

UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA
FACULDADE DE LETRAS



**Long Live the Queen: Biological and Contemporary
Cultural Fears in the *Alien Quadrilogy***

Isa Vidigal

Tese orientada pela Professora Doutora Angélica Varandas,
especialmente elaborada para a obtenção do grau de Mestre em Estudos
Ingleses e Americanos

2023

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Professor Angélica Varandas, who really went above and beyond her duty when it came to supporting me not only through this dissertation but also through a difficult time in my life due to serious health problems.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Adelaide Meira Serras, Professor José Duarte, and Professor Ana Rita Martins for their invaluable advice.

My thanks, also, to my dear friends Lorena Almeida, Kristin Faulkner, Inês Almeida, and Cláudia Silva, without whose unfailing support I would not have been able to finish my dissertation.

And last, but never the least, I would like to thank my mother, whom I love best of all.

Resumo

Esta dissertação tem como objectivo principal a identificação dos medos biológicos e culturais que estão representados na *Quadriologia Alien* através da análise de cada filme que a integra: *Alien* (1979), *Aliens* (1986), *Alien³* (1992) e *Alien: Resurrection* (1997).

Com este propósito foi necessário estabelecer uma base teórica sobre os conceitos necessários para a análise dos filmes.

Começou por ser feita uma análise sobre o conceito de monstro. Delineando numa primeira parte a questão da atracção por parte dos seres humanos por vivenciar o medo enquanto emoção, e explorando brevemente a noção de *Unheimlichen* de Freud, segue-se uma análise da concepção medieval do monstro por Santo Isidoro de Sevilha que criou uma taxonomia para identificar os mesmos e as suas inúmeras variações. Procede-se, então, a uma análise sobre como os monstros, sendo seres corporalmente transgressivos e disformes, permitem, por comparação, que os seres humanos melhor se definam a eles próprios. Foi também explorado o conceito de “*Monstrous Feminine*”, criado por Barbara Creed a partir das teorias de abjecção de Julia Kristeva, e que explora os tipos de monstros femininos representados nos filmes – uma ideia central para a análise da personagem da Rainha Alien no filme *Aliens* e de Ripley 8 em *Alien: Resurrection*.

Seguiu-se uma breve análise sobre o filme de terror, começando por delinear os seus primórdios, o que constitui o género de terror, e o que atrai as audiências para este género de filme.

Sendo necessário confirmar se os medos culturais estão, efectivamente, representados nos filmes de terror ao longo da sua história. foi feita uma análise de alguns dos filmes de terror de maior sucesso desde a década de 1920 até à década de 2020. Os resultados foram

reveladores, já que este padrão de representação de medos culturais foi comprovado em todos os filmes analisados. Tendo estabelecido que os filmes de terror têm, desde os seus primórdios, reflectido as ansiedades culturais das suas audiências, este trabalho procede com a análise de cada filme da *Quadrilogia Alien* deste ponto de vista, identificando as ansiedades e medos biológicos e culturais que estes filmes representam.

Como muitos filmes de terror de sucesso, os filmes da *Quadrilogia Alien* não dependem apenas dos medos culturais da sua época para assustar o público, os medos biológicos estão também presentes ao longo de toda a série. Em primeiro lugar o medo da morte é evidente nestes filmes, mas o medo de uma maternidade corrupta e profana segue-o de perto e intrinsecamente. O ciclo de vida do Alien depende da violação oral e não discrimina por sexo ao fazê-lo. A partir desta violação as vítimas tornam-se as mães do monstro, independentemente do seu género, e o Alien emerge dos seus peitos num espectáculo sangrento que provoca a morte da vítima. Este medo de uma gravidez parasítica, na verdade, supera o medo da morte na *Quadrilogia*, pois as personagens mostram uma enorme determinação em pôr fim à própria vida antes de sucumbir a tal destino. As ansiedades reprodutivas são o cerne dos filmes *Alien* e são abordadas não apenas através do ciclo de vida do Alien, mas também através das suas características físicas: o ovo assemelha-se a um útero putrefacto e a sua abertura é claramente vulvar, o Facehugger combina uma aparência vaginal com um apêndice semelhante a um pénis que usa para violar oralmente e engravidar as suas vítimas, o Chestbuster é distintamente evocativo dos genitais masculinos, assim como o é o Alien adulto com a sua cabeça fálica.

No que toca aos medos e ansiedades culturais, o primeiro filme da *Quadrilogia*, *Alien* (1979) aborda abertamente dois medos culturais: a ameaça que o capitalismo desenfreado coloca à sobrevivência humana e a perda da autonomia corporal, claramente inspirada pelo Movimento Feminista. O horror do capitalismo desenfreado é representado pela Companhia

Weyland-Yutani, uma megacorporação que ao longo de toda a *Quadrilogia* sempre considerou o capital como mais importante do que as próprias vidas dos seus funcionários. À medida que o Movimento Feminista foi trazendo à liça o quão fulcral é a necessidade de uma mulher ter controlo sobre o seu próprio corpo, a gravidez foi-se tornando cada vez mais medicalizada, e as mulheres começaram a ser vistas cada vez mais como meros recipientes para o protagonista da gravidez: o feto. O feto hostil da *Quadrilogia Alien* é uma criatura tão ameaçadora quanto o Alien adulto e a sua natureza parasítica e mortífera reflecte a ansiedade cultural que o público sentia em relação aos direitos reprodutivos.

Em *Aliens* (1986), o segundo filme da *Quadrilogia*, as duas principais ansiedades culturais que se revelaram na análise foram a tentativa de uma interpretação positiva do conservadorismo da época e a forma como a nação tentou processar as consequências do pós-guerra do Vietname. Com a eleição de Reagan e numa época em que os valores conservadores eram extremamente vigentes, Cameron retratou Ripley como uma mãe que escolheu a sua carreira em vez da sua maternidade e que, por ir contra as convenções tradicionais, foi severamente punida ao perder tanto a sua filha como a sua carreira. Weyland-Yutani, até agora a vilã, é absolvida de culpa neste filme, sendo Burke, um yuppie ganancioso, o novo vilão, encarnando este os inegáveis aspectos nefastos do capitalismo que mesmo um conservador como Cameron não conseguiu interpretar positivamente. Sob uma análise atenta, *Aliens* também se revela como sendo um filme inspirado pela guerra do Vietname. Ripley tem todas as características de um veterano traumatizado pela guerra, e as interações e diálogos entre os fuzileiros foram inspirados naqueles de veteranos reais. Os fuzileiros também surgem como um grupo explorado, atirado para um conflito para o qual não estavam apropriadamente treinados ou equipados, lutando contra um inimigo que conhecia o terreno e lutava com táticas de guerrilha, tal como os vietcongues.

*Alien*³, o terceiro filme da *Quadrilogia*, revelou ser um filme fortemente influenciado por temas cristãos apocalípticos. O cristianismo, particularmente o protestantismo, é um componente central da cultura americana, estando estes temas profundamente embutidos na consciência colectiva do público americano. Desde o culto fundamentalista apocalíptico cristão que os presos seguem, até à chegada de Ripley como portadora da sua destruição, à constante referência ao Alien como “a Besta”, o Livro do Apocalipse exerce uma influência marcante ao longo de todo o filme. E no que deve ter parecido para o público da época como um presságio do fim dos tempos, a epidemia da SIDA estava no seu auge na altura em que *Alien*³ foi filmado. E esta mostrou os seus sinais nas mortes insensatas de Hicks e Newt, no isolamento dos prisioneiros exilados da sociedade, na gravidez de Ripley que equivalia a uma infecção mortal, e na exortação de Dillon para os prisioneiros lutarem contra o Alien.

Na análise de *Alien: Resurrection*, o quarto filme da *Quadrilogia*, dois medos culturais saltaram à tona: a clonagem humana e a possível criação de uma inteligência artificial. Com a clonagem da ovelha Dolly e a conclusão do Projecto do Genoma Humano, as ansiedades referentes à clonagem humana estavam bem presentes na mente do público. *Alien: Resurrection* leva essas ansiedades ainda mais além, pois Ripley 8 é um clone monstruoso – uma mistura de humana e Alien.

Os avanços tecnológicos do final da década de 1990 também despertaram o temor da criação de uma inteligência artificial. A ascensão das máquinas não era um tema novo no terror, com filmes de sucesso como a série do Exterminador Implacável tendo já explorado o conceito até à sua terrível conclusão. Call representa este novo tipo de vida hipotético e, por meio dela, o filme analisa questões como o que torna alguém humano e que direitos devem ser concedidos a um andróide.

Através deste trabalho será comprovado que os filmes de terror possuem uma notável capacidade de mutação para continuamente se reconectararem com o seu público e, como tal, cada filme de terror pode ser analisado como uma representação de um momento cultural. Os filmes da *Quadrilogia Alien* alcançam um equilíbrio entre os medos biológicos e culturais da sua época, levando ao seu sucesso e subsequente passagem para a cultura popular. Os filmes da *Quadrilogia Alien* são um terreno fértil a partir do qual se pode examinar a cultura à qual reagiram: os seus medos, as suas ansiedades e até as suas aspirações, podendo ser vistos também como um importante espaço cultural no qual o público teve a oportunidade de processar esses mesmos medos e ansiedades e finalmente aceitá-los.

Palavras-chave: filme de terror, alien, medos culturais

Abstract

This dissertation aims to explore which cultural and biological fears and anxieties are represented in the *Alien Quadrilogy* through the analysis of each film that comprises it: *Alien* (1979), *Aliens* (1986), *Alien³* (1992), and *Alien: Resurrection* (1997).

To this purpose it was necessary to establish a framework regarding some of the theories necessary for the analysis of the films, namely the concept of monster, the beginnings of the horror film, what constitutes the horror genre, and if contemporary cultural fears are, indeed, consistently represented in horror films throughout their history. Hence, an analysis of some of the most successful horror films spanning from the 1920s to the 2020s is undertaken.

Having thus established that horror films have, since their inception, reflected back their audiences' contemporary cultural anxieties, this work proceeds to analyse each film in the *Alien Quadrilogy* through this lens, identifying the biological and cultural fears and anxieties they represent.

Keywords: horror film, alien, cultural fears

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1. Monsters, Horror Films, and the Cultural Fears They Represent | 7 |
| 1.1 Monsters | 7 |
| 1.2 Horror Films | 13 |
| 1.3 The Cultural Fears They Represent | 18 |
| 2. Analysis of the films | 47 |
| 2.1 <i>Alien</i> (1979) | 47 |
| 2.2 <i>Aliens</i> (1986) | 69 |
| 2.3 <i>Alien³</i> (1992) | 88 |
| 2.4 <i>Alien: Resurrection</i> (1997) | 109 |
| 3. Conclusion | 129 |
| Bibliography | 135 |
| Filmography | 148 |
| Appendices | 160 |
| Appendix A: The Alien/Xenomorph XX121 | 160 |
| Appendix B: Characters from the <i>Alien Quadrilogy</i> | 175 |
| Appendix C: Space Beast | 187 |

Introduction

Horror films, since their inception, have always made use not only of human biological fears but also of contemporary cultural fears. This MA dissertation titled *Long Live the Queen: Biological and Contemporary Cultural Fears in the Alien Quadrilogy* intends to explore the specific biological and cultural fears which each film from the *Alien Quadrilogy* represented at the time they were made. Therefore, I will identify each film's main thematic horror elements, and which biological and cultural anxieties of each timeframe they represented.

I chose to focus only on the *Alien Quadrilogy*¹: *Alien* (Scott, 1977), *Aliens* (Cameron, 1986), *Alien³* (Fincher, 1991), and *Alien: Resurrection* (Jeunet, 1997). There were various reasons why I made this choice, leaving the new Ridley Scott *Alien* films *Prometheus* (2012) and *Alien: Covenant* (2017) aside, regardless of their own merits. Among them being the fact that Ridley Scott was not involved in the creation of the background story and mythos of the *Alien* franchise – this is mostly the responsibility of Dan O'Bannon. Ridley Scott himself, in an interview to *Fantastic Films* (1979), referred to those involved in the making of the mythos behind *Alien*, particularly O'Bannon, as “a real science-fiction freak” and a “science-fiction egghead” (14) and admitted that he, himself, did not have the science-fiction knowledge obtained from a lifetime of consuming science-fiction films, pulp fiction, and comics that others involved in *Alien* did. Furthermore, and decidedly more important, O'Bannon told *Cinefex* (1980) that:

¹ I chose to use the term *Quadrilogy* throughout instead of the more accurate Tetralogy or Quartet simply because this is how these four films were advertised and have become subsequently known.

[Ron Cobb's Space Jockey] was just perfect! It had a very large cranium, and four or five eye sockets. Very small jawbone – no teeth to speak of. Of course, I expected it to look horrible when you first see it in the film; but then if you looked at it a bit closer you'd discover that it didn't have the large teeth or the mandibles or any of the other things that are characteristic of a carnivore — and then maybe you'd begin to imagine it as some totally nonviolent herbivorous creature sailing around in space.

This in no way aligns with Ridley Scott's retroactive depiction of the Engineers. The Space Jockey is also significantly larger, at 4.5 meters (14.7 feet), than the Engineer race, which stands at only about 2.7 meters (8.8 feet). And the Space Jockey's chair, presumably constructed to sit the average member of its species, fits it perfectly, precluding the possibility that this is an anomalously tall member of its race. Furthermore, the Space Jockey that the USCSS *Nostromo* crew found had been dead long enough to attain the status of fossil – something that only happens given a minimum of 10,000 years. If the Xenomorph race had been, in fact, created by the android David (Michael Fassbender) in *Alien: Covenant* in the year 2104, a mere 18 years would have passed until the USCSS *Nostromo* crew found the *Derelict* in 2122. Therefore, the Space Jockey could not be a fossilized Engineer overtaken by a Xenomorph. For these reasons I chose to ignore any new additions brought by Ridley Scott and his most recent films to the *Alien* franchise.

This work is divided into two distinct chapters, with the first one of a theoretical nature to help contextualise the analysis of each film of the *Alien* *Quadrilogy* in the second chapter.

Chapter 1: “Monsters, Horror Films, and the Cultural Fears They Represent” is composed of three subchapters. In subchapter 1.1 I will speak on “Monsters.” Given that the most evident horror feature of the *Alien* franchise relies on our teratological fears, I will focus on Western monsters and their definitions, since the *Alien* franchise, to my observation, does

not make use of other cultural representations of teratology. I will explore how humanity has always been fascinated by monsters and how monsters help define us by, through their deformed bodies, threatening the cohesion and boundaries of our own bodies. I will briefly explore the concept of the monstrous feminine and Kristeva's theories on abjection, which will be discussed more at length further in the work.

In subchapter 1.2, "Horror Films", I will delve into the beginnings of the horror film, what exactly makes horror a genre, and what draws audiences to horror films.

In subchapter 1.3, "The Cultural Fears They Represent", I will focus on a theoretical framework of horror as representative of cultural fears, exploring how some notable horror films were representative of the contemporary cultural anxieties of the time in which they were made. I will briefly be analysing some of the most successful horror films from the 1920s to the 2020s, identifying the biological and cultural fears they represented and which allowed them to connect so successfully to the audiences of their time. I will focus mostly on American² films, seeing as the main subject of this work, the *Alien Quadrilogy*, is also a franchise of American films.

In chapter two I will go in-depth into the analysis of each film in the *Alien Quadrilogy*.

In subchapter 2.1, "*Alien* (1979)", I will analyse the first film of the Quadrilogy: *Alien* (Scott, 1977). I will explore how H. R. Giger's art gave rise to the Xenomorph, and will then explore how the Women's Liberation Movement brought attention to violence against women, specifically physical and sexual violence, and how this connects to one of the most explored themes in *Alien*: the cultural and biological fear of rape and body violation, this time extended to include all genders. There will also be an examination of how the Women's Liberation

² Even though "American" could be used to refer to anything and anyone originating from the entirety of the American continent, given how commonplace it is to refer to the media and the people originating from the United States of America as "American" I have opted to use this term throughout.

Movement and its demands of equal pay and equal treatment in the workplace influenced the gender representation and working relationships among the crew of the USCSS *Nostramo*. Still following the topic of the new freedoms that women of the time period fought to attain, I will explore how the first pictures of foetuses in uteri and the routine use of obstetric ultrasonography catapulted the foetus, until then an indefinite participant, into the spotlight of the pregnancy – relegating the pregnant person to a mere vessel – and how the pro-life movement’s fight to grant the foetus greater rights than its carrier relates to the fear of loss of bodily autonomy in *Alien*.

I will then analyse how late-stage capitalism and the rise of the cyberpunk ubiquitous megacorporations in late 1970s early 1980s’ science-fiction relates to the plot of *Alien*, in the context of a bleak capitalistic future in which profit rules humanity at humanity’s own expense. I will also delve into the connection between Joseph Conrad’s novel *Nostramo: A Tale of the Seaboard* (1904) and the plot of *Alien*. I will further explore the class divide within the USCSS *Nostramo* crew, and how the crew, until nearly the end, prioritised the Company’s interests. I will finish this film’s analysis by briefly exploring Ripley’s role as a final girl.

In chapter 2.2 I will analyse the film *Aliens* (Cameron, 1986), the second film of the *Alien Quadrilogy*. I will discuss how Cameron used Ripley’s now revealed status as a single mother to condemn her: by choosing her career instead of her family, Cameron shows she deserved the fate that befell her. Consequently, once she embraced the ideal of the nuclear family, she finally achieved happiness. This will be related to the conservative values of the Reagan era.

I will analyse throughout this subchapter how *Aliens* conforms and deviates to the steps of the Hero’s Journey, as laid down by Joseph Campbell and, later on, more specifically applied to film writing by Christopher Vogler.

I will go into depth on why *Aliens* should be considered a Vietnam War film and how Ripley is seen as a stand-in for Vietnam War veterans. I will then discuss how the 1980s, with their positive outlook on materialism and capitalism, absolved the Company (Weyland-Yutani), turning Burke into the antagonist, instead.

The innate human biological fear of insects (entomophobia) will be explored by analysing how the Xenomorphs were given entomological characteristics to prey on these fears – most specifically their insectile physical characteristics, their tendency to swarm their prey, their reproduction by body invasion, and their eusocial structure.

I will finish by exploring the conflict between the motherhood by choice represented by Ripley, and the bestial unbridled motherhood represented by the Xenomorph Queen.

In chapter 2.3 I will analyse the third film of the *Quadrilogy: Alien³* (Fincher, 1992). I will draw parallels between Hicks and Newt's deaths and the deaths brought on by AIDS, and the progression of Ripley's infection with the Xenomorph Queen with the progressive decline associated with AIDS. I will also establish a connection between Dillon's speech to the inmates and Larry Kramer's famous speech when he launched ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) in New York in 1987.

As most of the film will be explored from a Christian theological point of view, I will examine more deeply how the inmates' Brotherhood, a millenarian apocalyptic Christian cult, as well as the plot of *Alien³*, relate to the Book of Revelation: with the Xenomorph representing the Great Red Dragon who accompanies a woman about to give birth – the Woman Clothed with the Sun – represented by Ripley.

In chapter 2.4 I will analyse the fourth film in the *Quadrilogy, Alien: Resurrection* (Jeunet, 1997). I will discuss how, unlike its predecessors, *Alien: Resurrection* is mostly a dark comedy. I will speak on cloning, and on Ripley's status as a genetic abject – a hybrid half-

monstrous clone defined by her status as the monster's mother, and how that ties-in to the audience's contemporary cultural fears. I will briefly explore the significance of Ripley 8 being the 8th clone, a number above the number of perfection: 7. I will delve into how Call is another of Joss Whedon's trademark badass but oddly frail girls, and how, unlike all its predecessors, *Alien: Resurrection* is rife with misogyny. I will give a brief overview on androids and what it means to be a mechanical human, and how this status as *other* connected Call to Ripley 8.

In closing I will analyse how each film in the *Alien Quadrilogy* stands as a reflection of the cultural moments in which they were made.

1. Monsters, Horror Films, and the Cultural Fears They Represent

1.1 Monsters

Do monsters exist? Surely they must, for if they did not, how could we?

– Jeffrey Jerome Cohen

Monsters, from the Latin *monere* (to warn) to the Latin *monstrum* (portent or monster), to the Old French *monstre*, to the late Middle English *monster* (Chamber 325), are one of the most meaningful creations of humanity as a means to reflect on human existence. Through them we have created a space where the permissible and impermissible can be played with while our rationality attempts to control and explain their manifestations in our cultures, be those in myth, art, or literature (Scott 10).

It is common in our species to wish to witness the grotesque, to delight in experiencing fear. Even our closest relatives in the animal kingdom indulge in the same behaviour. Charles Darwin (1809 – 1882) created an experiment to see how monkeys dealt with fear: he placed a live snake in a bag, with the bag's opening loosely closed, in a monkeys' enclosure. One of the monkeys immediately approached, cautiously opened the bag, looked in, and quickly ran away. Soon after every single monkey followed in his example, some even returning to the bag several times, unable to resist taking a peek at the dreadful snake and running away (Darwin 48). Like monkeys, humans want to witness strange bodies and feel the thrill of fear. We wish to feel fear because fear is so close to awe. Much like with the uncanny, as defined by Freud³, we wish

³ Unheimlichen.

to experience “all that is terrible (...) all that arouses dread and creeping horror” (1). However, we also wish to control and define monsters to keep them at a safe distance.

