face her own monsters, and we are allowed to follow her on her journey. The majorities of these monsters in these stories are personal and affect each and every one of us in different ways. Therefore, something that intimately affects me or scares me might not have the same effect on anyone else.

In her book, “As American as Mom, Baseball, and Apple Pie” Linda J. Holland-Toll writes that “much horror fiction works by exposing the contradictions embedded in social reality, contradictions which cultural models often “paper over” in order to achieve and maintain accepted social order” (14). It is in these “contradictions” that a story is written and it is these same “contradictions” that even enable us to understand the world of horror at all. “Everyone knows that monsters, at least inhuman monsters, do not exist”; but “if a text or author forces the reader to consider” that “the monster is real and as monstrous as” the “condition of engagement, then preconceived notions of reality are under attack for the duration, and sometimes beyond” (Holland-Toll 15). For example, we know that Frankenstein isn’t real but we become a part of the story and are drawn into a new “social order” and/or a new way of seeing the world without any of our “preconceived notions.” But, where does our understanding of “social reality” end or begin when we are exposed to any genre and/or specifically the horror genre? Does this “reality” really mesh with ghosts, or vampires? And what about the real horrors in life? Can we even understand them within this “social order?” The horror genre is outside of the normal interactions between societies. It holds its own code of conduct, and much like any other genre it compels us to break the norm if even in our own mind for just a bit.

To simplify the genre, we could classify “the types of horror literature” based on Justin Daniel Davis’s interpretation. He states that “if one were to split the genre of horror literature into three possible groups, one could start by categorizing it in general as psychological, allegorical, or sociological” (Davis). He goes on to write that “psychological horror indicates an element of horror that toys with the mind and targets the psyche” whereas “sociological horror generally serves to comment on a specific aspect of society” much like what Stephen King portrays in his work set against the background of small towns (Davis). He goes on to say that “allegorical

horror is largely symbolic and may hold a deeper or almost hidden meaning, drawing in both internalized and externalized horrors” (Davis) but all in all each of these specific types could relate to any and all genres including horror or as David Hayes, writer and instructor within the Communications Faculty at Grand Canyon University, has said “you can put any adjective in front of horror and make it apply on a case by case scenario (Hayes).

To begin with some of the various types of horror, and their themes one must begin with a theme very close to home, ”real-life horror” which Warner introduces as ”imagine believing that your family and close friends had been replaced by near-identical imposters-or that your flesh was putrefying before your eyes” (Warner 131). He is writing about an article explaining schizophrenia in which these “neurological disorders can distort one’s perception of the world”, but what of this real world and the fear that comes with it?

“Within American society, a widespread fear exists that we are more threatened, less safe, more under siege than at any previous time. We check the back seats of our cars; leave hitch-hikers, even men and women with small children, stranded on the road; lock ourselves within our increasingly fortress-like homes; live in ”gated communities”, those fortresses against the barbarous ”other”; glance over our shoulders, even while walking in broad daylight; cross the street to avoid threatening others. We fear the loss of our possessions and our lives” (Holland-Toll 2).

Every day are set in harm’s way by people and things that we cannot control. This is where real fear should lie since we have no ability to understand when terrible things might occur to us or those around us, and we have no way to foresee them let alone change them. We are completely powerless in reality, whereas we can stop a movie or put down a book when it becomes too intense and either decide to or not to continue at a later time.

“Horror fictions range from those that come dangerously close to resembling reality and the documentary real of our home-based evening TV viewing: torture, rape, murder, poisonings, suicide bombs, deadly diseases from eating burgers, approaching comets, madmen in power, to the more metaphorical, allegorical, and fantastic” (Wisker 13).

As for what Wisker calls “the root of horror”, I would state that this began within gothic literature (Wisker 7). For as Wisker reiterates, “horror has its roots in the Gothic, historically both an entertaining form-Gothic romances-and culturally and psychologically disturbing form-socially engaged” and Wisker identifies this horror by stating that “gothic horror preys upon fears of displacement, incarceration, loss of identity, home, heritage, family, friends, and security. In its use of the uncanny, it destabilizes what we take for granted and shows the values and certainties in which we invest to be mere constructions, ever vulnerable” (Wisker 7, 147). Thereby, there are several “major themes” of horror as defined by Wisker. The next level being “defamiliarisation and the uncanny” which is seen both in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and in several pieces of literature, including but not limited to as Wisker points out *The Alice in Wonderland* novels. For “there is nothing to hang onto when the familiar is defamiliarised, the stable destabilizes, and even more so when the subject of this shake-up is one’s self” such as Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis* when Gregor becomes an insect to the shock of himself and those around him (Wisker 146).