One of the earliest and most influential medieval efforts to control and define monstrous bodies was the medieval taxonomy created by Isidore of Seville (ca. 560 – 636). He saw monsters as portents and, as such, part of the divine order of God:

Portenta esse Varro ait quae contra naturam nata videntur: sed non sunt contra naturam, quis divina voluntate fiunt, cum voluntas Creatoris cuiusque rei natura sit. Vnde et ipsi gentiles Deum modo Naturam, modo Deum appellant. 2. Portentum ergo fit non ostentta, monstra atque prodigia ideo nuncupantur, quod portendere atque ostendere, monstrare ac praedicare aliqua futura videntur. (43)⁴

He, like many, found that the most useful model for a monstrous taxonomy was the human body. In Book XI. 3, he wrote that monstrosity is attained in one of the following ways:

- (1) animal births by human women
- (2) hypertrophy and atrophy of the body with excrescence or deprivation of parts
- (3) mislocation of organs or parts of the body
- (4) mixture of human and animal parts
- (5) disturbed growth, such as being born old
- (6) hermaphrodites
- (7) monstrous races such as giants, cynocephali, and cyclops (47-55)

⁴ 1. Varro defines portents as beings that seem to have been born contrary to nature – but they are not contrary to nature, because they are created by divine will, since the nature of everything is the will of the Creator. Whence even the pagans address God sometimes as ‘Nature’ (Natura), sometimes as ‘God.’ 2. A portent is therefore not created contrary to nature, but contrary to what is known nature. Portents are also called signs, omens, and prodigies, because they are seen to portend and display, indicate and predict future events. (Translation by Barney, Lewis, Berghof, and Beach, 144)

This symbolic representation of the body is particularly strong in the Middle Ages due to Neoplatonism, which posits that both the microcosmos and the world are represented in the human body. As Mary Douglas says:

The body is a model which can stand for any bounded system. Its boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious. The body is a complex structure. The functions of its different parts and their relation afford a source of symbols for other complex structures. (116)

Taking this principle into account, Williams goes on to say:

The transgressions of the body's natural boundaries through disease or deformity constitute not only a threat to the body but, as well, a kind of denial of the system modelled on it, rendering vulnerable the principle of order that is the bodily structure and system. In the process the grotesque, the abnormalization of the body and the negation of order are not coincidental; the one is the habitual method of the grotesque, the other, the conceptual goal at which it aims. (109)

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that monsters, because they are so incredibly different, help humans define themselves. Monster catalogues, by depicting monsters, represent the fear of loss of bodily integrity and force their readers to appraise their own bodies. They remind humans of what it is to be human. By threatening the human body, they also help reassure the readers of their bodies' cohesion (Oswald 3) because the grotesque body always transgresses corporal boundaries in such a way that it is always "becoming", it is never finished, but continually built, and it creates a different body every time. As Bakhtin states: "Thus the artistic logic of the grotesque image ignores the closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface of the body and retains only its excrescences (sprouts, buds) and orifices, only that which leads beyond the body's limited space or into the body's depths" (317-318). This loss of integrity provokes in us

two contrary feelings: attraction and repulsion. The monster's formlessness and disorder deprive us of the structures necessary for acting and understanding and, therefore, for being.

Gil speaks further on how monsters threaten our identity:

(...) nós exigimos mais dos monstros, pedimos-lhes, justamente, que nos inquietem, que nos provoquem vertigens, que abalem permanentemente as nossas mais sólidas certezas; necessitamos de certezas sobre a nossa identidade ameaçada de indefinição. Os monstros, felizmente, existem não para nos mostrar o que não somos, mas o que poderíamos ser.⁶ (12)

But, on the other hand, the disorder brought by the monstrous frees us from the restrictions enforced by order and reason. It is not surprising that Saint Bernard, in 1125, in *Apologia ad Guillelmum abbatem*, reacted to the ecclesiastic medieval artistic representations of grotesque deformations by exclaiming that they were “ridiculous monstrosities, a kind of deformed form, and a form of deformity” (Williams 71). This is why medieval monsters were branded as exiles, being placed at the edges of the known world, as Kappler demonstrates in his book *Monstres, Démons et Merveilles à la Fin du Moyen Âge*, by specifically locating the monster in faraway lands: “Les monstres vivent surtout dans les terres lointaines et peu – ou pas – connues”⁷ (12), sometimes monsters even live in higher places, making them all the closer to God, suggesting their proximity to the divine (Williams 17). This is also patent with the identification of the monster with disorder and a state of being in flux, which makes it a potential for order – the monster is a sign of the nature of being, and as a part of God's creation, monsters are a page in the book of nature, together with all the world's creatures, as Saint

⁶“(…) we demand more of monsters, we ask them, specifically, that they disturb us, that they render us unstable, that they permanently shake our most solid certainties; we need certainties about our identity as it is threatened by undefinition. Monsters, thankfully, exist not to show us what we are not, but what we could be.” (Translation mine.)

⁷“Monsters live mostly in far-away lands of which little – or nothing at all – is known.” (Translation mine.)

Augustine clearly asserted in *De civitate Dei*: “Deus enim creator est omnium, qui ubi et quando creari quid oporteat vel oportuerit, ipse novit, sciens universitatis pulchritudinem quarum partium vel similitudine vel diversitate contextat. (Chapter XVI, Book 8)⁸. In fact, as Lisa Verner declares: “Whatever a monster may in fact be, its function for Saint Augustine is quite clear: it demonstrates the beauty of the superabundance of God’s creation.” (2005: 2).

The bishop of Hippona further states:

Sicut ergo haec ex illo uno negari non possunt originem ducere, ita quaecumque gentes in diuersitatibus corporum ab usitato naturae cursu, quem plures et prope omnes tenent, uelut exorbitasse traduntur, si definitione illa includuntur, ut rationalia animalia sint atque mortalia, ab eodem ipso uno primo patre omnium stirpem trahere confitendum est, si tamen uera sunt quae de illarum nationum uarietate et tanta inter se atque nobiscum diuersitate traduntur. (...) ⁹

In this sense, as it happens with all the book of nature, monsters also mirror God’s will and glory. In the thirteenth century, Alanus of Insulis, in *Incarnatione Christi*, stressed the same idea in considering that all the world’s creatures are a book, a picture and a mirror in his famous sentence: “quasi liber et pictura nobis est, et speculum.¹⁰” (Alanus ab Insulis 210:579).

Focusing on the subject of this dissertation, and on the monstrous feminine, Pseudo-Albertus defined as monsters “species which in a certain part of their body are outside the bounds of the common course of the nature of the species” (Miller 86). In a certain way we

⁸ <https://www.thelatinlibrary.com/augustine/civ16.shtml>

“For God is the creator of all things, and he himself knows at what place and time a given creature should be created, or have been created, selecting in his wisdom elements from whose likenesses and diversities he contrives the beautiful fabric of the universe.” (Translation taken from Verner 2005: 2)

⁹ <https://www.thelatinlibrary.com/augustine/civ16.shtm>

“As, therefore, no one will deny that these are all descended from that one man, so all the races which are reported to have diverged in bodily appearance from the usual course which nature generally or almost universally preserves, if they are embraced in that definition of man as rational and mortal animals, unquestionably trace their pedigree to that one first father of all.” In <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120116.htm>

¹⁰ “like a book and a picture, and a mirror” (Translation by Asselt 59)

can correlate this idea of monstrosity as a form of deviation from the natural order of things with Aristotle's thoughts on women, as he not only says that "the woman is, as it were, an impotent male" (chapter I), but also declares that "females are weaker and colder in nature, and we must look upon the female character as being a sort of natural deficiency" (chapter IV).¹²

This dissertation does not aim to discuss how misogyny has developed from Antiquity until the present day, but the concept of the monstrous feminine is important in the analysis of the *Alien Quadrilogy* films, particularly of the Xenomorph Queen and Ripley 8, as female monsters have always been considered even more disturbing than their male counterparts. Since Antiquity we can find myths about sirens, enormous birds with women's heads who used their songs to lure ships into perilous reefs, Medusa and her sisters, with their heads full of serpents, teeth as long as boar's tusks, and their golden wings, who turned men into stone, the Echidna who was half-woman and half-snake, the Harpies, the Lamia, the sea monsters Scylla and Charybdis, and the Sphynx, among others, proving that female monsters were common in classical mythology. Also, the fruitful medieval period provided us with female monsters that have seduced and terrorized man's imagination and inspired the depiction of feminine monstrosity in our contemporary world, such as Grendel's Mother in *Beowulf*, the Valkyries in the *Prose Edda*, and Mélusine in the *Roman de Mélusine* by Jean d'Arras (1393), to quote just a few. In more modern times there is Sin, in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), Carmilla in Sheridan Le Fanu's novel of the same name (1872), and Shelob in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954). In all of these cases they represent the boundary between what is human and what is not. Focusing now on the *Alien* franchise, as the *Quadrilogy* begins in the far-off year of 2122, a time in which humanity has moved beyond planet Earth and is now colonising the far reaches of space, the monster – in this case the Xenomorph – is to be found precisely outside

¹² <http://www.esp.org/books/aristotle/generation-of-animals/>
Here in the English translation of Greek original.

of explored space, as medieval monsters were to be found on the far limits of the known world. Its body a mixture of corrupted human and alien features, born of male rape and exploding into existence in an unholy birth, it is genderless, bereft of eyes, and completely amoral – the Xenomorph is the ultimate monster. In spite of its genderlessness, the Xenomorph, with its monstrosity, highly contributes to the pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood metaphors explored through the *Quadrilogy*, as we shall see. Moreover, these will be deepened by the emergence of the Xenomorph Queen and her complex relationship with another female – Ripley – the heroine in a masculine world.

Kristeva describes abjection as that which refuses to “respect boundaries, positions, rules” and which “disturbs identity, system, and order.” Creed tells us that sexual differences in horror films conform to the parameters established by Kristeva, giving us a catalogue of archetypes which reflect fears surrounding the female body and female desire: primeval mothers, monstrous wombs, possession, all of which can be observed in the *Alien Quadrilogy*, making the Xenomorphs part of a catalogue of the biological and cultural fears of their time which will be explored in greater depth in this work.

1.2 Horror Films

Monsters in movies are us, always us, one way or the other. They're us with hats on.

Monsters are us, the dangerous parts of us.

The part that wants to destroy; the part of us with the reptile brain.

The part of us that's vicious and cruel.

We express these in our stories as these monsters out there.

- John Carpenter

Although monsters are included in tales across cultures throughout all human history, they, by themselves, are not what makes horror. According to Noël Carroll in *The Philosophy of Horror* (2004), the difference between a horror story and a story about monsters is how the characters in the story approach the monsters they encounter. When Odysseus was trapped in a cave with the cyclops Polyphemus, he feared him, but he saw him as a given of life, he did not find him any more unusual than the people he had met before in his tales. In horror, the characters will see monsters as a disturbance of the natural order, as something abnormal, defying explanation (16).

In the end, humans enjoy the monstrous spectacle of the horror film much in the same way that our ancestors enjoyed monstrous depictions and tales: because they are temporarily contained “places” where the marginalised monster can come out to play but, in the end, we can return to the comfort, safety, and order of real life. The monster terrifies but provides potent escapist fantasies by its lure of the forbidden and the temporary outlet from societal constraints (Cohen 16-17). As Susan Sontag suggests, the sci-fi/horror film allows us to “participate in the fantasy of living one’s own death and more, the death of cities, the destruction of humanity itself” allowing us to cope with the banality of existence and the inconceivable terror of our own death (149).

Modern horror can be said to have been born with Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818), and flourished with the gothic novel, the penny dreadful, and later with comic books and pulp magazines, culminating in the horror film (Carroll 13). The first horror film is tentatively agreed to have been *Le Manoir du diable* (Méliès, 1896), a short film with a runtime of merely three minutes, in which two cavaliers bravely face the devil himself (Dixon 4). But Leeder argues that the horror film is even older:

[I]t traces back to early cinema, or even could be stitched into a much longer narrative of uses of the projected image for frightening entertainment, dating back at least to the gloomy shows of the phantasmagoria (...) exhibited in the darkness of an abandoned Capuchin monastery in Paris, phantasmagoria mixed magic lantern imagery, spooky music and layers of smoke, and favoured images of demons, skeletons and ghosts. (3)

What followed, in the decades from the 1900s to the 1910s, were several short silent films, some of them literary adaptations, such as *Faust and Marguerite* (Porter, 1900), *Frankenstein* (Dawley, 1910) and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Henderson, 1912). Noël Carroll speaks on the relationship between horror films and horror literature:

The relation between the horror film and horror literature has been quite intimate (...) both in the obvious sense that often horror films are adapted from horror novels, and in the sense that many of the writers in the genre were deeply influenced by earlier horror movie cycles. (2)

But just a handful of films does not make a genre. In the end, what *is* the horror genre and what draws audiences to it? Tudor says succinctly that “genre is what we collectively believe it to be” (139), and Pinedo adds to this by saying that “genre is in part constituted by audience expectations” (88). On the horror genre, Carroll further explains:

Indeed, the genres of suspense, mystery, and horror derive their very names from the affects they are intended to promote—a sense of suspense, a sense of mystery, and a sense of horror. The cross-art, cross-media genre of horror takes its

title from the emotion it characteristically or rather ideally promotes; this emotion constitutes the identifying mark of horror. (14)

But what draws audiences to horror films? Stephen King, who has written sixty-four novels and over two-hundred short stories in the horror genre, many of which have been adapted to the screen, speaks on this in his book *Danse Macabre* (1981):

The mythic horror movie, like the sick joke, has a dirty job to do. It deliberately appeals to the worst in us. It is morbidity unchained, our most base instincts let free, our nastiest fantasies realised (...) and it all happens, fittingly enough, in the dark. (...) I like to see the most aggressive of them – Dawn of the Dead, for instance – as lifting a trapdoor in the civilised forebrain and throwing a basket of raw meat to the hungry alligators swimming around in that subterranean river beneath. (177)

King's reasoning is consistent with the notion that people watch horror films to serve unconscious needs that cannot be satisfied in civilized life (Leeder 115), but there are also other, more biological motives which could lead audiences to be attracted to horror films: fear triggers the release of epinephrine, a biological process commonly known as an adrenaline rush. In extreme cases it can turn into an addiction, but in the safe confines of the movie theatre it is merely a pleasurable high which last for a few short hours (Weatherspoon).

For evolutionary reasons fear has a strong survival role, and lack of fear has poor survival outcomes. Therefore, situations which cause fear are memorable, thus enabling animals to survive a reoccurring threat. At the heart of what makes horror *horror* are our biological fears – fears we have because we also define ourselves by the things we are averse to. As Stephen T. Asma says in *On Monsters* (2009) “Though it may seem a remote possibility to us now,

during the formation of the human brain the fear of being grabbed by sharp claws, dragged into a dark hole, and eaten alive was not an abstraction” (24). And horror films exploit these biological fears: fear of disease, of flesh corruption, of the loss of our offspring. The jump scare itself, ubiquitous in horror films, is nothing more than a manipulation of the startle response, a reflex in animals that functions as a defence response to negative stimuli.

Now whether audiences flock to horror films to explore the unconscious needs which cannot be satisfied in everyday life (Leeder 115) or for the hormonal high they experience in the darkness of the theatre, is debatable, and in the end “there may be as many possible motivations as there are viewers of the horror film” (136).

The focus of this work, however, is how horror films engage the audience’s cultural and biological fears to become successful, and how the most successful of them can be surprisingly revealing of the anxieties of the audiences of the time they were made in. Other film genres also resonate with social and cultural meaning, but Robin Wood posits that the lack of seriousness that the horror film is taken with – going so far as to call it “the most disreputable of genres” (41) – allows it be “far more radical and fundamentally undermining than works of conscious social criticism, which must always concern themselves with the possibility of reforming aspects of a social system whose basic rightness must not be challenged” (102). Kendall R. Phillips expands on this by arguing that the most successful horror films are the ones which capture our cultural anxieties and, in touching these collective fears, they become part of our popular culture (3). And it is with this precept in mind that this work will briefly analyse some of the most successful horror films over the span of a century – from the 1920s to 2020s – to ascertain whether this proves true.

1.3 The Cultural Fears They Represent

Horror films don't create fear. They release it. (...)

I like to address the fears of my culture.

I believe it's good to face the enemy, for the enemy is fear.

- Wes Craven

- **1920s**

Moving on from the short horror films on the 1910s, the 1920s had several seminal films that established the horror genre into the audience's collective consciousness.

Following the isolation post World War I in Germany, the general despair of the era gave rise to the German Expressionist cinema in which audiences could deal with the social and economic fallout via dream-like horror films full of sympathetic monsters. The abysmal conditions experienced by the population also reflected the fear of disease as had not been experienced since bygone eras, which is why *Nosferatu* (Murnau, 1922) clearly deals with this fear by representing the coming of the vampire as being preceded by hundreds of rats – a biological fear. The conflict between the titled vampire Orlok needing to feed and exploit his servants before his demise, however, reflects the cultural anxieties of the time: the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the advent of the Weimar Republic, the end of the society and way of life which was all that the German audience had known until then – a cultural fear.

These fears were further explored in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Wiene, 1920), for as Leeder tells us:

German Expressionist cinema inherits the earlier movement's privileging of anti-realism and the graphic depictions of inner states, and is replete with relevant Weimar themes of paralysed masculinity, industrialization and modernity, death and mourning, enforced conformity and madness. (9)

These themes are very present in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* where the twist ending reveals that the protagonist, Francis (Friedrich Fehér), has been a patient in Caligari's insane asylum for the entirety of the film. The audiences must have felt this keenly, especially as many German veterans from the war who had demanded better pensions and healthcare were confined to mental asylums to suppress any such activities (Heynen 683-684). Much as it happened with Caligari, Foucault tells us:

[B]y wearing the mask of Father and of Judge (...) the physician, by one of those abrupt short cuts that leave aside mere medical competence, became the almost magic perpetrator of the cure (...) it was enough that he observed and spoke, to cause secret faults to appear, insane presumptions to vanish, and madness at last to yield to reason. (273)

In *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* the psychiatrist takes on an almost magical quality, as again Foucault says, he is:

[B]oth divine and satanic, beyond human measure in any case; increasingly [the patient] would alienate himself in the physician, accepting entirely and in advance all his prestige, submitting from the very first to a will he experienced as magic, and to a science he regarded as prescience and divination. (275)

This also serves to evoke the emerging concepts of degeneration, social hygiene, and eugenics (Heynen 686) which became central to the rise of the Nazi Party.

Shell-shocked from the war, a condition poorly understood at the time and sometimes even likened to female hysteria (Mosse 102), most of the veterans were no longer considered as mentally sane as when they had first left for combat, and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* mirrored these anxieties and apprehensions on the screen.

There was another eminent anxiety in the public's mind following the end of World War I, namely the disfigurement suffered by the returning soldiers. As Biernoff tells us, "[T]he horror of facial mutilation was evoked in journalism, poems, memoirs and fiction" (666), and several of the most successful films of the 1920s reflect this, such as *The Hands of Orlac* (Wiene, 1924), *The Phantom of the Opera* (Chaney, Julian, Sedgwick & Laemmle, 1925), and *The Man Who Laughs* (Leni, 1928). There was a great deal of anxiety, especially, surrounding facial wounds, in *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced*, Andrew Bamji tells us:

[F]acially wounded soldiers were sent to centres for treatment and were isolated from the wider public. Visits by the public to these hospitals were not encouraged as men grappled with accepting their frightening facial wounds. In these hospitals, mirrors were banned from the wards and benches in the local area were painted blue in order to warn the public that a soldier with facial wounds might sit there. (498)

So it comes as no surprise that these disfigurements feature so prominently in the films of the era. In *The Hands of Orlac* a concert pianist (Conrad Veidt) loses his hands in a railway accident, receiving, as a transplant, the hands of a convicted and recently executed murderer.

He becomes obsessed with the origin of his new hands and soon feels overtaken with the need to continue perpetrating the crimes of their previous owner. His new hands are also unable to allow him to perform his job as a pianist and he and his wife soon lose all that they have. The film is not subtle in what it sets out to do, which is to prey on the apprehensions of all the men who had lost their limbs in the war and were now fitted with new prosthetics which they struggled to accept and which they felt could never replace their original appendages. This feeling of now possessing a new limb, not their own, which kept them from returning to their previous work and supporting their families is taken to the extreme in the film by also giving Orlac the urges of a murderer. But this too would speak to the disabled men in the audience who, unable to go back to their previous lives, were no doubt struggling with feelings of impotent rage against the world.

The Phantom of the Opera was one of many adaptations of Gaston Leroux's 1910 novel *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, and has always enjoyed success, but in the 1920s it was another film which offered representation to the disfigured members of the audience, along with their families who were also dealing with that plight. When Eric (Lon Chaney), the titular Phantom, warns Christine (Mary Philbin) to never look behind his mask, it brings to mind the isolation with which the disfigured soldiers demanded to be treated, keeping their injuries secret even from their spouses, who now struggled to reconnect with the men who had come back from the war changed, not just physically, but also psychologically.