“Supernatural Horror and Weird Fictions” follow with axe wielding maniacs, and dead children warning of Freddy Krueger coming to kill you in your sleep. “Supernatural horror and weird fictions comprise a range of themes and concerns, ranging from split selves and shape shifting, ghost stories, and horror frissons in the burgeoning numbers of tales of the walking dead who appear to warn and/or befriend us”(Wisker 147).

Although, I do not agree with Wisker's envision of "the walking dead" always trying to "warn us and/or befriend us", I do see her point and as she mentions both *The Sixth Sense* and *The Others*, I cannot help but think of *The Lovely Bones*, and Richard Matheson's *Stir of Echoes*. "Domestic Horror" would follow suit as it "picks on an innate need for safety, the complacent assumption that social obedience and common sense reward us" (Wisker 150). This theme comes up in several different films and novels. Stephen King brings up this idea throughout each of his stories such as *The Shining*, and *Gerald's Game*. So, does Ira Levin in both *Rosemary's Baby*, where the idea of home and family eludes to death and devil worship, and *The Stepford Wives* in which the idea of perfection is forced to the point of death. This type of "horror dramatizes the scenes of constriction in the family home and the hints of hidden secrets, other selves, and readings" such as in *The Yellow Wallpaper*, or in both the movie and book version of *The Exorcist* (Wisker 151). This leads us to "House of Horrors" and "Hotel of Horrors" in which "the house and home in a domestic horror is" set as "a place for confinement. It seems safe and wholesome, but it is threatened from within and without" (Wisker 152). *The Shining* could also be used in this area, as well as *The Amityville Horror*, the film *Poltergeist*, *Hell House* by Richard Matheson, and many others. "Murder in the family" is our next category in which Wisker states that the earliest "text" found implying "murder" was Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*, but we can also find these types of incidents in our own newspapers such as "Angela Carter's *The Fall River Axe Murder*" and other various articles varying from honor killings to Charles Manson. (Wisker 154).

Now onto what is commonly known as "Slasher and Teen Horror", which encompasses such iconoclastic characters as Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, and several other copycats. As Wisker states teenagers are "perfect" for this genre because "teenagers are like vampires:

borderline creatures, undergoing changes, placing them precariously on the edge of normalcy, or not” while not only their identity is being molded but while their control is continually in question and mostly regulated by “parental” authority(Wisker 157). “Splatter Horror” is another way of introducing “slasher horror” since both inevitably deals with “scenes of gore, mess, and uncontrollable destruction” much like *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, *I Spit on Your Grave*, and *The House Next Door* (Wisker 220). “Ghost Stories” are also another theme which “dramatize the return of the repressed” and which can be seen throughout both literature and film from *Ghost Story* to *The Haunting of Hill House* to *Beloved* (Wisker 162). In essence these themes are never ending. From “zombies” to “aliens”; from “monsters” to “cannibals” and “disease”, the themes of horror span throughout every known instance and/or environment and happen regardless of race, nationality, sexual orientation, or gender (Wisker 145-209, 220). Horror is as unbiased in it’s’ killers, as in the accumulation of its victims.

But, many are opposed to the horror genre due mainly to its’ stereotypes. I mean how many times, have you heard about the big breasted girl going up the stairs when she should be going down the stairs away from the killer? And yes, this scene has been used repeatedly in horror movies but as David Hayes stated in his interview in regards to teaching, writing, and the horror genre:

“Horror has a bad rap. Due, mainly, to the glut of material of poor quality, the average non-fan sees horror as a base, disgusting past time. It isn't controversial, per se, on its face. Controversy happens when educators use inappropriate horror models, or models out of context. The popular idea of horror is one of men in hockey masks slaughtering large breasted young women, which is our own fault. This conception has been allowed to persist, sadly enough, by

the horror fan base. We will need to turn the critical eye inward before the genre is accepted to any large extent.”