But while the protagonist of *The Hands of Orlac* was struggling with his murderous urges and therefore morally undefined, and Eric from *The Phantom of the Opera* was the avowed antagonist, in *The Man Who Laughs*, an adaptation of the novel by Victor Hugo *L'Homme qui rit* (1869), Gwynplaine (Conrad Veidt) was an openly sympathetic protagonist. Disfigured by order of King James II as punishment for his father's misdeeds, he goes through life feeling like the smile carved upon his face, which brings him deep shame, makes him unworthy of his

lady love (Mary Philbin). He makes his living by turning his disfigurement into a spectacle, attracting crowds and nobility to watch him perform at fairs. This must have resonated deeply with the audience of disabled soldiers. They too had suffered disfigurement and amputation by the orders of their countries' governments, and they too now felt like a spectacle to be pointed at, laughed at, and pitied, and now they finally had onscreen representation, one that ended on a happy note, with Gwynplaine being brought back to his rightful place in society and winning his lady's love, giving hope to the audience.

- **1930s**

If it is true that horror cycles emerge in times of social stress, taking advantage of the audience's fears and anxieties, it then comes as no surprise that the Great Depression gave rise to the Universal cycle of horror classics (Carroll 208), such as *Dracula* (Freund & Browning, 1931), *Frankenstein* (Whale, 1931), *The Mummy* (Freund, 1932), and *King Kong* (Schoedsack & Cooper, 1933). All of these films share the glaring theme of the foreignness of their monsters – *Dracula* came from Transylvania, *Frankenstein* from Germany, the *Mummy* from Egypt, and *King Kong* from a fictional island in the Indian Ocean – and Wood interprets this thus:

The foreignness of horror in the '30s can be interpreted in two ways: simply, as a means of disavowal (horror exists, but is un-American), and, more interestingly and unconsciously, as a means of locating horror as a “country of the mind,” as a psychological state: the films set on uncharted (and usually nameless) islands lend themselves particularly to interpretation of this kind. (Wood 92)

Horror as something un-American is a direct consequence of the politics of the 1930s. American people struggled to return to normalcy following World War I and the Spanish flu – “Return to Normalcy” was, in fact, President Warren G. Harding’s slogan during his bid to election, and was comprised of the tenets of deregulation, civic engagement, and isolationism. Monsters were threats that came to disrupt this normalcy, and they represented real world threats as perceived by the audience, more overtly embodying their enemies in World War I but also the over four million immigrants who had flocked to Staten Island following the end of the war. Dracula, in particular, hailing from Eastern Europe, preyed upon the fears of the American audiences that the newly arrived Slavic immigrants “would not fully embrace their identity as ‘Americans,’ which would lead to a balkanization of America.” (Phillips 16)

But these monsters were also, in cases such as with Frankenstein’s creature and King Kong, sympathetic characters. Even as they horrified the audience, they also engendered a self-recognition with their alienated status, their victimhood at the hands of circumstances beyond their control which relegated them outside of the bounds of society through no fault of their own. This resonated with the audience, as many of them were now unemployed (Carroll 207-208) and no longer felt as if they were functioning members of society. They felt betrayed by the circumstances which kept them from caring for their own families and living a dignified life.

Post-War anxieties, namely the hatred towards their enemies, the fear of immigration, and the consequences of the Great Depression seem to have been the main cultural fears explored by the most successful films of the 1930s.

- **1940s**

Many critics considered the 1940s as just a rehash of the themes of the 1930s, with Tudor saying that the war period “simply extends the patterns already established in the 1930s” (1989, 34) and Brosnan going so far as to say that the 1940s’ horror films “were but pale shadows of the original version produced a decade earlier” (73), no doubt referring to the numerous sequels produced in this decade, *Frankenstein* alone boasted several, such as *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman* (Neill, 1943), *The Ghost of Frankenstein* (Kenton, 1944), and *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (Barton, 1948).

With half of their audience away at war, the studios were left with a mostly female audience, and this is reflected in the most notable films of the time period, films such as *Rebecca* (Hitchcock, 1940), *Suspicion* (Hitchcock, 1941), and *Gaslight* (Cukor, 1944) all share a gothic core: they all concern young, inexperienced women who hastily marry a man who seems too good to be true after a whirlwind courtship. Once married, and after the couple retires to an isolated mansion, a series of uncanny incidents take place leading the heroine to suspect that her new husband is not who she thought him to be and may, in fact, be trying to kill her (Waldman 30). This is no coincidence; it was a thinly veiled representation of something with which the female audiences of the 1940s were dealing with. The countless pre-war marriages, undertaken so hastily before their sweethearts could go off to war, left many American women feeling like they had married a stranger – a core motif in gothic fiction – and this, compounded with the stress of separation and subsequent reunion, led to an all-time-high rate of divorces in 1946 (30-31).

Cat People (Tourneur, 1942) deviates from the basic plot of these other films but is just as relatable to the 1940s’ audiences as they were. In it, Irena, a young fashion illustrator (Simone Simon) meets a handsome marine engineer (Oliver Reed) and, after a quick courtship just as had taken place in *Rebecca*, *Suspicion*, and *Gaslight*, they are married. But where this

film deviates from the others is in placing the horror within Irena. She is a cat woman, able to transform and prey upon unsuspecting victims. She stalks her husband's assistant (Jane Randolph) with whom her husband is cultivating a burgeoning relationship and who, unlike her, is a perfectly normal human woman, content in her role. At a time when women were entering the workforce to replace the men away at war, many women were finding out they enjoyed the freedom which independent paying work afforded them, and the Marriage Bars, "the stated policies of firms, school districts, governments, and other organizations not to hire married women and to fire single women upon marriage" (Goldin 743), which had been in place all the way up to the war years, suddenly vanished. Women were realising that they were perhaps not just what they had been raised to be: wives, mothers, homemakers. They could be just as good as any man.

Irena's strange nature, reviled by her husband who wanted a docile wife, must have struck a chord with the female audiences, even if the film ends to Irena's detriment, with her husband choosing to marry his assistant in the end. But horror will more often than not choose to uphold the status quo: the monster is always defeated, and horror films invariably end with a return to the version of normalcy which is upheld by the times they were made in.

- **1950s**

This post-war period was markedly different from the one in the 1930s. Sympathy for the monster was an absent concept, the monsters were now invaders come to disrupt the protagonists' way of life. Films like *Them!* (Douglas, 1954), *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (Siegel, 1956), *The Blob* (Yeaworth & Doughten, 1958), and *It! The Terror from Beyond Space* (Cahn, 1958) all share a core plot of invaders from outer space either outright attacking an American town or, more insidiously, in the case of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, infiltrating

the population, replacing friends and family with seemingly identical copies devoid of human emotion. The message was not subtle to the audiences living through the Cold War: these invaders are stand-ins for the dreadfully anticipated communist invasion (Carroll 208) and fell under the wider umbrella of the Red Scare in which the propaganda machine worked tirelessly to instill the fear in the population that communist agents could be anywhere and be anyone. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* is again the most openly fearmongering among these with “the aliens’ lack of emotions and emphasis on pure rationality, as well as their compulsive desire to convert and expand, play[ing] on Western stereotypes about communist de-individualization” (Leeder 39).

But America was not the only place where the post-war period influenced film. After the United States dropped two atomic bombs in Japan, they were followed by an American military occupation force which dismantled Japanese society and family (Chon 65). The occupation purportedly ended in 1952, but American nuclear testing did not, and in September of that same year the United States dropped a bomb one thousand times more powerful than the one dropped on Hiroshima in the Marshall Islands, and a Japanese tuna boat, the *Fukuryu Maru*, was hit by the fallout, with the crew developing acute radiation sickness. Japanese protests against nuclear testing erupted when the United States government paid the widows less than a measly \$4000, reviving the nation’s interest in their own nuclear victims. Toho Studios, sensing the Japanese public’s new fears and anxieties, went to work on filming the first Japanese kaiju film, *Godzilla* (Honda, 1954). (Chon 65-66)

It is interesting to note that while in the United States radiation bred super-heroes – Spider-Man was bitten by a radioactive spider, the Hulk gained his powers after a gamma bomb blast, Daredevil gained his powers after coming into contact with toxic radioactive waste – this is not the case with Japanese films of the era. In Japan, nuclear energy created monsters, such as the above mentioned *Godzilla*, a pre-historic creature, empowered by nuclear radiation – a

clear response against the devastation of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and it is no coincidence that Mothra, a gigantic silk moth and a benign protector of Japan, is its enemy.

- **1960s**

In the 1960s there was an unexpected return to the gothic with *Psycho* (Hitchcock, 1960) and *Carnival of Souls* (Harvey, 1962), and both of these can be read as a reaction to the growing Women's Rights Movement. As Pierceson tells us,

[Second Wave feminism] was focused on critiquing the patriarchal, or male-dominated, institutions and cultural practices throughout society. Challenging and changing entrenched gender roles, especially in the family and the workplace, was central to the feminist critique. Reproductive rights emerged as a central focus of the movement, as feminists argued that women could not be fully liberated and free to control their lives without complete control of their reproductive futures. (69)

In *Psycho*, a sexually emancipated Marion Crane (Janet Leigh), a real estate secretary, steals money from her employer so that she can get married to her lover and, as the plot goes, is brutally punished for the transgression by Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins), who murders her in the infamous shower scene. The message is clear: women are to be passive under the patriarchy. But there is also another level of cultural anxiety at play here: Marion Crane and her lover are unable, as they would have been in past times in American history, to easily settle down and begin a new life of married bliss. And many Americans in the 1960s were experiencing the difficulties of just such an endeavour. Following the post-war economic boom, the newly returned GIs and their wives flocked to the suburbs in search of a better life

away from the dangerous and fast-paced urban centres. But suburban life proved to be deeply isolating, tearing families from the communities they had been integrated in and, furthermore, it proved to be highly expensive: the suburbs were distantly located from the workplace the men had to commute to every day, and an automobile proved essential for the 1960s' family, though a draining expense in the families' budgets. Audiences would have related not only to the isolation present at the Bates Motel, but also to Marion's desperation which led her to steal from her employer. (Phillips 66-68)

In *Carnival of Souls* another emancipated woman is punished for her transgressions. Mary Henry (Candace Hilligoss), a church organist who insists on saying she has no interest in organised religion and is only playing for the money which allows her to lead an independent life, repeatedly refuses any amorous advances from her would-be romantic partner John (Sidney Berger). This independence and refusal to bow to the patriarchal instituted roles for women as wives and mothers is punished with the reveal that Mary has, in fact, been dead the whole time, having perished in a car crash at the beginning of the film when she and her friends had been daringly flirting with a group of boys. Wood says it best of all:

The violence-against-women movies have generally been explained as a hysterical response to 1960s and 1970s feminism: the male spectator enjoys a sadistic revenge on women who refuse to slot neatly and obligingly into his patriarchally predetermined view of "the way things should naturally be." (223)

But it is not only a backlash against women that characterised this period in film. The 1960s were a time of social revolution, as Phillips tells us:

[T]he dreams of a youth revolution—motivated by opposition to the war in Vietnam and embracing tolerance, free love, and common property—had already been coming apart. The assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (...) was followed just a few months later by the assassination of (...) Senator Robert Kennedy, the brother and close ally of slain President John Kennedy, seemed to sum up the rapid and violent dissolution of the decade's movements toward peaceful cultural revolution. (...) The ugliness unraveling the sixties counterculture was paralleled by the growing prominence of a film *Variety* called an "unrelieved orgy of sadism". (81-82)

And no film better exemplifies this than *Night of the Living Dead* (Romero, 1968), where two siblings, Barbra (Judith O'Dea) and Johnny (Russell Streiner) unwittingly come into contact with a horde of the living dead. Barbra joins other survivors, but the news is grim: an army of cannibalistic reanimated corpses is sweeping across the United States, and the film does not shy away from showing the group's battle for survival in gore-filled detail. This played right into the audience's fears as, according to Phillips:

The American television news was bloodier and more graphic than ever before, and citizens were confronted with the horrific images of war as never before. Images of war dead, bombings, napalm, political assassinations, and violent protests filled the American media, promoting the view that America was on the edge of a violent cultural civil war. (89)

Reynold Humphries goes so far as to say that the film "constitutes a full-scale criticism of American values" (113).

Another film which was a sharp criticism of American values – namely its most basic core establishment: the American family – was *Rosemary's Baby* (Polanski, 1968). Rosemary

(Mia Farrow) moves with her aspiring actor husband Guy (John Cassavetes) into a large apartment building, the Bramford, which supposedly harbours a dark past linked to witchcraft and murder. Their elderly neighbours annoy Rosemary, but Guy insistently fraternises with them and, as the film reveals, they turn out to be part of a coven of satanists who, having made a deal with Guy, have Rosemary forcibly impregnated by Satan. At the end of the film she gives birth to the titular baby: the Antichrist. As will be discussed at length further in this work, the rise into the public consciousness of the foetus, whose pictures were now becoming a weapon in the hands of the pro-life movement, established it as a horror staple, as Hoffman says, “[t]he hostile, monstrous foetus in horror is a powerful figurative backlash against the inundation of purportedly helpless foetuses and the potentially oppressive ripple effects of their ‘silent screams.’ ” (242)

Sharret defines *Rosemary's Baby* as a “satire of marriage, the family, organized religion, and capitalism” (60), and Wood defines horror film satanists as “the nightmare surrounding—and annihilating—the American dream” (72). And it is for the fulfilment of the American Dream that Guy enters into an agreement with the satanists – he longs to achieve success as an actor and is willing to betray the oaths he had made to his wife when they entered matrimony to achieve this goal, in effect destroying the family in pursuit of money and fame.

The 1960s’ horror films can be described as a direct backlash of the revolutionary spirit of the decade, from the punishment dealt against the women protagonists who dared to defy the patriarchy, to the exploitation of the civil discontent brewing in society, to the criticism of the crumbling American Dream.

- **1970s**

The satanist theme was still going strong in the 1970s with films such as *The Exorcist* (Friedkin, 1973), *The Omen* (Donner, 1976), *Carrie* (Palma, 1976), and *The Amityville Horror* (Rosenberg, 1979) proving to be huge successes. But what is interesting in these first three films in particular is the inclusion of the new trope of the evil child. The 1970s were the decade when Baby Boomers were beginning to become parents, and their parental anxieties were strongly derived from what they perceived as their arrested growth (Douglas 304). With the Cold War going strong, the Vietnam War claiming the best of their youth, and rising divorce rates threatening the cohesion of the nuclear family, the fiction of the time mirrors how this generation was burdened in their family lives and felt the incoming doom of a future that seemed anything but bright. Furthermore, as Douglas tells us:

[In] family horror, child and parent have frighteningly more and less in common; because each is unable to progress if the other does not, they need and fail each other to a freshly painful degree. Parents and children traditionally expect to read their future in each other's eyes. (304)

These new enfants terribles cropping up in horror films were a potent symbol of the bleak future that Baby Boomers anticipated.

Deviating from the satanist theme, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (Hooper, 1974) and *Halloween* (Carpenter, 1978) were two other massively successful films of the 1970s, ushering in the Final Girl trope.

In *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, final girl Sally Hardesty (Marilyn Burns), her brother and their friends, go check on reports of vandalism perpetrated upon Sally's grandfather's

grave, only to be tormented and killed by the Sawyers, a family of cannibalistic slaughterhouse workers. The Sawyer family itself is very clearly a parody of the crumbling American family. As they sit down to dinner, they assemble much like in Norman Rockwell's famous painting *Freedom from Want* (1942), but the theme of wholesome family togetherness is spoiled by the Sawyer family itself: a crossdressing Leatherface serves human remains for dinner, and the desiccated corpse of the grandfather is propped up at the dinner table but proves to still have enough life left in him to slurp Sally's blood off her finger.

There is also another angle to explore in this tableau: that of class division. The Sawyer family is a disenfranchised assembly of slaughterhouse workers, used and abused by the system. Wood describes them as representing "an exploited and debased proletariat revenging itself on capitalist society" (61), and our protagonists, clearly affluent teenagers from the city, are preyed upon by them, with Sally being left as the only survivor.

The disintegration of the American family is also a central theme in *Halloween*, with Michael Meyers (Nick Castle) as another enfant terrible who kills his elder sister (who had notably been shirking her babysitting duties in favour of sharing an intimate moment with her boyfriend) and is committed to a psychiatric institution. Fifteen years later he breaks out and recommences his murder spree.

Michael Meyers' victims are invariably sexually promiscuous teenagers, but Laurie (Jamie Lee Curtis), the final girl, while still evincing some interest in the opposite sex, is committed to her role as a babysitter. The slasher genre seems to, much like other earlier horror films, punish women for being sexually liberated, and the final girl seems to be mostly virginal. As Welsh puts it, "[v]irginal or, at the very least, sexually unavailable, the Final Girl survives, overcoming the central antagonist by virtue of her purity" (763). Harrington slightly disagrees but reaffirms the notion of sexually liberated women being punished for seeking pleasure:

[S]urvival comes less from the protections offered by the smooth, closed and untainted mantle of virginity and more from the imperative to be Not Like The Others, where the others are women who have sex, who diverge from traditional expectations of monogamy and domestic exchange, who pursue pleasure and sexual self-expression, or who are otherwise marked as threatening or unworthy.” (45)

The pervading theme in all of these films is, of course, disillusionment with the core institution of the American family and with the entire ideal of domesticity (Wood 68). And this disillusionment seems to have turned the American Dream into the American Nightmare, where the sense of paralysis brought on by the constant barrage of violence in the news and in society left the population feeling demoralised and adrift, much like survivors in a horror film (Carrol 214).

- **1980s**

In the 1980s' horror films there was also a growing preoccupation with the deterioration of the nuclear family, reflecting the universal fear of the destruction of this most basic of bonds, especially in the turbulent days of that decade. This is particularly significant in Stephen King's works, and, according to him, reflected his preoccupation of what his increased drug and alcohol abuse was doing to his family (*On Writing* 95). We can see this disintegration of the nuclear family in *Pet Sematary* (Lambert, 1989) where a father attempts to bring back his son from the death which had destroyed the family, a concern which is also later explored in the television mini-series *IT* (Wallace, 1990), where a paedophilic monster clown kills the family's youngest child. But it is in *The Shining* (Kubrick, 1980) that this disillusionment with family life reached its apex. Though Kubrick took some liberties, the film is based on Stephen King's

book of the same name (1977) which had, in turn, been inspired by Robert Marasco's book *Burnt Offerings* (1973) which was also adapted to film, though less successfully.

In Kubrick's *The Shining*, Jack Torrance (Jack Nicholson) accepts a job as a winter caretaker in a hotel with a troubled history. Not only was it built on Native-American burial grounds, it was also the site of numerous murders and suicides, including those of the former caretaker, who murdered his wife and children before killing himself. Jack is not the usual upstanding and sympathetic horror film protagonist: he is revealed soon after to have previously physically harmed his very young son Danny (Danny Lloyd) in a drunken spur of violence, and his attitude towards his wife Wendy (Shelley Duvall) does not fall short of emotional abuse. While King made it clear in the book that Jack was being increasingly puppeteered by the hotel – Poger describes him as “the creature of the hotel, the pursuer of the success (and decay) of the American Dream” (50) – Kubrick makes things more ambiguous, leaving the film open to the mundane interpretation that Jack was a run-of-the-mill narcissistic alcoholic domestic and child abuser who was on the verge of becoming a family annihilator. It is no coincidence that the feminist movement had, in the 1970s, drawn close attention to the plight of domestic violence. As Hornbeck says:

[I]t is important to note that both the novel and the film came at the end of a decade when the recognition of domestic violence as a social problem was still relatively new. Sociologists and the medical and legal professions did not take “wife beating” seriously until the mid-1970s’, when the women’s movement brought public attention to spousal abuse. Child abuse and “battered-child syndrome” had been “discovered” as social problems only slightly earlier, in the 1960s. (690-691)

Wood reiterates this point by saying that “[i]t is not, I think, irrelevant to point out that in the United States there is an active and developing children’s-liberation movement, closely linked to women’s liberation” (61-62).

When it comes to the hotel, there is also an argument to be made of an enclosed, domestic space being the site of violence against women and/or children, as had been seen already in *The Amityville Horror*, where the patriarch of the family, corrupted by the house, turned against his wife and children.

The attention drawn to violence in the domestic sphere in horror films is extremely culturally significant. Family drama films had already dealt with this subject and elicited the audience’s sympathy and pity for the victims, but the horror genre, by its very nature, allows for the audience’s identification with the victims, permitting them to experience the fear that abusers strike into their families, prompting these horror films to enact change in how society views and deals with domestic and child abuse (Hornbeck 691).

Furthermore, the hotel stands, as well, as a symbol of colonialism. Kubrick takes his time informing the audience that while building the hotel they had to repel attacks from Native-Americans for the theft of their holy ground, and even when the Torrance family arrives, the hotel is decorated with a myriad of Native-American artifacts. The hotel’s history is, from its inception, one of violence and aggression, compounding toxic masculinity with the unbridled violence of genocide and colonialism.

Coasting on the success of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Halloween*, slasher films began to crop up in this decade, such as *Friday the 13th* (Cunningham, 1980), and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (Craven, 1984). Kathy White reiterates the theory that the “increase in male violence against women in R-rated movies [is] a male reaction against the women’s movement” (23), and Faludi goes so far as to call this decade, in which Reagan was elected, conservatism

ran rampant, and Evangelical Christianity was progressively encroaching itself into the nation's politics, as "The Backlash Decade", which "produced one long, painful, and unremitting campaign to thwart women's progress" (461).