Matthew Warner goes even farther to state that one of the problems lies within “the writing instructors across the country who dictate “no genre fiction” in their syllabi” therefore we are left with only our stereotypes of what we think a genre might be or become without any investigation (13). But, as with every genre, the best way to understand and/or develop your knowledge is to avoid the stereotypes and open yourself up to the possibility of that particular genre with an open mind. If you have already drawn yourself to conclusions without doing the work then you are not only missing out, but also giving those who work hard to maintain that genre a “bad rap” in the process.

This leads us to teaching horror in the classroom. The first question, you may ask is why would we want to teach horror and what makes it a compelling topic to teach. First of all according to Mort Castle, “horror fiction deals in aberrations-aberrations of nature and circumstance-of fate and destiny, of the cosmic and the exquisitely human” (146) but it also “can spark critical thinking and literacy skills” and is “exciting for students” due to its origins in “popular culture” (Aho). “Horror fiction also engages readers on a cognitive and emotional level” for “when readers begin to read horror fiction they are already utilizing what they have previously learned to create their own contexts” and “the audience is also suspending its’ disbelief” (Aho). Plus, already having a love of horror fiction can also “motivate” a struggling student to want to learn (Aho). We can also learn as Magistrale and Morrison state our own “human vulnerability” (2). Horror, in its’ own right, reminds us of our weaknesses and our strengths. It reminds us of all of

our possibilities and the possibilities of the world around us be it good or bad, right or wrong.

For as Stephen King states in *Danse Macabre*:

“Here is the truth of horror: It does not love death, as some has suggested; it loves life. It does not celebrate deformity by dwelling on deformity, it sings of health and energy. By showing us the miseries of the damned, it helps us to rediscover the smaller (but never petty) joys of our own lives. We make up horror to help us cope with the real ones. With the endless inventiveness of humankind, we grasp the very elements which are so divisive and destructive and try to turn them into tools-to dismantle themselves” (26, 198).

Yet there are difficulties in trying to teach horror. Even Mort Castle identifies the “occasional academic bias against horror writing”(34) which has also been agreed on by Carl Sederholm the associate professor of comparative studies and humanities at Brigham Young University, and Dr. Linda J. Holland-Toll. Sederholm repeatedly referred to “the negative perception” through his emails, while he stipulated that “the most important thing about teaching the Gothic is helping students think about the lifelong implication of the genre.” Holland-Toll writes of “the reactions of people to my reading material of choice” in her article *Unleashing the Gremlins in the Crypt: Teaching Horror Fiction in The Journal of Contemporary Horror* when what she read was horror, and when what she chose to teach was horror related. But, I say one should master all the possibilities of teaching since being both subjective and objective tend to do nothing much but the extraordinary in the classroom. One never knows where or how their students will learn; thereby a teacher should keep their options open regardless of their own personal preferences.

There are several examples and/or teaching lessons and plans set aside exclusively for horror. Within Domaille’s book, she illustrates various beginning “tasks” to help her students become

aware of the genre such as in film “list up to 10 horror films you know, and discuss the ways in which each film uses similar conventions or offers new ones” (Domaille 1.3) At Cabrillo college, “vampire novels” were reported by McClatchy’s *Boulder Weekly* as being “used to teach reading, writing skills” by “using the ‘’Twilight’’ novels and the horror genre in general” (McClatchy). McClatchy goes on to state that “it is not the first time English professors have chosen to explore depictions of zombies, monsters, vampires, and other horrific creatures in literature and other media.” One of the instructors involved in the *Twilight* courses, Joseph Carter, said that it’s “a pathway to get people reading”, and although he believes that “there is better written horror than that, ‘’Twilight’’ gets them in the door, and they stay for ‘’Dracula.’’” Their courses “explore how the ideas in literature reflect the culture”, and English and reading instructor for Cabrillo, Jeannete Rickey, also stated that “studies have shown that course structures like these help students develop a connection, and they are more likely to come to school and more likely to stay in school” (McClatchy).