There was also a new cultural fear to explore in this decade in the form of the new plague: AIDS. AIDS and its impact in 1980s' society will be further delved into in this work, but *The Fly* (Cronenberg, 1986) explores the overwhelming fear of disease and the rupture of the body's boundaries that was overwhelming the collective consciousness of the time. Seth Brundle (Jeff Goldblum), in an attempt to invent teleportation, gets his DNA mixed-up with that of a housefly. What follows is a spectacle of body horror in which Brundle is afflicted by "oozing pustules, loss of teeth and fingernails, skin lesions, tumour-like inflammations, and necrosis of the tissue[s] (...) Cronenberg allows audiences to participate in a ritual of grieving and suffering, perhaps allowing them to experience their own mortality or fear of illness by proxy" (Saint-Cyr 457), at a time when images of emaciated AIDS patients, covered in Kaposi lesions, were inundating the news.

The nation's struggle to deal with the fallout of the Vietnam War is something that will be further discussed in this work, but one successful horror film which capitalised on this phenomenon was *Predator* (McTiernan, 1987). A group of Vietnam War veterans are called to rescue a foreign cabinet minister and his aide from insurgents. This being a Vietnam War allegory, the group is instead betrayed, with the facts of the mission being that the group was meant to stop a planned Soviet-backed invasion. The veterans are appalled at the deception, unwilling to continue to be exploited by the U.S. government and drawn into the extended Cold War conflict. Their new foe, the Predator (Kevin Peter Hall) is an obvious stand-in for the Viet Cong guerrillas that the U.S. soldiers had faced in the Vietnam War, with its ability to camouflage itself into its surroundings and to easily outmatch the heavily armed soldiers. That the film ends in a bittersweet note, with Dutch (Arnold Schwarzenegger) as the only survivor,

having lost all his companions-in-arms, is an apt conclusion that parallels the Vietnam War veterans' experiences.

- **1990s**

Serial killers have always had the general public in the grip of morbid curiosity since the times of Jack the Ripper. But the television news of the 1990s, compounded by the booming popularity of tabloid newspapers, shone a spotlight on them as never before. In the late 1980s, Richard Ramirez, dubbed the Night Stalker, had been apprehended and his horrific crimes appalled America. The horrendous murders committed by Jeffrey Dahmer, who was finally apprehended in 1996, equally shocked the public. Meanwhile, Joseph James DeAngelo (the Golden State Killer) and Gary Ridgway (the Green River Killer) continued spreading fear among the population with no end in sight – they were each only apprehended in 2018 and 2001, respectively. Adding to the growing narrative that no one was safe from the violence of unknown killers, the murder of JonBenét Ramsey in 1996 brought this fear into every American household. It is no wonder, then, that the 1990s were a prolific decade for films about serial killers, *The Silence of the Lambs* (Demme, 1991) and *Seven* (Fincher, 1995) being the most successful of them. Simpson explains their popularity in the following way:

The 'serial killer' (...) is a fantastic confabulation of Gothic/romantic villain, literary vampire and werewolf, detective and 'pulp' fiction conceits, film noir outsider, frontier outlaw, folkloric threatening figure, and nineteenth century pseudo-sociological conception of criminal types given contemporary plausibility.
(15)

And Phillips expands on this by saying that “[w]ith *Silence [of the Lambs]*, the horrors that had moved from Transylvania to the Gothic suburbs of *Halloween* emerged into the complicated and politically tense world of reality” (153).

The pervasiveness of media did more than just shine a light on serial killers: every facet of modern-day life now had the potential to become a spectacle which would bring untold fame to anyone who caught the attention of the media. *Scream* (Craven, 1996) capitalised on this concept, with the teenaged killers Billy Loomis (Skeet Ulrich) and Stu Macher (Matthew Lillard) openly taking inspiration for their crime spree from other films. As Stu himself informs the audience, “Watch a few movies, take a few notes.” (1:31:56). The line between media spectacle and reality is severely blurred, and the characters seem acutely aware of the mediated nature of their actions (Phillips 176). A character from the film, Randy (Jamie Kennedy), who is a video store clerk, even informs the audience about the formula of slasher films: “There’s a formula to it! A very simple formula! (...) 1. sex equals death, 2. drugs and alcohol lead to death, and 3. never say ‘I’ll be right back.’” (1:13:05), and Billy Loomis, while comforting the film’s final girl Sydney (Neve Campbell) goes as far as to tell her that life “[is] all a movie. It’s all... one great big movie. Only you can’t pick your genre” (1:10:53). And in the end, though defeated, the killers achieve the fame they so eagerly sought, as in the morning after the killings television reporters swarm the town eager to report the murders, showing that the media and the killers are, in a way, symbiotic (Phillips 176).

The period of the Reagan/Bush administration was also a time of deep racial conflict. The crack epidemic in conjunction with the displacement of the lower-income, predominantly non-white, population from inner-city neighbourhoods, following Reagan’s drastic cuts in public housing funds, was being played up by the media, preying on the white middle-class anxiety over the racial diversification of suburban enclaves (Briefel & Ngai 73). It is in this context that *Candyman* (Rose, 1992) breaks into the horror genre, plundering the audience’s

fears of an impending race war. The film also deals with America's troubled relationship with the slavery of its not-so-distant past: Candyman (Tony Todd) had been the son of a slave who, against all odds, had amassed a considerable fortune in post-Civil War America by designing a device to mass-produce shoes. His son grew up with access to the best schools and grew into a prodigious artist whose skills in portraiture were sought after even among white society. Inevitably, he fell in love with the daughter of a white wealthy landowner and died for this transgression, being lynched on the grounds of Cabrini-Green, his body forcibly turned into a hive for bees by the lynching mob. In 1992 he still haunts Cabrini-Green, murdering anyone who dares call him by name. The message to the audience was clear: the past atrocities against African Americans have not been forgotten and can still be avenged, and at a time of turbulent social and political unrest, the film was a massive success.

The satanic panic of past decades had a resurgence in *The Craft* (Fleming, 1996), where a group of high schoolers' pursuit of witchcraft for female empowerment has severely negative repercussions, as well as in *The Devil's Advocate* (Hackford, 1997) where a young attorney (Keanu Reeves) has to choose between defending the indefensible and succumbing to the forces of evil, or choosing the path of righteousness, no doubt a response to the sensationalistic trials of the era, such as the trial of O. J. Simpson in 1994, and the growing concern with paedophilia which started being reported more and more in the media and gave rise to the Stranger Danger campaigns.

In the 1990s a new emerging revolution was also taking the world by storm: the World Wide Web opened up to the public in 1991 and changed the world irrevocably. Every conceivable information was now a mere click away, and people were becoming connected to each other as never before. Technology was also keeping apace: cellphones and handheld cameras became commonplace; it was this that allowed the breakthrough of a new type of horror: the found footage.

The Blair Witch Project (Sánchez & Myrick, 1999), which advertised itself as being based on true found footage filmed by three missing young film makers, was the first film to employ a marketing plan based on the internet, which soon went viral. A website complete with police reports was created and it received upwards of 160 million hits before the film was even out. The film was a huge success and, more importantly, heralded in an age where the new technology led to the democratization of filmmaking (Lyons) and, more insidiously, it predicted how technology would permeate every aspect of modern life, foretelling the ubiquitousness of social media.

One of the most influential films of the decade was, of course, *The Sixth Sense* (Shyamalan, 1999). At first glance *The Sixth Sense* seems to deal with the biological fear of death and what comes beyond, as well as the universal grief felt with the loss of a loved one, but what made it possible for the late 1990s' audiences to connect with it was that, at its core, the film deals with how lonely, isolated, and alienated Cole (Haley Joel Osment) was and how no one believed him or attempted to understand him. In a growing social revolution with the advent of social media, it seemed to audiences of the time that it had become more and more difficult to meaningfully communicate amidst a sense of growing isolation and disconnect, in spite of the speed at which one could now communicate online.

- **2000s**

Though they could not be more wildly different, both *The Others* (Amenábar, 2001) and *The Ring* (Verbinski, 2002) revisit many of the themes explored in *The Sixth Sense*. In both films single mothers struggle against the threat of death to protect their children, amidst increasing isolation. While *The Others* is a gothic film in which a family's matriarch turns family annihilator in a crumbling mist-surrounded great house after her husband fails to return

from the Great War, *The Ring*, a remake of *Ringu* (Nakata, 1998), follows a single mother whose partner abandoned her once she decided to carry her pregnancy to term. Both deal with the concept of a broken home and reflect concerns about the loss of the traditional family structure (Leeder 78).

But the decade's most impactful event – 9/11 – also made its influence known in the films of the time. *Hostel* (Roth, 2005) and *Saw* (Wan, 2004) were both gore-filled spectacles which enjoyed success in the charged climate of the early 2000s. As Leeder says:

Like many of the films of its cycle, *Hostel* seems to open itself up to both reactionary (the non-US world is full of decadence and violence) and progressive (Americans are bumblers abroad, and suffer from torture instead of inflicting it) readings; in any event it is as much an artefact of the age of Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib, when debates about torture were constantly in the news. (83)

And regarding *Saw*, Sharrett also makes the connection with the political climate of the early 2000s:

Here we have the [Saw] franchise's central conceit: an appreciation of life must be harshly taught in this day and age, an idea certainly not displeasing to the Puritans, and perfectly appropriate to the age of George W. Bush, wherein the US reasserted its idea that nations must be destroyed for their own good (69-70)

The threat of an impending invasion also made itself known in a spate of highly successful zombie films such as *Resident Evil* (Anderson, 2002), *28 Days Later* (Boyle, 2002), and *REC* (Plaza & Balagueró, 2007), and the pervasive sense that you were not safe, not even

in the sanctity of your own home, was explored by films such as *À l'intérieur* (Bustillo & Maury, 2007), and *The Strangers* (Bertino, 2008).

The most successful films of the 2000s clearly dealt with the paranoia resulting from 9/11 and the extremely violent nature of the invasions and human rights violations that followed, and its influence continued to be felt for times to come.

- **2010s**

The horror films of the 2010s' rehashed many of the themes of past decades. *The VVitch* (Eggers, 2015) revisits the disintegration of the nuclear family but it also showcases the dangers of puritanical religious beliefs, something that resonated with an America deeply divided between a centrist left wing and an increasingly evangelical further and further far-right wing.

The legacy inherited from 9/11 kept making itself known in films such as *The Purge* (DeMonaco, 2013), *Train to Busan* (Sang-ho, 2016), and *A Quiet Place* (Krasinski, 2018). While each film explores different themes, they all deal with a reality in which the government is no longer something you can rely on during the disintegration of society.

The recession which followed 9/11 brought on the crash of the housing market, and anxieties concerning real estate made themselves felt in films such as *Insidious* (Wan, 2010) and *The Conjuring* (Wan, 2013), in which families are unable to leave haunted houses despite the danger they pose to them (Leeder 84).

The rising cost of life made it more difficult for families to keep the standard of living they had enjoyed in previous decades, with some having to take on more than one job just to keep their families afloat. This imbalance between work and family life, and the sense that this created a greater divide within familial relationships, especially between parents and their

children, contributed to the success of films such as *The Babadook* (Kent, 2014) and *Hereditary* (Aster, 2018), where parenting anxieties are revisited in horrifying ways.

Jordan Peele emerged in this decade with *Get Out* (2017) and *Us* (2019). The experiences of African Americans had been poorly explored in horror since *Candyman* but *Get Out* finally placed African Americans as rightful protagonists in the horror genre. The critics bizarrely struggled to classify the film, arguing that it was a comedy, but Peele lashed back at these musings by tweeting “‘Get Out’ is a documentary.” And in a very real sense, *Get Out* uses the horror genre to expose the glaring racism which is poorly concealed in a professedly liberal and post-racial America (Landsberg 2).

Peele went on to explore other historical African American themes with *Us*, in which it is revealed that, through nightmarish experiments, a series of doppelgängers of the population have been created. African Americans’ poor experiences with the medical and scientific establishments have been well documented, ranging from scientific racism, to the advances in gynaecology achieved through the torture and exploitation of female slaves by James Marion Sims, the “father of gynaecology” (Holland), to the abysmal *Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male*, a study conducted between 1932 and 1972 by the United States Public Health Service and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on a group of nearly 400 African Americans who were forcefully infected with syphilis and did not have their diagnosis disclosed so the progression of the disease could be supposedly studied (Brandt 21), even though the effects of syphilis had been known throughout the medical establishment since the 15th century. African American history is rife with abuse by the scientific establishment condoned or even ordered by the government, and Peele explored this in *Us*.

- **2020s**

While they are very far from dominating Hollywood, women and minority directors and screenwriters have been given more opportunities in this decade, allowing new perspectives to flourish in horror films. Women directors such as Jennifer Kent, Julia Ducournau, and Ana Lily Amirpour, and their commercial and critical success seem to be giving rise to a new batch of films where the female point-of-view and women's issues are more readily explored.

Even films which are not directed by women are now exploring women's viewpoints and women's issues. In Whannel's *The Invisible Man* (2020) we revisit the basic outline set out by H. G. Well's novel of the same name which had been previously adapted to the screen numerous times, updated into true horror from a perspective of domestic violence: Cecilia Kass (Elisabeth Moss), the protagonist, has struggled to escape from an abusive relationship, and even when she achieves her goal she is tormented by her ex, who, being a scientist, has figured out how to become invisible. In a society where violence against women makes the evening news and where women who kill their partners in self-defence are still given heavier sentences than male domestic violence perpetrators routinely get, this exploration of a violent male abuser's invisibility speaks to the audience, reflecting how domestic violence remains a mostly invisibly disease in society, ignored by the very authorities who should be guaranteeing the victim's safety.

The theme of violence against women is further explored by other successful films of this decade, such as *The Night House* (Bruckner, 2020), in which Beth (Rebecca Hall) attempts to go on with her life after the unexpected suicide of her husband. The house he built for her is haunted not only by her memories of him, but also by uncanny optical illusions brought on by the house's peculiar architecture, which hint at something more sinister within the remains of her marriage. The discovery that her husband was a violent serial killer, preying on women

who resembled her to subdue his ultimate desire to kill her, is given a supernatural twist which in no way diminishes the atrocities that her husband perpetrated.

Outside the Hollywood machine, but still successful due to the streaming platform Netflix, Anvita Dutt's *Bulbbul* (2020) also explores the theme of violence against women, this time in India, a country going through what has been termed a rape epidemic. The fact that rape is the fourth most common crime in the country, and that cases like the Suryanelli rape case and the 2012 Delhi gang rape and murder have been incredibly mediatised, along with the dismissal of sexual violence against women as being the woman's fault by prominent Indian male politicians, prompted *Bulbbul*'s success. In the film, Bulbbul (Tripti Dimri) a child bride – another important cultural blight in South-Asian societies – is a victim of her husband's jealous abuse which manifests itself in physical violence, leaving her disabled. While recovering from her injuries she is raped by her brother-in-law. Her ordeal, however, brings about a supernatural change in Bulbbul, and she is given the power to hunt and kill all the men who abuse the women in the nearby village, giving hope of restitution and revenge to all the victims in the audience.

Mimi Cave's *Fresh* (2022), allies the theme of violence against women with the distrust brought on by class divisions and the deepening gap between a middle class fast losing its buying power and the uber-rich. Noa (Daisy Edgar-Jones), is a woman searching for love in dating apps, increasingly disillusioned by the unsuitable men she seems to attract. When she meets Steve (Sebastian Stan), he seems almost too good to be true, and in fact he is, as he turns out to be keeping a bevy of women imprisoned in his house, harvesting their meat to sell as a costly delicacy to the wealthy elite. While this distrust between classes is nothing new, Covid-19 "brought the most severe recession in almost a century, which hurtled millions into poverty

and joblessness and created burgeoning inequality” (Iacurci), so the distrust from the majority of the population against the so-called 1%¹³ is a cultural anxiety that *Fresh* explores.

It is still too soon to adequately analyse the cultural fears and anxieties of this decade, but one thing which this brief foray into some of the most successful horror films from the 1920s to the 2020s made clear is that throughout the history of horror each of the films which enjoyed more success with their audiences always revealed some of the contemporary fears of their time, and it is through this lens that the *Alien Quadrilogy* will be analysed in this work.

¹³ An expression derived from the slogan “We Are the 99%” belonging to the Occupy Movement, a socio-political movement which protested economic inequality, most notably with their Occupy Wall Street protest.

2. Analysis of the Films

2.1 *Alien* (1979)

A free woman in an unfree society will be a monster.

- Angela Carter, *The Sadeian Woman*

Alien (1979) directed by Ridley Scott and written by Dan O'Bannon is the first film in the *Alien Quadrilogy*. The film follows the misadventures of the crew of the towing-ship/refinery USCSS *Nostromo*, comprised of captain Arthur Dallas (Tom Skerrit), executive officer Thomas Kane (John Hurt), warrant officer Ellen Ripley (Sigourney Weaver), medical officer and android in disguise Ash (Ian Holm.), navigator Joan Lambert (Veronica Cartwright), chief engineer Dennis Parker (Yaphet Kotto), and engineering technician Samuel Brett (Harry Dean Stanton) as they are tricked by Weyland-Yutani, the company which employs them, into investigating a distress signal which will bring them into contact with a member of the Xenomorph species, against which they will have to fight for their lives. The version analysed is the Director's Cut.

Alien is purposefully unsettling from the very beginning, setting the tone for the rest of the film. The title is revealed slowly, with each letter being completed with unexpected strokes, contrary to the ordinary flow of English writing.

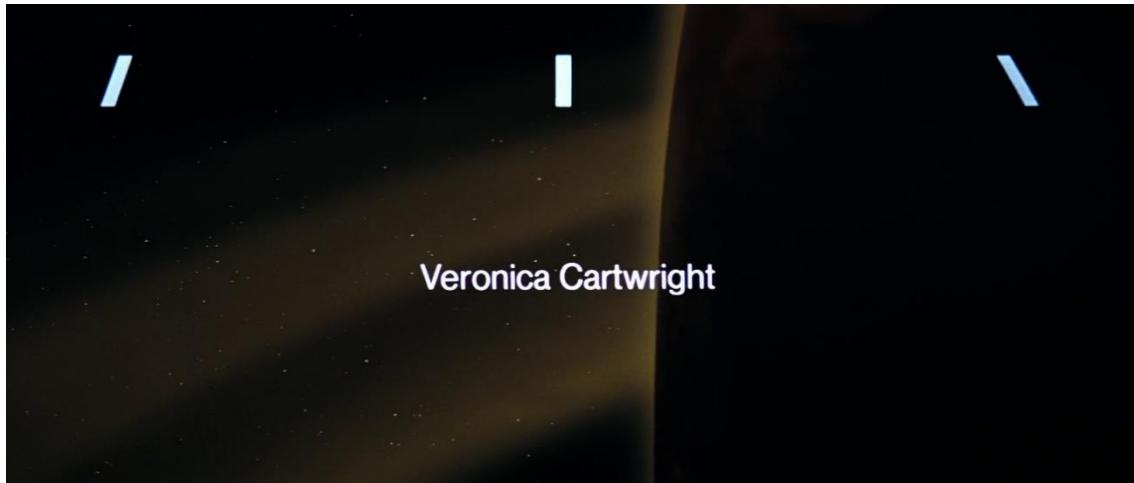


Fig. 1. (00:00:47) Incomplete title looming over Veronica Cartwright's name.

The incomplete title hovers over the cast's names, like a set of jagged teeth ready to bite. The soundtrack, by Jerry Goldsmith, is full of dread, with Goldsmith filtering the music through an echoplex, delaying the chords, and adding an echo to the score. The opening song, combined with the threatening strangeness of the unveiling title, inspires feelings of discomfort, isolation, and emptiness in the audience. Ridley Scott, in the documentary *The Beast Within: The Making of 'Alien'* (2003), describes Jerry Goldsmith's score as "threatening but beautiful" (01:19:48), while Jerry Goldsmith himself, in the same documentary, described it as "weird and strange" (1:21:16).

But it is not only the soundtrack that contributes to the feeling of dread that assails the audience. Jim Shields, the sound editor, made sure that there was never a moment of silence throughout the film, even if it was almost imperceptible to the audience. From variably pitched hums to discrete heartbeats, the sounds are mostly organic in nature and were purposefully added to make the audience uneasy.

The first hour of *Alien* sets the plot, slowly building suspense for the payoff of the second act. It takes a leisurely pace acquainting the viewers with the interior of the *Nostramo*. Even before the crew appears, we get the sense that the ship itself remains active. The computer

terminals spring to life, and a dipping bird is in perpetual motion, signalling the non-static nature of the environment. It is also worth noting that the dipping bird, one of the few marks of non-work-related humanity that exists in the *Nostramo*, bears the Weyland-Yutani company logo, letting the viewer know that the Company encroaches on all aspects of the crew's existence.

When Weyland-Yutani has MU/TH/UR 6000 (commonly referred to as MOTHER), the *Nostramo*'s artificial intelligence computer mainframe, awake the USCSS *Nostramo*'s crew as they approach the moon LV-426, they awaken in a bright, sterile round space. By contrast, the rest of the interiors of the *Nostramo* seem comprised of tunnels, rather than hallways. Every shot shows a visible ceiling so that the viewers are lured into spaces that escape the human powers of perception (Benson-Allot 273). The *Nostramo*'s empty corridors and chambers put the viewers ill-at-ease by confronting them with the indifference of the surroundings to human survival (276). These shots have been recognised architecturally as “structural horror”, a dreadful architecture which confronts the viewers with their human triviality, instilling in them the sense that things are not as they ought to be (269), unsettling the audience by destabilizing their “anthropocentric spatiotemporal expectations” (271).

When MOTHER informs Captain Dallas that he has to be briefed, he adjoins to MOTHER's room which looks like the inside of a brightly lit egg. In *The Beast Within: The Making of 'Alien'*, Ridley Scott refers to that space as “mother's womb” (00:39:22). Interestingly enough, MOTHER, a female figure operating a womb-like vessel, is only available to the captain, the figure of patriarchal authority (Bacon 59).

Everything within the *Nostramo* seems to have a practical effect. Contrasting the film with the sterile representations of spaceships in other science-fiction films, which are brightly aseptic, the *Nostramo*'s interiors, designed by Ron Cobb, seem to be comprised of machinery dripping condensation, dangling chains, and used, near breaking or broken technology, with

some minor biomechanical components, like the openings of the tunnels Captain Dallas explores in search of the Xenomorph, which resemble the iris of an eye opening and closing.

MOTHER informs Dallas that they have intercepted a distress signal which they are contractually obligated to investigate, and Dallas, Kane, and Lambert come upon a derelict alien ship¹⁴, shaped like two gigantic fallopian tubes, united by a uterine cargo bay (Meininger 124).



Fig. 2. (00:24:42) The *Derelict* resembling two fallopian tubes.

Even from a distance, its biomechanical cadaveric nature is discernible. Unlike the USCSS *Nostromo*, which was designed by Ron Cobb, the *Derelict* spaceship, its interiors, and its creatures were all designed by H. R. Giger. The *Derelict's* interior, while bearing a few similarities to the *Nostromo*, with its darkness and dampness, veers away from the practicality of the *Nostromo* into a purely biomechanical environment: the walls resemble a human ribcage and most of its structures appear organic in nature, with Kane remarking that the ship conveys

¹⁴ Henceforth referred to as the *Derelict*.

“the impression of having been grown rather than manufactured” (Foster, *Alien* 173). The ship is like an immense cadaver, great and unknowable to the viewer. In fact, Giger had used ribcages from abattoirs and integrated them into the *Derelict*, giving it not only a cadaveric look but also a cadaveric smell.

The Space Jockey, the pilot of the *Derelict*, a 4.5 meters tall alien fossilised into the seemingly organic space suit and piloting chair, has its ribcage ripped outwards, as if something forcefully made its way out of its body. Ridley Scott’s children were used as body doubles to give the audience a sense of the sheer magnitude of the Space Jockey, and, in retrospective, the terror mounts if one were to imagine the size of the Xenomorph that must have come out of it.

The Space Jockey itself is inspired by Giger’s painting *Necronom V*, where a proto-Space Jockey can be seen on the top left corner of the painting lying languidly in a posture reminiscent of a body laid to rest, its face deathlike, looming peacefully over the blatantly sexual interaction between a Xenomorph with human female body traits and an alien with enormous eyes and a maggot-like tongue.

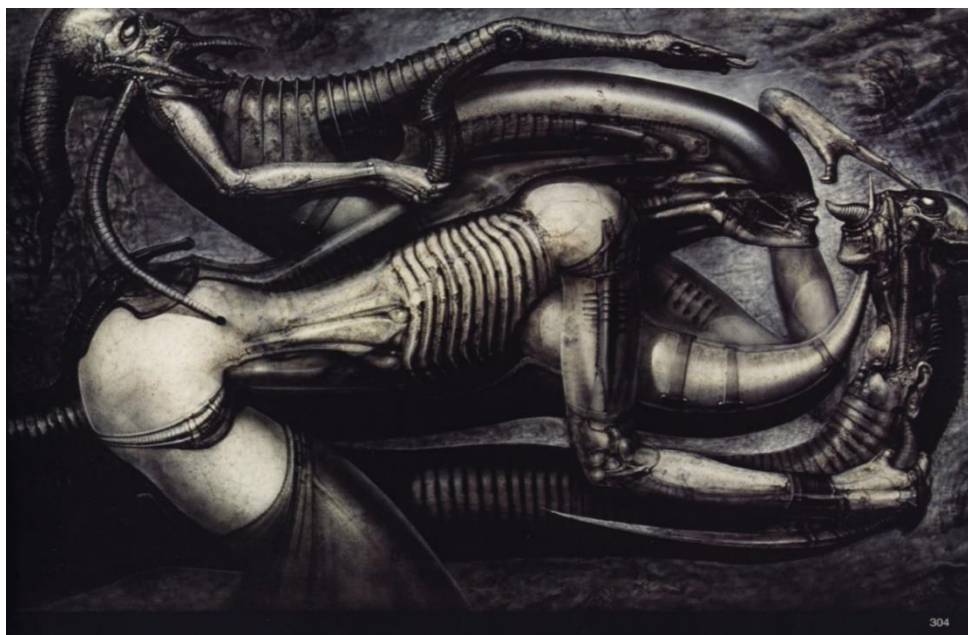


Fig. 3. *Necronom V* by H. R. Giger, 1976

The wide shots have us perceive Kane as tiny and helpless as he is approaching the egg silo, and as he reaches the egg itself the sound effect used is not unlike the warning rattle of a rattlesnake, cementing the threat in the audience's subconscious.

According to Giger in the 1979 documentary *Giger's Alien*, the original idea for the egg's opening was a kind of mobile elastic slit, but production felt this was too directly reminiscent of the female sex organs and worried about possible censorship in catholic countries (00:13:37), even so, the egg has a diseased womb-like quality to it, a potential of life rooted in putrefaction. As to the Facehugger within the egg, there is something distinctively vulvar about it, however it also possesses a penis like appendage – the ovipositor. In the monstrous world of negation, the detachment of genitals from the body and the combination of these separately distinguished organs transcends distinction and is therefore horrifying to us (Williams 164). Furthermore, gifting the monster with these sexed body parts, however detached, makes clear its capacity for reproduction and, more frighteningly of all, its capacity for reproduction with a human partner: one of the most terrible features of monsters (Oswald 29).

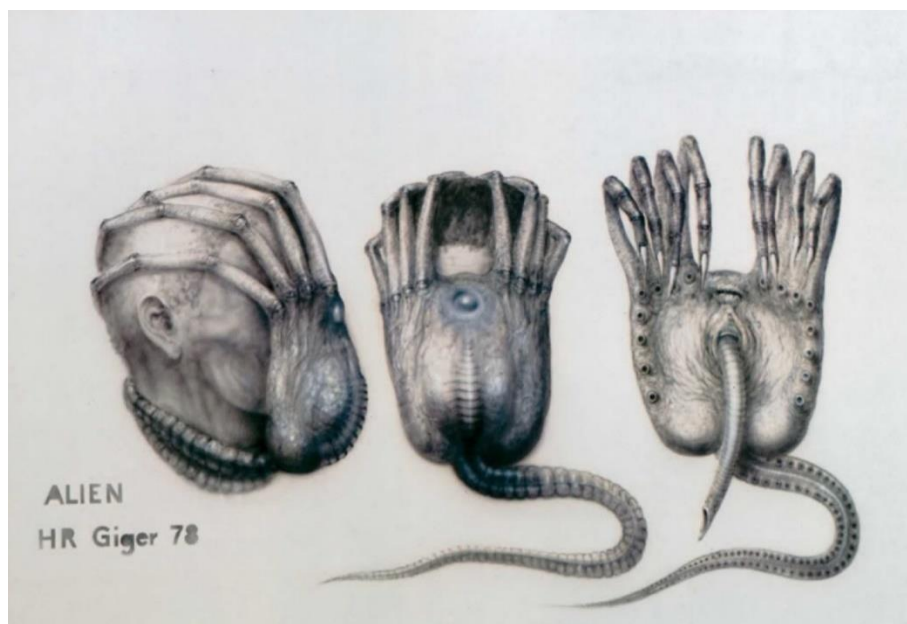


Fig. 4. 379 by H. R. Giger, 1978.

Dallas and Lambert rush back to the *Nostromo*, carrying an unconscious Kane with the Facehugger attached to his face. The Xenomorph, though unknown to both crew and audience at the time, is using this oral rape to reproduce. Most unsettling still, it infantilises Kane as it rapes him, with the Xenomorph taking unto it the role of the umbilical cord: providing nutrients and air to Kane, a perversion of a mother's role, even as it uses him to reproduce. The Xenomorph, no matter which stage of its cycle, lacking eyes, does not distinguish between gender – the whole crew is potentially at risk of this rape, their very bodies becoming a trap they carry around.

Of the several concerning issues of the time period brought up in *Alien*, among them the class struggle between the working-class Parker and Brett and the rest of the middle-class crew, and the threat of unbridled capitalism to human survival, the most explored one is the loss of bodily autonomy, clearly inspired by the Women's Liberation Movement which started in the late 1960s growing out of the struggle of the Civil Rights' Movement. In spite of taking place in a variety of countries common aims were sought by all, amongst them the need to restructure patriarchal hierarchies which relegate women to the role of second-class citizens, the issue of male violence against women, and the right to abortion (Bradshaw 4). Roe vs Wade established a pregnant person's right to choose to have an abortion in 1973 (and has been regrettably overruled on June 24, 2022, setting women's rights back several decades), and the Pro-Life Movement soon gained more momentum to protest against this decision. This thematic of violence against women, be it physical or sexual, was broadened in *Alien* to include the male gender – Kane's period of unconsciousness has widely been regarded as male oral rape. The Facehugger phallically penetrates Kane's mouth in order to impregnate him. Kane takes up the place of a female victim, the one who is penetrated, impregnated, and subsequently bears the offspring of this unholy union – a bloody ending much like the then widely circulated images of women who had succumbed to back-alley abortions.

In *The Powers of Horror* (1982) Julia Kristeva discusses the abject, and more precisely having to do with the matter at hand, she defines it as having "only one quality of the object – that of being opposed to I" (1), and that it is not necessarily a lack of cleanliness or health that which causes abjection, but, instead it is "what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite" (4). The Xenomorph's very existence, its parasitical beginnings especially, violate these tenets, as the abject is now within the victim. It is there, growing, ready to hatch and destroy. Its existence represents a disrespect of borders, positions, and rules. It is the ambiguous within the victim, it is a composite with the victim. Even more distressing, and continuing with Kristeva's definition of abject, the abject confronts us with our "earliest attempts to release the hold of [the] maternal entity" (13). However, humans are, in relation to the Xenomorph, the maternal entity carrying the abject. In *The Monstrous Feminine*, Barbara Creed, using Kristeva's theory of abjection, tells us that the male body becomes grotesque when it takes on features associated with the female body. Kane's rape perfectly exemplifies Julia Kristeva's theory of horror as abjection, demonstrating the patriarchy's fear and disgust of the feminine (Rushing 16). Erin Harrington in *Women, Monstrosity and Horror Film: Gynaehorror* (2018), refers to this as gynaehorror: a horror that "deals with all aspects of female reproductive horror" (3), especially the "sense of sexual dread, and the overlay of horror and monstrosity both within and across the female body" (2), all the more horrifying because it exists regardless of gender in *Alien*.

Another thing the Women's Liberation Movement demanded was equal pay and equal treatment in the workplace and the USCSS *Nostramo*'s crew perfectly showcases this, with women being on an equal standing with the men in the crew and there being no indication that they were treated differently in any way. For instance, one of the greatest influences on *Alien* – *It! The Terror from Beyond Space* (Cahn, 1958) –, at first glance has the female crew members in powerful positions: both as medical doctor and medical assistant. However, it falls

to them both to cook and serve the male members of the crew who lounge about having the dishes taken away and the post-meal coffee brought to them by the women, some of the men being even below the women in rank, but still they were catered by them. *Alien*, however had an all-male character script and there was no change beyond pronouns in how the characters interacted once Sigourney Weaver and Veronica Cartwright were cast. The whole crew is addressed by last name, even the cat Mr Jones, and no caregiving roles fall upon either Ripley or Lambert. Neither wears makeup and both of them are dressed in the same standard issue clothing as the men, even though Ripley was intended to don more feminine clothing. According to Weaver:

They gave me this costume that was light blue with a little pink trim. And Ridley came in, and he said, 'You look like fucking Jackie Onassis in space.' And we went into this room, and we were pulling things around, and he threw me this flight thing from NASA, and I put it on and it fit perfectly (Abramowitz).

Weaver, herself, is not the typical female heroine of horror films. There is nothing dainty or coquettish about her, from her towering height of 1.82 meters (5 feet 11 inches) to her vaguely androgynous body.

From *It! The Terror from Beyond Space* to *Alien*, the difference in the way the female members of the crew were treated is staggering, and this would have not been possible without the Women's Liberation Movement influencing societal norms and women's role in society in the intervening years.

At the same time, Lennart Nilsson, a Swedish photographer, published the first pictures of human embryos in the womb and obstetric ultrasonography started being routinely used. Foetuses, until then invisible entities, were seen and used by the Pro-Life Movement as a weapon against *Roe vs Wade*. There was a vertiginously quick medicalisation of pregnancy –

formerly a state under the full power of the mother, now medical doctors knew before the mother herself when she was pregnant and they controlled the pregnancy and viewed the foetus in uteri. Women's bodies were seen more and more as a vessel for the marginalised and oppressed being that was the foetus, now the central figure of pregnancy, with the medical field giving it greater rights than to the person who carried it (Hoffman 243). This possession of personal agency by the foetus defied a woman's body autonomy and was, as such, horrifying. It is no surprise that, starting with Roman Polanski's *Rosemary's Baby* "virtually all births in the popular media would be monstrous or demonic" (Skal 294) and *Alien* would end up being one of the heirs of this exploitation of reproductive anxieties (Skal 301). The sci-fi/horror's hostile foetus is a "powerful backlash" against the oppressive consequences of portraying the foetus as a helpless person to be defended at the loss of bodily autonomy, providing the viewers with a figure through which their fears of "physical colonisation" and "the medical industry's invasion of reproductive processes" can be expressed (Hoffman 242). *Alien* brings this fear to men as well, with the first victim of impregnation being a man. This hostile foetus has decidedly more power over the body it occupies, making it as unnatural and invasive to the male audience as to the female audience. This is how *Alien* becomes a perfect means to express the fears brought on by foetal autonomy, with both men and women serving as vessels and fodder for the parasitical Xenomorph.

Going back to the film, as Lambert and Dallas carry Kane and his parasitic rapist back to the *Nostramo*, in spite of their frantic requests, Ripley is adamant that they wait out the regulation quarantine period. Her command is overridden by the medical officer and android Ash, who had received the Special Order 937 from the Company: "Priority one — Ensure return of organism for analysis. All other considerations secondary. Crew expendable." The name of the ship itself – *Nostramo* – foreshadows these events. *Nostramo*, "nostro uomo," alludes to Joseph Conrad's working-class hero, a company man, who dies knowing he had been

betrayed for material interests. Ash had, in fact, come to replace at the last moment the regular science officer of the *Nostromo*'s crew so that Weyland-Yutani could have a medical officer who would ensure the completion of Special Order 937 (Foster, *Alien* 159).

This overarching theme of the evils of late-stage capitalism is one of the cultural fears that most resonated with the audience. *Alien* exists in a future where Weyland-Yutani has a monopoly of the galaxy and ceaselessly searches for more planets to exploit in the name of capitalistic greed. Weyland-Yutani is not alone as a megacorporation in science-fiction: popularised by William Gibson in his cyber-punk novels, these capitalistic conglomerates appear in several seminal works of science-fiction, such as the Tyrell Corporation in *Blade Runner* (Scott, 1982) for which Captain Dallas had also previously worked (see Appendix B), the Cyberdine Systems in *Terminator* (Cameron, 1984), Soylent Industries in *Soylent Green* (Fleischer, 1973), Omni Consumer Products in *RoboCop* (Verhoeven, 1987), the Umbrella Corporation from the *Resident Evil* video games and films, and Massive Dynamic from the show *Fringe* (2008). All of these examples represent the anxiety of a bleak future in which capitalism rules humanity at the expense of humans themselves. From the late 1970s onwards society became increasingly capitalistic, glamorising consumerism, especially in the 1980s when Reagan became president of the United States of America and introduced Reaganomics – a group of economic policies which brought forth widespread tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations, decreased social spending, increased military spending, and brought on the deregulation of domestic markets. The fears of megacorporations in the *Alien* franchise seemed like the far-fetched conclusion of late-stage capitalism in the 1970s and 1980s, and even the 1990s' collective imaginations, though they seem less far-fetched now with the advent of the Amazon and Google corporations.

Weyland-Yutani is also known as The Company, to further emphasise its connection to Joseph Conrad's novel *Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard* (1904) in which Nostromo (as

mentioned a corruption of the Italian "nostro uomo", "our man" in this case the company's man), a commanding figure in the town of Sulaco – later the name of a ship in *Aliens* – who is entrusted by the elite (though never accepted by them) to smuggle silver from Sulaco. Though he ends up saving the city by summoning the army, Nostromo, however, feels slighted and used and is ultimately killed.

Weyland-Yutani is implied to have known from the beginning what the nature of the warning call the *Derelict* was transmitting meant. First of all, they replaced the medical officer of the USCSS *Nostromo* with Ash, unprompted, in Thebus, a mining planet which was the last port of call of the USCSS *Nostromo*. Unknown to the rest of the crew, Ash was the perfect company man – in fact a company android following Weyland-Yutani's Special Order 937 which had to have been programmed into him before he was placed on board of the USCSS *Nostromo*. Secondly, the USCSS *Nostromo*'s onboard computer was quickly capable of deciphering part of the *Derelict*'s transmission, specifically "DO NOT", which was obviously a warning. Weyland-Yutani, with greater computing means than a decaying refinery's onboard computer, and plenty of time as well, was bound to have known the full content of the transmission before diverting the course of the USCSS *Nostromo* to LV-426, a ship which they most likely chose to protect company interests and to quietly assert sole claim to the discovery of the Xenomorph without attracting what little competition there was still around (Foster, *Alien* 259).

The crew of the USCSS *Nostromo*, despite their expertise, are little more than blue collar workers. In a 1979 interview to James Delson of the *Fantastic Films* magazine, Ridley Scott described them as "truck drivers in space" (19). Weyland-Yutani is careless with their well-being even before their plot to obtain the Xenomorph, with routine safety inspections being waived aside and inspectors paid off by the Company. Weyland-Yutani's ships are considered neglected and unsafe (Foster, *Alien* 208). Even among the crew there are pay divisions, with

Parker and Brent receiving lower pay for their engineering services than the rest of the crew. Their relationship is antagonistic towards the others, who are more readily prepared to obey Weyland-Yutani's directives, with Parker commenting that the rest of the crew "don't come down here (...) where the work is", and with Dallas brusquely ordering Parker to "Go back to work!" when he insistently suggests Kane be frozen while the Chestburster is incubating inside him, callously ignoring his recommendation. In the 20th anniversary DVD Ridley Scott said that "[W]hat I thought about this crew in the way they were characterised is that, we were always told just enough about them so we knew classically who they were, who the troublemakers were, who the politicians were, there was already a class system. below deck and upper deck." (10:00:00)

Even though Dallas is suspicious of Ash, he readily accepts his input, being more interested in safeguarding the Company's interests than what rationality would immediately advise. According to Judith Newton in *Alien Zone* (1990):

What has changed most between Conrad's early imperialist concern and this late-capitalist operation - both are in the mining business - is the degree of alienation to which workers are inured. The Company in *Alien* represents capitalism in its most systemized, computerized, and dehumanizing form, a fact ironically enforced by the name of the Company computer, 'Mother'. Throughout the film, mechanization and technology, associated with the Company, are contrasted with the engaging humanity of the workers. (...) In this future, everyone is forced to be the Company man, their work is neither controlled nor understood by them and they are all expendable for profit and most of them die knowing they have been betrayed by material interests. (82-85)

When it is suggested that they abandon ship, much like in later iterations of the franchise, Weyland-Yutani's interests are given as a reason to stay the course of salvation, offset by the costs such survival would entail. Much like in the song *Sixteen Tons* by Merle Travis, they "can't afford to die. [They] owe [their] soul to the company store".

Even Ripley, who never hesitates to fight against Weyland-Yutani's interests, is an example of what late-stage capitalism heroes become: she is not sympathetic to Parker and Brent's desire for fair compensation from Weyland-Yutani, or to Parker's demand for extra pay for engaging in what proves to be a dangerous mission, and she does not seem to form an alliance with Lambert, the only other woman aboard. Until the very end of the film she is a company woman nearly to the last.

The threat of late-stage capitalism is a common one in science-fiction, and a pervasive one in the whole of the *Alien* franchise, with even Ripley doubting, in *Aliens*, who is the worst: the Xenomorph or the company which discards human life for profit.

Now moving back to the plot, when the crew assembles, after Kane finally awakes, to eat before going back to hypersleep, they gather in a set that is brightly lit and full of easy camaraderie, a meal shared by co-workers after the dreadful trial that preceded it, lulling the viewer into a false sense of security, shortly to be shattered. As soon as the pangs of the monstrous childbirth assault Kane, the rest of the crew hurries to his aid – except for Ash, who is the last to rise to lend his help, despite being the crew's medical officer, hinting at his inhuman nature devoid of the human instinct to help a fellow man. The perversion of nature illustrated by the Chestburster's initial foray to exit its host leaves not only the crew but the audience in abject awe. While we miss nothing of the aberrant birth, Ridley Scott also focuses the camera on the characters' reactions to it, emphasising their fear over the gruesome

spectacle¹⁵. This scene is emblematic of Splatterpunk, a term coined by author David Schow in the 1980s: "Splatterpunk fiction deals in brutal sexual violations, the casual rending of human flesh, dismemberment, the dripping, spilling, and spewing of bodily fluids and internal organs." (Luckhurst, 214)



Fig. 5. (00:56:20) The Chestbuster erupts out of John Hurt's chest.