Even *The New York Times*, lists a series of “activities/procedures” written by Amanda Christy Brown in which “horror films and scary stories” are used to enhance learning and when asked “how can I incorporate this into my classroom?” Aho gives us a listing of ways to involve horror into our student’s life “the first” being “a Horror Self Quiz that can be given to students to help them find their placements within the horror genre.” She also states that students should be move onto “Character Creation” in which “students are asked to create a horror character that represents who they are in the horror genre and mythos” (Aho). This leads to “Responding to Horror Fiction” where the “students are asked to respond to a selection from a horror text and are asked to incorporate their responses as their horror personas” (Aho) Thereby, her “students” are

allowed to “take ownership of the material” which leads to “critical thinking and cognitive engagement” (Aho)

I would also recommend J.L Benet’s “Teaching the Horror Genre” website, which not only offers advice for instructors, but also information on horror author’s, a “horror genre handout”, “a teacher’s horror reading list” and other helpful hints for breaking out the box and heading beyond the mainstream of traditional teaching in regards to the horror genre (Benet).

Throughout my experiences with the horror genre, humble as they may be, I have learned that the genre is always evolving. There is a widespread “realization” occurring “that horror writers aren’t actually crosseyed psychopathic nethercreatures with horns” and “the thing that “also “amazes non-writers the most is that the majority of us hold down day jobs” (Warner 16). Even through listening to how low budget horror movies are made, and realizing that the majority of the early work comes from duct tape and prayers one realizes that there is a great amount of passion within this genre and as those small screen visions lead to the big screen those passions still maintain throughout the filming, after the clapboard is released, and onward for future generations to enjoy with wide eyed rapture. For horror has its’ loyal fans, and “generally speaking the reader’s” or film goers “of horror fiction” expect “at least some of the following elements to surface: an aspect of the supernatural, fantastic or inexplicable” and a good story line couldn’t hurt the mixture (Holland-Toll 4). Most fans of horror are in what I like to call in the pursuit of the scare. For, it’s all about finding that perfect element, which is subjective to every individual, of fear and effect and with every scare, much like a drug, a new more elevated scare is required. This leads all people of all ages to come to the movies; to revel in the new horror novel, and to wait anxiously while their favorite horror villain is inexplicably brought to life

again and again. “Horror is the dark fantastic. It is the fear of the unknown and then showing the unknown. Like matter and anti-matter. Horror, though, is determined by its audience” (Hayes).

Why do we love horror? Is it as Warner states that “stories are ultimately reflections of a writer’s subconscious” or have those who love horror had trauma throughout their lives (51)? Are we trying to inescapably return to that feeling of lost youth, when we sat in the theaters hand in hand with a boyfriend/girlfriend scared out of our minds or in essence do we just like to be scared? Wisker states that “horror by exposing and exploring what we fear, by disturbing our complacency and what we take for granted, starts to enable us to face up to contradictions and disturbances in our everyday lives. It acts as a vehicle for exploration of the mind and for exposure of the conflicts and contradictions in society” (25-26).

In general, the horror genre imparts the ability to make us more human in a way that no other genre can in regards to our society, ourselves, and those around us. In times of trouble, we come together as a community in the world and fight for those around us, for their survival, and for our own. We stand as brothers and sisters united against whatever foe ails us, and help each other to the best of our ability. It is only the horror genre that brings out these, the most complementary, of traits to the human nation. It is also only the horror genre that shows the extent of the deplorable. We are subject, in this genre, to the most killings and thereby subjected to the most ways to kill and be killed. In this aspect, horror can make us grateful to be alive.

“When asked why I write psychological horror, I always reply that this form is the most intimate way to reach a reader. The true and pristine horror is that of the unknown, and so those latter readers who look at the genre with condescension are still showing a reaction. Horrors, real or imagined, are all around us. With the increasing awareness of different behavioral traits,

new writers may have a fresh angle on terror. Things that go bump in the night are no longer ghosts or succubae, but the heightened heartbeat of someone suffering from OCD" (Castle 51).

In conclusion, horror takes us to a different place and makes us more aware of not only the people around us but inevitably the person that we want to become.

If I have learned anything, it is that I am not alone. Castle writes that "there's an old myth that says, "'Those who can't do, teach.'" Wrong. Those who can teach do teach. They have to do it well to keep their jobs. They also must publish" (33). They must also, in my opinion, keep involved in what motivates them, and what continually fuels their passion.

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