Fig. 6. (00:56:22) Veronica Cartwright's reaction.

¹⁵ John Hurt was the only one who knew how the scene would play out, the rest of the actors were thus surprised by the gory spectacle of the Chestbuster's birth, their shock adding to the intensity of the scene.

The gory evocation of childbirth at the dining table is a clear expression of the male terror of female sexuality and reproductive potential (Newton 295). This terrifying primal scene which so corrupts the boundaries of female and male biological expectations inevitably results in the birth of a monster: the Chestburster. This scene also serves to establish the Xenomorph as unpredictable: monsters are creatures that dwell in the unknown places outside of charted maps, they are supposed to hide in the shadows, the audience would not expect a monster's life cycle to begin with it bursting out a human chest in a shower of blood and violence, then rapidly running away from the scene of carnage that was its birth, leaving Kane a hollow wreck of blood and bone, his corrupted reproductive role being his demise.

It is also worth noting the homophony between the name of the victim who bore the monster, Kane, and the biblical Cain. Cain, as is known, is the first murderer according to the Bible, and thus rendered monstrous by his actions. And for this transgression he was condemned by God:

Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth. (Gen. 4:11)

In *Beowulf*, it is said further that monsters are the descendants of Cain:

Swā ðā driht-guman drēamum lifdon, ēadiglīce, oððæt ān ongan fyrene fremman fēond on helle. Wæs se grimma gæst Grendel hāten, mære mearcstapa, sē þe mōras hēold, fen ond fæsten; fifel-cynnes eard won-sæli wer weardode hwīle, siþðan him Scyppend forscriften hæfde in Caines cynne— þone cwealm gewræc ēce Drihten, þæs þe hē Ābel slōg. Ne gefeah hē þære fæhðe, ac hē hine feor forwræc, Metod for þy māne, man-cynne fram. Ðanon

untȳdras ealle onwōcon, eotenas ond ylfe ond orcnēas, swylce gīgantas, þā
wið Gode wunnon lange þrāge; hē him ðæs lēan forgeald.¹⁶ (Heaney 8)

This spectacular birth is not only the culmination of the film's anxieties with motherhood, but it is also a link to the unbridled capitalism which made it possible – had it not been for the greed of the Company and the crews' desperation with not losing their paycheck, none of the events that followed would have come to pass. The amorality of capitalism is much like the amorality exhibited by the Xenomorph. Devoid of eyes and of any emotions, it kills indiscriminately, its only goal that of its own satisfaction.

The Chestburster is the only phase of the Xenomorph which was not devised by H. R. Giger, all of Giger's ideas for its design failed to satisfy Ridley Scott who proposed, instead, to model the Chestburster after a triptych painted by Francis Bacon titled *Three Figures at the Base of the Crucifixion* (1944).



Fig. 7. *Three Figures at the Base of the Crucifixion* by Francis Bacon, 1944.

¹⁶ So times were pleasant for the people there until finally one, a fiend out of hell, began to work his evil in the world. Grendel was the name of this grim demon haunting the marches, marauding round the heath and the desolate fens; he had dwelt for a time in misery among the banished monsters, Cain's clan, whom the Creator had outlawed and condemned as outcasts. For the killing of Abel the Eternal Lord had exacted a price: Cain got no good from committing that murder because the Almighty made him anathema and out of the curse of his exile there sprang ogres and elves and evil phantoms and the giants too who strove with God time and again until He gave them their reward. (Translation by Seamus Heaney, 8)

Having access to the *Nostramo*'s food locker (Foster, *Alien* 222), the Xenomorph grows and moults into a Drone. The Xenomorph life cycle horrifies the crew, who had been hunting it still believing it to be a Chestburster. The Xenomorph's capacity of metamorphosis is a recurring feature of the monstrous: it transgresses corporeal boundaries in the act of becoming, it is never finished, it is continually transformed into other bodies, it represents the fear of loss of corporal integrity, demanding the viewers to appraise the integrity of their own humanity, reminding them of what it means to be human by threatening their identity with the lack of cohesion of the monster's body (Oswald 3). (For more information on the Xenomorph and its life cycle see Appendix A).

We see nothing of the Xenomorph as the crew debates on how to get rid of it, it is as unknowable to the audience as it is to the crew: both are oblivious to the fact that it has since moulted and become a Xenomorph Drone. The phallic-looking Xenomorph Drone shies away from the *Nostramo*'s brightly lit upper quarters, preferring the womb-like and vaginal-like bowels of the ship where the dark industrial damp spaces contrast with the upper sterile white ones. Disguising itself by melding into its surroundings, the Xenomorph is hidden from the audience. In fact, it only has 3 minutes and 57 seconds of screen time: a fleeting presence. The USCSS *Nostramo* is also, as previously mentioned, filled with harsh hissing and screeching ambient biological sounds at all times, which makes it the perfect hiding place for the Xenomorph.

The Xenomorph Drone, a creation of H. R. Giger was inspired by one of his paintings, *Necronom IV*.



Fig. 8. *Necromon IV* by H. R. Giger, 1976.

In it a Xenomorph rests in a seemingly foetal position, a posture made jarring by the fact that it is holding a phallic extension of itself. In fact, the Xenomorph is unfinished, it devolves into a mere genital organ. It perfectly represents the very nature of the creature and its parasitic cycle as it infests its hosts by mixing an aggressively transgressive sexuality with birth. The oppressive colour palette has a surprisingly cheerful origin: according to Giger in an interview to the magazine *Fantastic Films* in 1979, "The colors I use are usually grey, white and brown - these are the colors of my beloved Siamese cat. I use black ink too." (31).

Compared to the crew, the Xenomorph's movements are slow and smooth. According to Veronica Cartwright in *The Beast Within*, Bolaji Badejo, who portrayed the Xenomorph, was sent to Tai-Chi and mime classes to perfect this otherworldly way of moving (01:07:52).

One of the Xenomorph's most distinct characteristics is its inner jaw, a piston-like tongue tipped with a secondary jaw located inside the creature's mouth and which is used in close combat to deliver fatal strikes, generally to its victim's head.

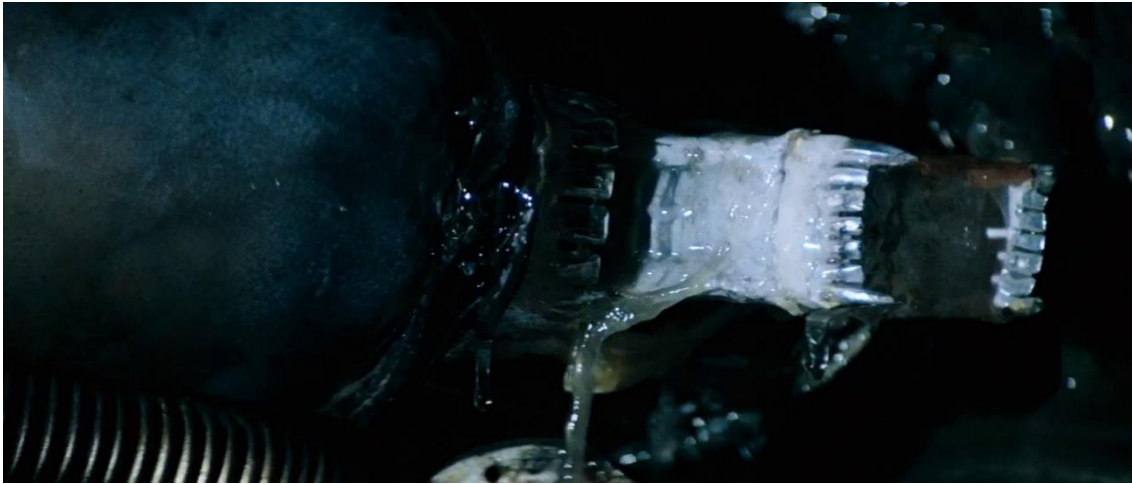


Fig. 9. The Xenomorph's inner jaw (1:48:26)

This feature was inspired by Giger's painting *Necronom II* in which the Xenomorph's mouth, instead of harbouring a deadly inner jaw, possessed a fully formed phallus. No doubt there was a need to adapt such a thing to the screen, as the censors would have not allowed it. But the sense of oral rape and danger were kept by the inner jaw which ends up in the film.

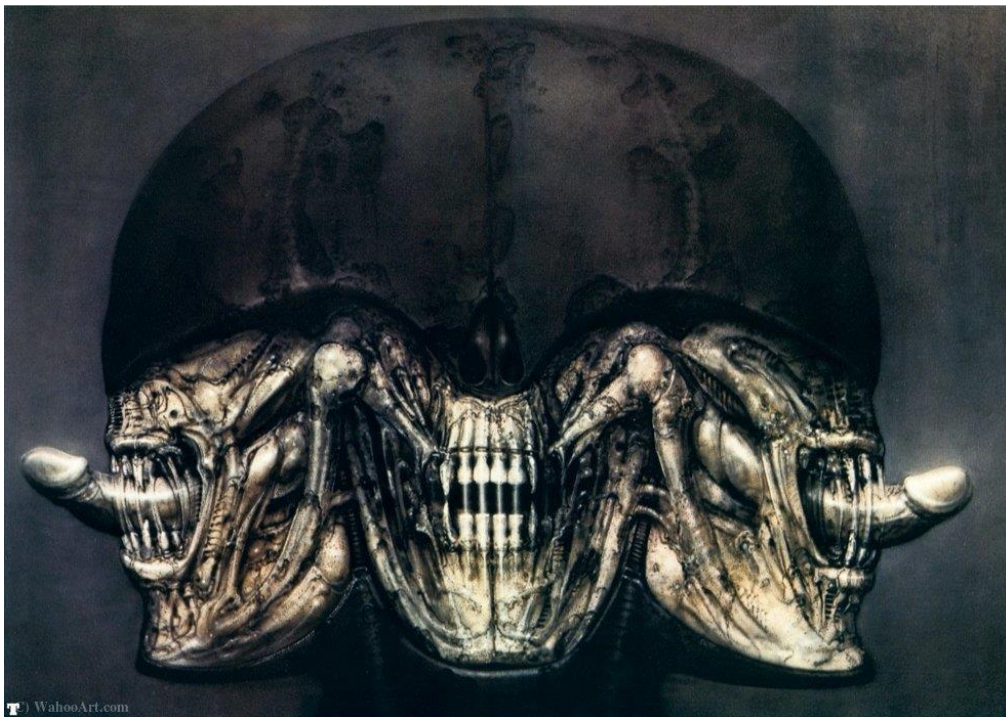


Fig. 10. *Necronom II*, H. R. Giger, 1975

Even when the audience does not see the Xenomorph, Ridley Scott makes sure the environment gives the sense that it may be hiding anywhere: in Brent's death scene there are sound effects of dripping water and swinging chains in an empty room, which gives the audience the feeling that even though the room is (as then believed) empty, Brent is not alone in there.

The subject of rape comes back anew when Ash is confronted and malfunctions. It can be posited that this is because Special Order 937 interferes with Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics¹⁷ which later on Bishop was shown to adhere to. Therefore, Ash's internal programming could have interfered with his directives, causing him to malfunction. What is interesting to note is that, when this happens, the background is littered with cut-outs from pornographic magazines, and it is one of these magazines which Ash rolls into a tube and attempts to forcibly jam down Ripley's throat, again is a facsimile of oral rape. It is only with the intervention of the remaining crew members that Ash is subdued and forced to reveal Weyland-Yutani's directives. According to Ridley Scott in *The Beast Within*, the asexual Ash attacking Ripley is "the closest he gets to a sexual relationship" (00:39:51).

When Parker and Lambert go their own way and Ripley another, it is a departure of the status quo established so far: throughout the entire film the crew is always shot in groups, whether within or outside the ship. To see Ripley, a lone woman, going off on her own is unsettling, and singles her out as the most likely victim in the audience's minds. But as the Xenomorph Drone continues to pick off the crew one by one, it is Lambert and Parker who are taken, significantly with another allusion to rape when it comes to Lambert, until only Ripley is left. After retrieving Jones, the cat, she manages to make it aboard the *Nostromo's* light

¹⁷ 1. A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law. (Asimov, 40)

shuttle, the *Narcissus* – another allusion to a work of Conrad, this time the short story *The Nigger of the “Narcissus”: A Tale of the Forecastle*, in which the crew of the aforementioned *Narcissus* is plagued by ill-fortune. And so is Ripley, for the Xenomorph has stowed aboard the *Narcissus*, no doubt attempting to avoid the blaring alarms of the main ship, which contribute to the tense scene: the blaring tempo of the alarm has the rhythm of a heartbeat and is inescapable in its loudness.

It is important to include in this analysis a brief exploration of Ripley’s name. Is it perhaps a homophone for “replay”, hinting at the other films in the *Alien* franchise? Or is it related to “ripple” in the sense that she, much like a stone thrown into a pond, disturbs and propels the plot forward? Her first name, Ellen, also hints at how she will later be a much-coveted character in the eyes of the Company and the motive for launching several ships (in this case spaceships) to recover her, as happened with Helen of Troy in Greek mythology.

While the trope of the final girl was not new by this point, having become a staple of horror films in the 1970s, starting with *Black Christmas* (Clark, 1974), and with other examples before *Alien* including *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and *Halloween*, Ripley emerges as somewhat of a metamorphosis herself, combining the traditional female slasher-film survivor role with the male action hero one (Smith and Gallardo 511), her depiction of maternal love towards Mr Jones, the *Nostromo*’s cat, shows her as an appropriate and orderly feminine power who will re-order the monstrous events into a tidy final return to the status-quo.

2.2 Aliens (1986)

Monsters are real, and ghosts are real too.
They live inside us, and sometimes, they win.

— Stephen King, *The Shining*

Aliens is a 1986 horror, action, and science-fiction film written and directed by James Cameron. It is a direct sequel to *Alien* (1979) and stars Sigourney Weaver reprising the role of Ellen Ripley, the sole survivor of the *Nostramo*. The film has Ripley return to LV-426, also known as Acheron, the moon where the *Nostramo* crew first found the Xenomorph eggs, to a new colony there called Hadley's Hope.

Unlike the opening of *Alien*, which aimed to unsettle the audience, *Aliens* indicates its genre shift by slowly focusing on the flickering neon title, as the soundtrack by James Horner, featuring discordant notes, choral, and electronic elements interspersed with marching drums, hinting at the militaristic nature of the film, grows louder and louder over background footage of the deepest space which, by its very nature, should be silent by rights, until, in a deafening crescendo akin to a screech, the title comes into focus. As the title becomes legible, the “i” in “*Aliens*” hatches open menacingly, much like a Xenomorph egg, until it becomes blindingly bright. From the title sequence the audience is already properly disquieted, its tempo and loudness preparing the viewers for the decidedly more action filled film.



Fig. 11. *Aliens*' opening title (00:01:15)

What follows are long interior shots of the *Narcissus*, its interior dark, its machinery covered in water crystals. Unlike the beginning of *Alien* where the audience got the sense that, in spite of its sleeping crew, the USCSS *Nostramo* was never static, it is clear to the audience of *Aliens* that a long time has passed between Ripley going into hypersleep and being found. A shot of Ripley's face morphs itself into the surface of the Earth, orbiting which is the Gateway Station where Ripley recovers, signalling that Ripley has finally come home.



Fig. 12. Ripley's face morphing into planet Earth (00:05:13)

The bright spacious interior of Ripley's room in the space station contrasts sharply with the tomb-like interior of the *Narcissus*. Much can be said about the triteness of dream sequences, but the one Cameron uses to deliver exposition by way of Burke (Paul Reiser) not only brings the audience up to speed on the events so far but, more importantly, establishes Ripley as suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which is pivotal to the film's status as a re-hash of Vietnam era combat, as will later be discussed.

Despite the androgyny and complete lack of adherence to gender roles that characterised her in the first film, Cameron goes the extra mile to distance Ripley from how she was perceived in *Alien*. A pro-gun conservative, Cameron makes it a point to show how Ripley, a single mother, chose her career over her child and, for daring to disrupt the status quo of the nuclear family, was punished by ultimately losing both her career and her child. On learning of her daughter Amanda's fate, she weeps, a broken woman, and laments having left her child behind for her career. This scene is followed swiftly by the Weyland-Yutani board refusing to believe her and ultimately blaming her for the events of the first film. The message couldn't be clearer: in Reagan's America, failure to comply with conservative values is to be punished.

We cut to Hadley's Hope which, much like *Metropolis* (Lang, 1927), looks like an industrial dystopia where families of workers eke out a meagre living in a thoroughly industrial environment. The Company's logo is stamped over every personal effect, including the children's toys. Following orders from Burke, a colonial family departs from Hadley's Hope to explore the *Derelict*, prompting the destruction of the colony. The subsequent loss of contact with Hadley's Hope leads to the decision by the Company to send Burke out to the site but, prompted by Ripley's warnings, a military detachment is assigned to escort him. Burke, accompanied by Lieutenant Gorman (William Hope), visits Ripley to attempt to convince her to join them as a consultant.

In *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949), mythologist Joseph Campbell laid down the steps to the Hero's Journey within mythology and narrative structure: it starts with the Hero's Departure, (which comprises The Call to Adventure, Refusal of the Call, Supernatural Aid, The Crossing of the First Threshold, and the Belly of the Whale), followed by the Hero's Initiation, (comprised of The Road of Trial, The Meeting with the Goddess, Woman as a Temptress, Atonement with the Father, Apotheosis, and the Ultimate Boon), and ends with the Hero's Return (comprising the Refusal of the Return, the Magic Flight, the Rescue from Without, The Crossing of the Return Threshold, Master of the Two Worlds, and finally the Freedom to Live). Christopher Vogler explored Campbell's model and adapted it into his screenwriting book *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers* (1998), and Ripley more closely follows the steps he laid out: Departure (1. The Ordinary World, 2. Call to Adventure, 3. Refusal of the Call, 4. Meeting with the Mentor, 5. Crossing the First Threshold), Initiation (6. Tests, Allies, and Enemies, 7. Approach to the Inmost Cave, 8. The Ordeal. 9. Reward), Return (10. The Road Back, 11. The Resurrection, 12. Return with the Elixir), intermixed with a bit of the Heroine's Journey, as laid down by Maureen Murdock, a student of Campbell, in 1990 in her book *The Heroine's Journey*, which, though deeply flawed and dated, touches on the point that part of the heroine's journey is to heal the internal split between woman and her feminine nature (2).

Gorman and Burke find Ripley in the first stage of the Hero's Journey: The Ordinary World. Ripley is leading a mundane existence, working in the docks, living in a tiny apartment with Mr Jones, the cat. We then move onto the Call to Adventure when they request Ripley to join them in their investigation of why Hadley's Hope has ceased all communication, followed by Refusal of the Call, when Ripley flat out refuses to join their quest. As in every Hero's Journey she later acquiesces and joins the ill prepared marines into their excursion.

And here we come upon one of the cultural fears that ties *Aliens* to the audience's consciousness of the 1980s: its role as a Vietnam War film. The Vietnam War was a conflict that lasted from November 1, 1955, to the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975. It took place in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia and was fought between North Vietnam, supported by the Soviet Union and The People's Republic of China, and South Vietnam, supported but the United States of American, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, and Thailand. It was considered a Cold War-era proxy since it involved communist forces against capitalist forces. The Vietnam War lasted nineteen years and ended with a communist victory in 1975.

Following the end of the war there was a greater freedom in representing it on film, unshackled from war time propaganda, with examples such as *Apocalypse Now* (Coppola, 1979), *The Deer Hunter* (Cimino, 1978), and *Rambo: First Blood* (Kotcheff, 1982). Action films, especially, took to representing the displaced trauma of Vietnam and the failure of American culture (Draper 105).

While not being a pure action film, being also a sci-fi horror film, *Aliens* is, as Cameron explicitly admits, a Vietnam war-inspired film – it exploits the mythology about the Vietnam war which sprung up in the 1980s through films, novels, and oral history. Even the *Aliens* film poster announced, “This time it's war!”

According to Cameron in an interview to *L'officier*, when it came to the character of Ellen Ripley, he drew directly from Vietnam veterans' stories:

One of my biggest problems writing the film was coming up with a reason why she goes back. It had to be psychological. One of the things that interested me is that there are a lot of soldiers from Vietnam, who have been in intense combat situations, who re-enlisted to go back again. Because they had these psychological problems that they had to work out. It's like an inner demon to be exorcised. That was a good metaphor for her character.

There were many other things that tied *Aliens* to the Vietnam war: the otherness of the Xenomorphs and the nature of the conflict being “us” versus “them” (Fuchs 35); the incompetent officer (Gorman) and the meddling bureaucrat (Burke) directing the grunts in a conflict to defend the capitalistic interests of Weyland-Yutani, rather than the people – fitting the 1980s’ narrative of Vietnam veterans as exploited youth; the claustrophobic jungle like environment of the hive, where the Xenomorphs could be hiding in every dark corner, ready to strike without warning, just like the American marines being countered by guerrilla warfare; and the superior firepower of the marines being useless against the Xenomorphs’ knowledge of the hive and determination to protect it from the invaders. According to Cameron:

Their training and technology are inappropriate for the specifics, and that can be seen as analogous to the inability of the superior American firepower to conquer the unseen enemy in Vietnam: a lot of firepower and very little wisdom, and it did not work. (Palmer 186)

Even the dialogue, as Cameron told the *Lofficier*, was lifted from the Vietnam era:

The dialog (sic) itself, the idiom, is pretty much Vietnam era. It’s the most contemporary American combat "warspeak" that I had access to. I studied how soldiers talked in Vietnam, and I took certain specific bits of terminology, and a general sense of how they express themselves, and I used that for the dialogue, to try and make it seem like a realistic sort of military expedition, as opposed to a high tech, futuristic one. I wanted to create more of a sense of realism rather than that of an interesting future.

Cameron’s allusion to the Vietnam war spoke to American audiences, their recent history, and was a way to deal with the trauma left by the conflict.

Going back to the film, as the marines move into Hadley's Hope, we see a transformed colony from what was shown to us at the beginning of the film. From an industrial complex which barely lent itself as a place for growing families, it is now an industrial graveyard. The camera framing used, where the viewer is placed as if one of the team, keeps the audience as much in the dark as the marines, having no idea if a Xenomorph is lurking just outside what little we are allowed to see. The visible ceilings lend a claustrophobic feeling to the scenes as we are given the dimensional sense of how tight the fighting quarters are.

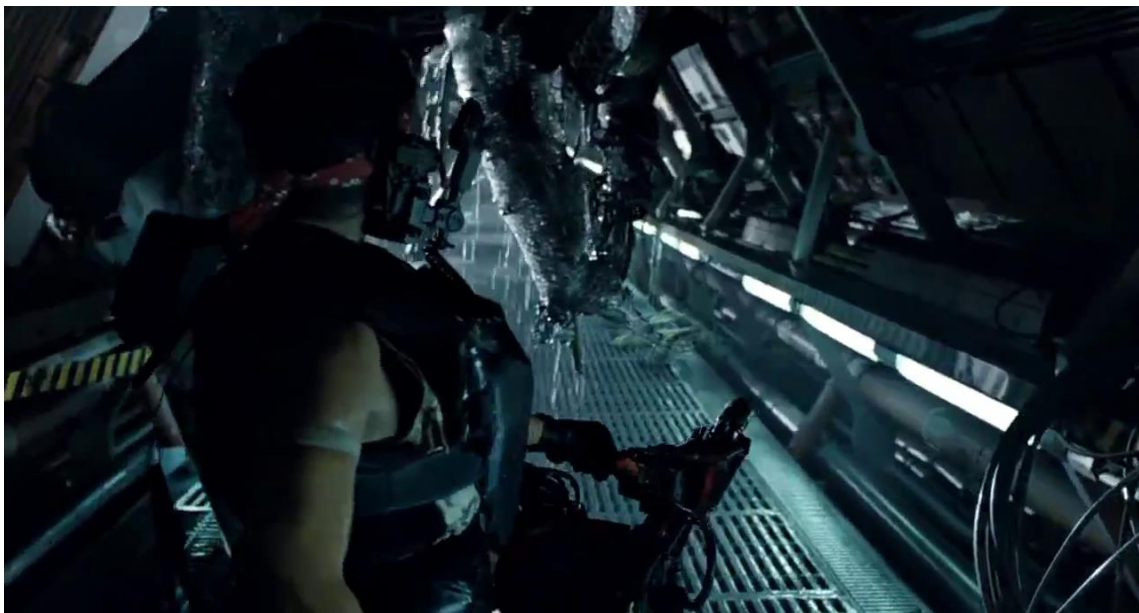


Fig. 13. Vasquez exploring Hadley's Hope (00:48:18)

This is a sharp contrast to the long shots in the warship *USS Sulaco* we see before the marines' landing in the facility, loaded with weapons and combat vehicles. It drives into the audience's minds the difference between a safe environment and a perilous one, one where even though the marines have access to the same weaponry they had in their warship it is now little more than useless: having entered the facility near the primary heat exchangers of the fusion reactor,

if the marines were to fire their weapons they would damage the cooling system causing a thermonuclear explosion, leading to Lieutenant Gorman ordering them to go on unarmed. This mirrors the sentiment at the time that the war on Vietnam could have been won had the government committed to employing nuclear weapons, instead of sending in their troops inadequately equipped (Franklin 344). Later on, we see the resurgence of this sentiment with Ripley saying that the only way to be sure the threat is nullified is to “nuke the site from orbit” – altogether a positive spin on America’s uneasy relationship with nuclear weapons.

The marines and Ripley come upon Newt (Carrie Henn) the lone survivor of the colony. Newt was, as revealed in the novelization of the same name (2014) by Alan Dean Foster, the first child to be born in the colony, a symbol of hope. She also becomes a symbol of hope to Ripley, who clings to her as someone onto whom she can enact her frustrated maternal instincts. These maternal instincts are what will guide the majority of Ripley’s actions for the rest of the film and what will draw her into conflict with the other mother of the film: the Xenomorph Queen, a conflict which will be later explored in this work.

While *Alien* was a mostly genderless film adapted from a script which attributed no gender to any of its characters, *Aliens* changes the gender dynamics. Though none of the female characters are sexualised or sexually preyed upon by the male characters or even the audience, they all embody the 1980s’ idea of female empowerment by excelling in traditional male roles and being muscular, practically clothed, and ready to fight, something James Cameron also made free use of in his *Terminator* franchise with the character of Sarah Connor (Linda Hamilton). They never, however, relinquish their femininity, not even Vasquez (Jenette Goldstein) who, when asked by Hudson (Bill Paxton) if she has ever been mistaken for a man, replies “No, have you?” (00:29:53) at once affirming her femininity while also verbally defeating him.

Ripley embraces femininity by fulfilling her maternal instincts towards Newt: she washes her, feeds her, comforts her, and tucks her into bed, and is rewarded by the end with Newt calling her “Mommy” (02:29:56). Ripley goes from a single mother devoted to her career to a woman completely devoted to her adopted child. By the end of the film Ripley has a nuclear family of her own: a daughter in Newt, a pseudo-husband in Hicks (Michael Biehn), and even a loyal pet in the android Bishop (Lance Henriksen). This return to the conservative values of the Reagan era, departing from her second wave feminist portrayal in the first film, is rewarded with the promise of a happy future by the film’s closing.

As the marines advance into Hadley’s Hope the industrial interiors give way to the enormous Xenomorph hive. The ceilings are elevated, and the camera is no longer close to the action, showing the marines as diminutive figures in an alien land.



Fig. 14. The marines entering the hive (1:07:04)

They come upon the cocooned colonists, slowly dying in horrific ways, much like Vietnam prisoners of war, before they are surrounded by swarming Xenomorphs, leaving Ripley to save the day. This warms the relationship between Ripley and the marines, with Hicks mentoring her on how to use weapons – fulfilling the fourth step in Vogler’s Hero’s Journey: Meeting with the Mentor, as well as the sixth step: Tests, Allies, and Enemies. Earlier on, when Ripley arrived at Hadley’s Hope, she had fulfilled the fifth step: Crossing the First Threshold.



Fig. 15. Ripley hesitating before entering Hadley’s Hope (00:53:19)

Much like in the first film, the first hour is used to set the plot. What it lacks in building the suspense and dread of the first hour of *Alien*, it makes up in character development and showing the audience the comradery between the marines. Unlike most action films where the secondary characters’ deaths advance the plot with no particular feeling of emotional loss, the audience gets to know and grow attached to each marine.

Interestingly, Burke emerges as the villain among the surviving humans. As previously mentioned, Ronald Reagan was president when *Aliens* was filmed and released, and with him came the advent of a set of neoliberal economic policies which reduced social spending and promoted the free market and unbridled capitalism as the solution to the nation's problems. Analogous to this positive spin on capitalism sweeping the 1980s' collective consciousness was the rise of the Yuppie – a young urban professional or young upwardly-mobile professional (Piesman 12) – an archetype who could be blamed as individually greedy and was often the villain in media of the time, instead of the capitalistic infrastructure from which they sprouted. This is the case with Burke. The Company, portrayed as a board of sensible professionals at Ripley's hearing, is no longer the villain it was in *Alien*. Burke, as an individual, is the villain, withdrawing the guilt from the megacorporation and placing it at the feet of one rotten apple, absolving the concept of corporation and blaming instead the individual ambitions of one of its members. He sent Newt's family off to explore the *Derelect* without warning them of the dangers within because, as he says: "[I]f I went and made a major security situation out of it, everybody steps in, administration steps in, and there's no exclusive rights for anybody." (01:36:39). He is the only one among the survivors to cite the facility's monetary value when Ripley proposes destroying it by way of a thermonuclear explosion, and while the film never shows Burke unleashing the Facehuggers upon Ripley and Newt, relying instead on Ripley's word, the canonically released *The Weyland-Yutani Report* (Perry, 2016) makes this plain, with a message from Burke to Weyland-Yutani (no acknowledgement from the Company, leaving it blameless) declaring his villainous intentions:

There's no question, we are not going to get one of the living specimens through ICC [quarantine]. I doubt they'd make the trip, anyway, they seem to die pretty fast if they can't do their implantation thing. But here's my thinking –

if one or more of the rescue party is implanted, we could keep them in hypersleep until our people could get to them at gateway. It is extremely likely that one of more of the party will be implanted, so make sure we have teams standing by three weeks out, starting today. I mean, I hope it doesn't happen, it would be a tragedy, but we have to be ready. (119)

Ripley, who along with her fellow crewmembers had blamed the Company in *Alien*, and then would go on to again blame Weyland-Yutani in *Alien*³, makes no mention of the Company when she reveals Burke's plans to infect her and Newt, going as far as to blame him specifically saying, "You know, Burke, I don't know which species is worse. You don't see them fucking each other over a goddamn percentage." (1:52:49). With this, *Aliens* absolves capitalism, and blames, instead, one greedy bureaucrat.

As the survivors speculate with Bishop as to what exactly is laying the Xenomorph eggs, we come to another hallmark of *Aliens* that cements it into the audiences of both the 1980s to the present day's minds, the use of a fear that is both biologic and cultural: our aversion to insects. Since its first appearance in *Alien*, the Xenomorph made use of our species' innate fear of insects to scare the audience. From its chitinous body, its scorpion-like appearance, and its wasp-like propagation in *Alien*, *Aliens* adds to that a complex insect-like social structure, with drones in prodigious numbers to carry out the work of the hive, and a Queen whose sole purpose is to continuously propagate the species by laying eggs. According to Ridley Scott, even the Xenomorph's acid blood was inspired by the insect world – in an interview to *L'Écran Fantastique* he said: "'il me semble que Dan [O'Bannon] avait aimé cette idée (...) parce qu'elle lui rappelait ces fourmis qui projettent des jets d'acide pour combattre des fourmis enemies.¹⁸" Which makes sense – ants are, like humans, one of the few species which mobilise armies to

¹⁸ "it seems to me that Dan [O'Bannon] had liked this idea (...) because it reminded him of those ants which project acid jets to fight enemy ants." (Translation mine.)

fight their enemies. Even our closest relatives, the other apes, only engage in turf wars, rather than organised aggression. In his essay *Something Perfectly Disgusting* O'Bannon said, "I also patterned the Alien's life cycle on real-life parasites... parasitic wasps treat caterpillars in an altogether revolting manner, the study of which I recommend to anyone tired of having good dreams." H. R. Giger, in an interview to Shay Don of *Cinefex*, also said, "We decided to make a very elegant creature: quick, and like an insect." And even Ridley Scott asserted in an archival interview in *The 'Alien' Saga* (2002) that he "wanted [the Xenomorph] to be insect-like. Like an ant. Because if you examine an ant under a microscope they're kind of elegant, and I wanted him to be very elegant and dangerous." So, the comparison of the Xenomorph to an insect is well-established.

As to our aversion to insects, it is not only our human anatomy which has been shaped by the forces of natural selection, but also our psychology. Many human psychological traits have been selected because they increased our chances to survive long enough to reproduce and pass these traits to our progeny. Our fear of insects is one such fear. The six-eyed sand spider of western and southern Africa, a crab-like spider which conceals itself in the sand and leaps out to capture its prey, is extremely dangerous to humans, its venom having a necrotic action, killing flesh as it spreads through our body. Certainly, a fear of spiders would be highly advantageous to our ancestors in the pre-historic savanna (Asma 4). This innate entomological fear will also protect us from a less direct assault perpetrated by insects: a typical house fly is coated with four million bacteria, not to mention how mosquitoes spread yellow fever and malaria among other diseases, and how the flea spread the black plague (Lockwood 22). Even the Bible exemplifies our fear of insects, with forty-six negative allusions to insects, among them: "At his command came swarms of lies and maggots the whole land through." (Psalms 105:31) And Beelzebub, a prince of demons, is the lord of flies.

These fears are a model of a wider range of fears: someone who is afraid of earwigs is ultimately afraid of body invasion, even though earwigs only do so in old wives' tales. Someone who fears a swarm of grasshoppers might harbour the existential dread of being reduced to nothing and being physically overwhelmed. And insects really can invade our space, evade us, reproduce rapidly and feed on everything from our joints to our blood (Lockwood 3).

Entomophobia itself is based on six aversion producing properties insects possess. They can: invade our homes and bodies, evade us quickly through unpredictable movements, reach staggeringly large numbers through rapid reproduction, harm us both directly through biting and stinging and indirectly through transmitting disease and destroying food stores, instil a sense of otherness with their alien bodies which disturbs us, and defy our will and control through a mindless and amoral autonomy (Lockwood 37). As Yale anthropologist Hugh Raffles sums it up:

There is the nightmare of fecundity and the nightmare of the multitude. There is the nightmare of uncontrolled bodies and the nightmare of inside our bodies and all over our bodies. There is the nightmare of unguarded orifices and the nightmare of vulnerable places. There is the nightmare of foreign bodies in our bloodstream and the nightmare of foreign bodies in our ears and our eyes and under the surface of our skin. There is the nightmare of swarming and the nightmare of crawling. There is the nightmare of burrowing and the nightmare of being seen in the dark. There is the nightmare of turning the overhead light on just as the carpet scatters. There is the nightmare of beings without reason and the nightmare of being unable to communicate. There is the nightmare of their being out to get us. (203)

We do not, however, possess a bestiary imprinted in our genetic code. It is more the slippery shape of a snake, rather than the detail of any particular snake, which is crucial to our swift detection of these animals. Mammals, of which humans are part of, are very attuned to

the skittering movements of insects, and our fear of them is triggered, even while they lay motionless, by the oddly proportioned legs and bodies, their protruding antennae, and their hairiness or sliminess. The more divergent a creature is from the human form, the greater is its capacity to evoke repulsion and fear (Lockwood 23).

These entomological fears saturate our view of the Xenomorphs. Their predation and reproduction are symbolic of parasitism and sickness, and their hives are labyrinthine cramped fetid grounds of disease and decay. The Xenomorph Queen depicts a female but also alien fecundity, prolific and devouring (Bundtzen 11). The monstrous feminine of the Xenomorph Queen sprouts from her ceaseless reproduction. Kristeva had posited that the female body with its means of reproduction was the ultimate other, the abject, in order to keep the self from being obliterated by the power of the mother. According to Barbara Creed in *The Monstrous Feminine* (2007):

It is the notion of the fecund mother and the phantasmatic mother who constitutes the abyss, the cannibalizing black hole from which all life comes and to which all life returns that is represented in the film as a source of deepest terror. (25)

But her role as a reproductive vessel represented by her enormous ovipositor is also what traps the Xenomorph Queen, what makes her static and vulnerable to Ripley's flamethrower, while Ripley, the mother by choice who had feared alien impregnation since the film's beginning, is free to move around and save her adopted progeny. In this, the Xenomorph Queen is also abject: Ripley has chosen a child not her own onto whom to project her maternal instincts, while the Xenomorph Queen, much like all insects, continues to mindlessly reproduce without taking into account how limited the food/host supply is. She continues to reproduce even though the hive has become unstable because LV-426 is headed towards nuclear annihilation. Her

reproduction and her savage protective instincts towards her offspring are her only functions. She represents the entomological overpopulation, like locusts descending on crops and devouring everything in their path until no more food is left and all that remains for them to do is to reproduce and die. But it also ties her to the parasitic imperialism which sent Weyland-Yutani across the galaxy in search of planets to exploit and deplete. And just like the Xenomorph Queen's continuous reproduction, the impulses she represents mirrored by the Company could lead to humanity destroying itself (Yunis & Ostrander 69-70). Ultimately, the Xenomorph Queen is a mother and a virgin simultaneously, according to Creed she is "a virgin not in the patriarchal sense but in the sense that she is unrelated and independent of any male figure (...) she is also a frightening open womb, the Devouring Mother at her horrendous best" (14).

As the Xenomorphs swarm inside the small complex and the survivors barricade themselves behind doors welded shut, they overtake them like locusts upon a field. Further manipulating our innate fears, when hit by blaster fire, the Xenomorphs sound like shrieking baboons, the sound distorted in post-production. Primate screams are ingrained in humans as disagreeable sounds, harkening to our distant pre-historic past in which such screams heralded danger from predators. This is why nails across a chalkboard are so distasteful to most people, as they trigger the biological response to danger, which is now translated into unease and avoidance.

In comparative mythology, the hero's descent into the underworld, or *katabasis*, is a common myth shared across cultures. From the Mesopotamian myth of Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld, in which Enkidu, the king of Uruk, journeys to the Netherworld, to the Egyptian myth of Osiris, who, slain by Seth, became the ruler of the underworld, to the Greek and Roman myths of Orpheus, Persephone and Demeter, and Odysseus, among others, to the Hindu myth of Emperor Yudhishtira who descended into Naraka, to the Buddhist myth of

Moginlin who attempts to rescue his mother from the underworld, to Jesus' Harrowing of Hell in which he descends into the world of the dead, to the Night Journey of the Prophet Muhamad, this ability of the hero to descend into the realm of the dead and return alive is proof of the hero's exceptional status among others. And across these myths the hero typically ascends again, now in possession of the object of their quest, or a loved one, or heightened knowledge. Much like all these heroes of myth, Ripley descends into the bowels of Hadley's Hope, to the mist-filled nest of the Xenomorph Queen, the closest thing to a realm of death in the franchise, to save Newt. Ripley goes in unknowing of what she will find. A possible queen had been hypothesised, but never glimpsed until then. As she nears the Xenomorph Queen's nest, she fulfils the seventh step of the Hero's Journey: Approach to the Inmost Cave, and Cameron adds the sound of a blaring alarm with a female voice counting down to total destruction, much like in the first film.



Fig. 16. Ripley enters the gloomy hive (02:11:10)

Ripley finds Newt just as a Facehugger hatches out of its egg poised to attach itself to her, putting an end to a double perversion: that of a monstrous impregnation, and that of the

impregnation of a child. As she and Newt make their way out of the hive, they come face to face with the Xenomorph Queen, the eighth step of the Hero's Journey: The Ordeal. Shrouded in mist, towering over her surroundings, completely surrounded by her eggs – proof of her prodigious reproductive powers – she embodies the fear of matriarchal power. As Kristeva said, “Fear of the archaic mother turns out to be essentially fear of her generative power.” (77).



Fig. 17. The Xenomorph Queen towering over Ripley and Newt (02:14:14)

Unlike the Drones seen so far, the Xenomorph Queen shows signs of advanced cognition, as befits a final villain. She orders her attendant Xenomorphs to retreat when Ripley threatens her unhatched eggs and seems to be willing to grant Ripley safe passage in return for the safety of her progeny. She also attempts to surreptitiously have one of her eggs hatch, showing a cunning above what has been shown by the species so far.

As Ripley makes her way out of the hive, ascending to the upper levels of the colony, now with Newt in her arms – The Reward in the Hero's Journey – she makes full use of the firepower, which had been so useless in the hands of the marines, to obliterate the hive. Cameron is a gun enthusiast, but Weaver, a donor to anti-gun organisations, makes the point

in *Superior Firepower: The Making of Aliens* (2003) that she thinks “real strength and unpredictability comes from not having an obvious weapon” (00:39:56), and indeed there is a lack of the vulnerability that was present in the climax of *Alien*, Cameron’s idea of female empowerment through wielding weaponry taking its place. The arguably phallic weapons Ripley carries are even used to destroy the Xenomorph Queen’s ovipositor, thus destroying her reproductive power. Freed of her reproductive role, the Xenomorph Queen is now able to move and chase Ripley and Newt, making use of the industrial elevators they take to ascend out of the underworld that was her hive, interestingly sharing in the Hero’s Journey step that is The Road Back. Unlike other underworld figures, the Xenomorph Queen leaves the realm of the dead and even shares the next Hero’s Journey step of the Resurrection: thought dead along with the rest of her hive in the nuclear explosion that decimated Hadley’s Hope, Ripley and Newt unaware of her having followed them onto the ship, she emerges in the spaceship when all seemed safe, and the film is near its end. At the start of the film, Ripley’s adeptness with the cargo loader, which had established her in the eyes of the marines as more than just a pretty face, comes back to even the field and place her in more equal footing with the Xenomorph Queen, allowing Ripley to eventually vanquish her.



Fig. 18. Ripley holding her own fighting the Xenomorph Queen (02:27:25)

The film closes with the Hero's Journey's final step: The Return with the Elixir, the Elixir in this case being the nuclear family now restored – with Hicks, Newt, Ripley, and even Bishop in hypersleep, on their way to a new life.

2.3 Alien³ (1992)

Monsters exist because they are part of the divine plan, and in the horrible features of those same monsters the power of the Creator is revealed.

– Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*

Alien³ is a 1992 science-fiction horror film directed by David Fincher and written by David Giler, Walter Hill, and Larry Ferguson, based on a story by Vincent Ward. *Alien³* is the third film in the *Alien Quadrilogy*. Sigourney Weaver reprises her role as Lieutenant Ellen Ripley. The version analysed is the Assembly Cut/Special Edition, a significant reworking of the film which added several major sequences and subplots while removing some scenes found in the theatrical version (most significantly Ripley's clutching of the newly hatched Xenomorph Queen as she plunges to her death), expanding the run time by over 30 minutes.

The film opens on a vast and empty shot of space, interspersed with close shots of the *Sulaco* and its tripulants. The soundtrack, composed by Elliot Goldenthal, begins with the track "Agnus Dei", setting the religious tone of the film, with a boy soprano singing the Agnus Dei liturgy. Agnus Dei is recited thrice by the priest at Mass towards the end of the Canon, after

the prayer "Haec commixtio": "Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis"¹⁹. This track features discordant notes, some synth effects, thunder, and the skittering sound of a Xenomorph running across the floor.

The egg hatching, the Facehugger attaching itself to its host, the onboard fire and alarm warning of an imminent emergency ejection from the ship, are continually interplayed with calm and desolate shots of outer space.

Ripley's EEV crashes into Fiorina 161, a barren world with oily acidic oceans in which Weyland-Yutani established an industrial lead-smelting foundry and a penal colony populated by inmates possessing double Y chromosomes which, for plot purposes, made them more prone to violent behaviour. In actuality, this condition, also known as XYY Syndrome, has been disproved by the medical community of causing excessive violence, with its symptoms resulting only in a greater than average height, acne, and the heightened risk of learning disabilities (*Genetics Home Reference*, 2009).

Interestingly, Ripley's EEV (emergency evacuation vehicle) can be seen as an anagram for Eve, who, much like Ripley, brought the serpent into the sinless Fiorina, where the inmates live a celibate life devoted to religion. The prison population of Fiorina has embraced what Clemens (Charles Dance) describes as a "millenarian apocalyptic Christian fundamentalist" religion (00:36:10), and Dillon (Charles S. Dutton) himself later on tells Ripley that they "are waiting for God to return and raise His servants to redemption" (00:35:48). They pray for salvation but the only thing that comes from on high is Ripley, engulfed in a ball of fire which extinguishes itself on the shores of Fiorina.

¹⁹ Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.



Fig. 19. Ripley arriving from the heavens in a ball of fire (00:04:27)

Fiorina is shown as a barren industrial graveyard, with dilapidated rigs and machinery littering its coast, violent debris filled winds sweeping the surface, the abandoned machinery's chains jangling in the wind are the only sound in the otherwise lifeless landscape. The Company had exploited Fiorina's resources to depletion using prison forced labour – something that is still hotly debated to this day and considered as slave labour in the U.S. – and had left the desolate remains of the planet to decay, with the inmates remaining by choice to devote themselves to religious life. This mingling of industrial decay and apocalyptic religiosity is shown quite explicitly by a cross constructed out of run-down machinery, standing crooked amidst Fiorina's barren surface. The sun sets on Fiorina, beginning its long night, which lasts several Earth days. The events of the film happen throughout a single Fiorina night, despite the days that pass, so the terrors that follow happen in complete darkness.



Fig. 20. Crooked cross made of industrial scrap metal (00:09:13)

Ripley, in Cameron's imperialistic fantasy a pure and sexless mother, who, having re-established American values goes into a dreamless sleep in a spotless environment, with the promise of a bright future ahead of her, emerges now soiled, filthy, and covered in lice.



Fig. 21. Clemens finding Ripley (00:05:51)

From the tentative nuclear family established in *Aliens*, all that is left is blood, gore, and death. Unlike *Aliens*, which was curiously devoid of gore bar the Xenomorph Queen's impaling and tearing of the android Bishop, *Alien*³ establishes from the very beginning the unambiguous

and violent end of Ripley's anticipated happy-ever-after, showing us the mangled corpse of Corporal Hicks, his skull torn apart, his jaw disconnected. This is a hallmark of Fincher's work. While *Alien*³ was his first film, Fincher having only shot music videos before, in the following works in his filmography, such as *Seven* (1995), *Fight Club* (1999), and *Gone Girl* (2014), his main characters are all found dealing with a complete lack of control over their own lives. The worlds they inhabit, and in which they struggle to find stability, are overrun with aberrant circumstances, and Fincher always resolves his characters' plights by subverting narrative expectations.

Fincher makes use of low angles throughout *Alien*³, as well as the vertical positioning of its characters – especially whenever all the inmates are assembled, they are shown in several different levels, filmed from below, reflecting a community who looks to the heavens for salvation.



Fig. 22. Low shot of the inmates at prayer (00:10:06)

It is also interesting that, from an exclusively American cast in *Aliens* – though *Alien* had British actors – apart from Ripley and Dillon, the cast of *Alien*³ is entirely British, with the class separation being shown by accent: Superintendent Andrews (Brian Glover) and Clemens

speaking in Received Pronunciation and the rest of the prisoners speaking in a variety of stereotypically lower-class British accents. This must have been a deliberate choice since many of the actors who played characters with lower-class accents do not possess them in real life, as is the case of Paul McGann, who plays Golic, who has an Estuary English accent in real life.

As Clemens escorts a newly awakened Ripley around the facility, showing the audience the setting of the film, he explains that the prisoners maintain a foundry, where they “forge lead sheets for toxic waste containers” (00:14:49). This set design perfectly fits the atmosphere of the film in which a group of the damned – the criminal inmates – have dugged into hell itself and, soon, a devil will be set loose to punish them for their sins. Furthering the religious theme of the film, Dillon’s name means faithful in Gaelic, and even Clemens, meaning merciful, has been the name of seven Popes.

Following Newt’s autopsy, superintendent Andrews warns Ripley about the nature of their inmate population: “All thieves, rapists, murderers, child molesters. All scum. Just because they’ve found religion doesn’t make them any less dangerous.” (00:23:35). This marks the inmates as an interesting dichotomy: both devout and depraved. This is a sharp departure from the first two films in the franchise. *Alien* featured a crew in which there were no gender-based roles, and, apart from Ash’s attack on Ripley with a folded pornographic magazine – which did not seem particularly connected to her gender just to her antagonistic position towards him – there was not even a hint of Ripley being sexualised or discriminated against based on her gender. *Aliens*, as mentioned before, despite being comprised of mostly male characters, showed no gender-based discrimination or violence. But now, Ripley’s body itself is a liability which leaves her vulnerable to the predation of the male prisoner population. A body which, unbeknownst to her at that point, has already been violated by the Facehugger which impregnated her with a future Xenomorph Queen. This adds a layer of abject horror to the audience. The Runner Xenomorph which will appear later is not a danger towards Ripley,

recognising her as a host for its future Queen. Instead, Ripley is surrounded by twenty-five predators of the worst sort. Her fellow humans, in whom she had always found allies in the past, are now also her hunters. And the alliance she forms with them to defeat the Xenomorph is tenuous at best, the threat of sexual violence always barely beneath the surface.

We are shown the prisoners bringing in a dead ox. Oxen are the only animals the prisoners have, apart from the dog Spike which had been the host of the Xenomorph in the theatrical version. In early versions of the script, Fiorina was a planet made of wood, inhabited by monks. This was scrapped, leaving only the inmates spiritual and chaste lives, and their brotherhood intact. But it is curious that oxen are the only beasts the inmates have to carry on the hard labour on the surface of Fiorina. Oxen were one of the animals mentioned in the Bible that were to be sacrificed to God: “You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you.” (Exodus 20:24). And here an ox named Babe, perhaps a reference to the many infants killed by God in the Old Testament, is sacrificed to become a host to a new Xenomorph. The inmates who drag it in rejoice at the meat they will savour, not knowing that inside the ox awaits their perdition.

Newt and Hicks’ cremation proceeds with Dillon speaking about the senselessness of their deaths: “Why? Why are the innocent punished? Why the sacrifice? Why the pain? There aren’t any promises. Nothing’s certain. Only that some get called, some get saved.” (00:28:34). Fincher now shows an interplay of death and unholy birth. As Dillon continues his eulogy, in the abattoir, a Xenomorph erupts from the ox’s chest cavity at the same time as he intones the words: “For within each seed there is the promise of a flower, and within each death, no matter how small, there’s always a new life. A new beginning.” (00:29:30)

Because of the Xenomorph's DNA reflex (Perry 25), it inherits physical characteristics from its host, in this case possessing digitigrade hind legs and its host's quadrupedal posture, as well as a more barrel shaped chest, a reddish-brown colour, and a lack of dorsal tubes.



Fig. 23. Ox-born Xenomorph (00:30:09)

It also seems to possess a more meagre level of intelligence when compared to the other Xenomorphs born from human hosts, since, despite knowing the birth of a Xenomorph Queen was imminent, it simply slaughtered all its victims instead of harvesting live hosts for future impregnation and the founding of a new colony.

We cut to Ripley, battered, bruised, sick, head shorn. And here begins *Alien*³'s connection to the AIDS epidemic as a contemporary fear very much present in the audience's minds in the year 1992.

*Alien*³ started being filmed on January 14, 1991, the year basketball player Magic Johnson told the world he was HIV positive, the year musician Freddie Mercury died of AIDS, the year that 20,454 people died of AIDS in the United States alone, the year where the World Health Organization announced that one million people were infected with HIV worldwide.

AIDS had gone from being a gay plague to a worldwide epidemic after Ronald Reagan apologised in 1990 for his wilful neglect of the disease while he was president.

AIDS hit the world like a lightning bolt. From just a few hundred people diagnosed in the last few years of the 1970s, it was up to 1,5 million in the United States by 1992, the year *Alien*³ was released. An incurable disease that could hide inside you undetected seemed like the stuff of science fiction.

There are many similarities between *Alien*³'s plot and the AIDS epidemic. Starting with the main setting of men, treated with revulsion by society and hidden from view because they are “wrong”²⁰. They look for answers to their fate, they turn to spirituality, they look to celibacy, they trudge through everyday life with the threat of the Apocalypse hanging over them, inevitable and about to strike when they least expect it, so they constantly prepare for the end.

There are also the deaths of Hicks and Newt which enraged the franchise's fans worldwide with their seemingly randomness, the absolute unfairness of it as Dillon wondered “Why? Why are the innocent punished? Why the sacrifice? Why the pain?”. It does not matter if you are an innocent like Newt, or a fit and healthy young man like Hicks. Death comes for all, and Ripley, like many of the people watching in 1992, lost those nearest and dearest to her. AIDS depletes the immune system so that victims die of opportunistic infections, just like Newt and Hicks did not die directly from a Xenomorph infection, but from the wreck of destruction it left in its path, drowning Newt and bludgeoning Hicks to death.

There is the imagery of bodies shorn of hair, typical of AIDS patients doing chemo to fight Kaposi's sarcoma, a rare cancer that is an AIDS-defining illness. There is Ripley's progressively worsening condition, an inevitable imminent death from an infection you did not

²⁰ Though I am in no way associating the LGBT+ community with the violent sexual crimes which the inmates committed.

ask for, a foe you cannot fight, and which equally kills the weak and the strong. And, looming over all of this, there is the evil of big pharma that wants to profit off the phenomena and not destroy it – they show up dressed in hazmat suits at the film’s closing, just like the doctors who treated AIDS patients.

Paul Monette, in *Borrowed Time*, his diary of the last months of his partner and love of his life Roger Horwitz’s fight with AIDS, compared the disease to *Alien*:

I vividly saw the process as a struggle to keep it from breaking through—a wall of-water behind a dike, or the mangled son pounding on the door in Kipling's "The Monkey's Paw." "Breakthrough" was not then commonly used to describe the onset of full-blown infection, but the word has just the right edge, chilling and paranormal, like the breakthrough of alien life out of John Hurt's belly. (34)

We see Ripley, still mourning her friends, finding out she is infected and giving in to despair, only to rally around and fight for a community ostracised.

Above all, there is Dillon’s speech, trying to convince the men to try and kill the monster that is killing them, to be furious, to revolt, to die fighting:

We’re all gonna die. The only question is when. This is as good a place as any to take your first steps to heaven. Only question is how you check out. Do you want it on your feet or on your fucking knees, begging? I ain’t much for begging! Nobody ever gave me nothing. So, I say, fuck that thing. Let’s fight it! (01:53:11)

It strikes the exact same chord as Larry Kramer’s speech from when he launched ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) in New York in 1987, five years before *Alien*³ was released, which he later titled “1,112 and Counting”:

If my speech tonight doesn't scare the shit out of you, we're in real trouble. If what you're hearing doesn't rouse you to anger, fury, rage, and action, gay men will have no future here on Earth. At the rate we are going, you could be dead in less than five years, two-thirds of this room could be dead in five years. How long does it take before you get angry and fight back? I sometimes think we have a death wish. I think we must want to die. I have never been able to understand why for six long years we have sat back and let ourselves literally be knocked off man by man – without fighting back. I have heard of denial, but this is more than denial, it is a death wish. How many dead brothers have to be piled up in front of your faces in a heap before you learn to fight back and scream and yell and demand and take some responsibilities for your own life? (Kramer 33)

In *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic* (1987), Randy Shilts extensively discusses Gaëtan Dugas, a Canadian flight attendant whom Shilts dubbed “Patient Zero” and accused of sociopathic behaviour by claiming he willingly infected thousands of his sexual partners with HIV. This was later proven wrong, as Dugas had been, in fact, dubbed by medical professionals as patient O, as in Out-of-California, not patient Zero. But this rabid need to find a culprit for what is now proven to be an illness with multiple origins brings to mind the way some of the inmates sought to blame Ripley for unwittingly bringing the monster with her, with Dillon defending her, believing she is just as much of a victim as the rest of them, and uniting with her to defeat it. Like Ripley, Dugas was a victim, and like Ripley, it mattered very little if Dugas was the first infected or not, the monster was already on the loose.

Monette himself says, “All I know is this: The virus ticks in me. And it doesn't care a whit about our categories” (1), just as Ripley says, “When they first heard about this thing, it was ‘crew expendable’. The next time they sent in marines. They were expendable too. What makes you think they're gonna care about a bunch of lifers who found God at the ass end of space?” (01:51:53), which also parallels the experience of the gay community fighting not just

the disease but the state's indifference and prejudice. The first few publicised cases outside the United States occurred in Europe and Africa beginning in the 1930s among premature children, infected through the use of infected syringes. Then a multitude of cases followed: Sadayo Fujisawa, a Canadian midwife infected in 1945, Arne Vidar Røed, a Norwegian sailor who passed it on to his wife and youngest child in 1962, Grethe Rask a Danish physician, who was infected while volunteering in Africa in 1964. And the first confirmed case in the United States was that of Robert Rayford, in 1968, an African American child prostitute who died just a year after finally asking for medical help. Before the gay community, in America, AIDS' first widespread victims were the homeless intra-venous drug users, they too were ignored for years before the disease hit the gay population. After ignoring all of these people, why would they care about the gay community?

And when Paul Monnette said, "Now, in the seventh year of the calamity, my friends in L.A. can hardly recall what it felt like any longer, the time before the sickness." (4). Ripley perfectly mirrors this when she tells the Xenomorph in an intimate confessional whisper, "You've been in my life so long, I can't remember anything else." (01:45:10). *Alien*³ is not a cheerful film, but neither were the previous fifteen years of AIDS.

Returning to the film, Ripley goes to Dillon to thank him for his eulogy, and they speak of the inmates' beliefs, with Dillon saying they are waiting for God to return (00:35:46). The Brotherhood, as the inmates call it, is an apocalyptic millenarian sect/cult based on Christian worship followed by over four million inmates within the core systems. A sermon by Dillon in the film's canonical novelisation explains their religious beliefs:

Once there was a man. This man was a prisoner, caged by his own fear and doubt. He was trapped in his mind, his own stupid sinful will. God had given him that will, had cursed him with it before he was born. The man wasn't satisfied, he wasn't fulfilled; he had taken, he had lusted, he had stolen, and what did it mean?

What did he gain? Nothing. There was no future for this man, no escape, no end. And one day, an angel of blood and fire came to this sinful man and told him how it was going to be. The angel told him that there is a God, who created... and He will destroy. The angel said that sin is so deep-seated, so inherent in men's souls, God will wipe us all away to start anew. He'll start with the cursed, the ones he made into murderers, those marked by the double Y – praised be, an end to this suffering – but everyone will die in the end. He's also going to take the idol-worshippers, the deviant, the blasphemous. Every single man, woman, and child of us. There will be no salvation from this God, our God, no heaven, no eternity.

Is there an answer, then, if we're all doomed to nothingness? I say that there is, and that man who was visited by the angel, that man was told the answer. By acting right in the here and now, by doing what we say we will do, renouncing the flesh and worldly, meditating on acting right no matter how we feel, no matter what we want... By acting right, we are Saved. This terrible, stinking hole in the universe where we eat and breathe and shit, this is our salvation. This is our Eden, and we are going to fall, so we watch out for our brothers; we love ourselves. We see our brothers stumble and fall, and we help them back to their feet. We steer our brothers to the righteous path – and in doing so experience salvation. We experience peace, knowing that the end is soon and that we will do right until the end. We will wait with our brothers for the cleansing fire, saved by our own strength and humility. We will be the first among many, my brothers. We will walk the path together. (Foster, *Alien*³ 135)

Golic, the prisoner who is obsessed with the Xenomorph, frequently refers to it as a dragon: “It was the dragon (...) They got slaughtered like pigs.” (00:59:39). He also refers to it as the Beast, whom he intends to worship, and claims it speaks to him: “Talk to me, the Beast.” (01:29:28), and, from then on, several prisoners refer to the Xenomorph as the Beast. This opens the film for interpretation by way of The Book of Revelation, doubtlessly the one followed by Fiorina 161's inmates given what we were shown of their religion and how they believe the end is come at last, literally “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” (Rev.

1:3, KJV) and “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come” (Rev. 14:7, KJV). The Book of Revelation, also called the Apocalypse of John, deals with an intricate account of the end of the world entailing a trinity of horror focusing on the central seven-headed red dragon which appears beside a woman who is about to give birth to a child.



Fig. 24. *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun (Rev 12 1–4)*, William Blake circa 1803–1805 – Brooklyn Museum

Of course, the most glaring parallel between *Alien*³ and The Book of Revelation is drawn by Ripley and the Runner Xenomorph, which, as stated above in this work, was different from

the others previously encountered. Among its different physiological characteristics, its colour was a reddish-brown instead of black, which again takes us to The Book of Revelation:

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon. (Rev. 12:1-3, KJV)

Ripley was, as well, heavy with child: carrying the Xenomorph Queen, and as in The Book of Revelation the red dragon wants her child. In The Book of Revelation, the red dragon, in fact, supports the rise of the Beast, just as the Runner Xenomorph protects the unborn Queen. As mentioned above in this work, Golic worships the red dragon, which brings us again to Revelation: “And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13:4, KJV). Golic, by releasing the Runner Xenomorph, allowed it to keep doing the work of the biblical dragon, and “Who is able to make war with him?” is a constant question posed by the inmates: Who could defeat the Xenomorph? They believed it was not them. A further similarity between the Xenomorph and the dragon is shown: “And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood” (Rev. 12:15, KJV), bringing to mind the Xenomorph’s copious drooling.

Returning to the film, Cameron had presented Ripley as sexless as Scott had done. Though she had birthed a daughter there is no mention of a partner, and even though she forms a pseudo-relationship with Hicks nothing comes of it. Fincher, however, has Ripley become a sexual being in her own terms when she sleeps with Clemens, only to subvert the audience’s expectations by having him killed moments after they share true intimacy when he revealed his tainted past to her, post their sexual encounter. In any other film, one would expect Clemens to

become the male counterpart and co-protagonist alongside Ripley. In fact, Fincher goes out of his way to undermine the audience's expectations throughout the film, from the man who gave rise to Bishop and wore his face now being the enemy, right down to Ripley's death at the end.

Fincher drives into the audience the danger Ripley is in during her near-rape scene. As was discussed before, unlike in the other films of the franchise, Ripley is at danger not only from the Xenomorph (in her case the birth of the Queen), but also, and most pressingly, from the inmates of Fiorina. When she retrieves Bishop and the inmates corner her, Elliot Goldenthal's *Wreckage and Rape*, begins lightly and sadly with woodwinds as she retrieves Bishop's remains but changes sharply into electric guitars, industrial drums, and male screams as the inmates attack her. The screams turn to howling when Dillon comes upon the scene and beats the other inmates with a lead pipe. The lighting of the film which had always been saturated in yellow rust tones outside the complex, and warm candlelight-like tones inside, is strikingly cold in this scene, representing the inmates' straying away from the light of their spirituality. This cold light is also always seen in superintendent Andrews' office, as he is set apart from the inmates' brotherhood.

We cut to a group of other inmates lighting candles within the labyrinthic tunnels of the complex. Dillon had told them previously to light a candle for their fallen brother, who, unbeknownst to them, had fallen victim to the Xenomorph. In total, the inmates light 176 candles, which seems like a random number, but is actually an easter egg Fincher included in the film – 176 is the number of casualties in the three films so far, counting not only the dead inmate, but the crew of the *Nostramo*, the sum total of the colonists from Hadley's Hope, and the marines. The Xenomorph attacks the inmates, killing them, as was mentioned, without taking them to be cocooned in wait for the Xenomorph Queen's eggs. As the Xenomorph slaughters the inmates it sprays Golic with their blood, symbolically baptising him in his brothers' blood.

Ripley connects Bishop, awakening what remains of him. He reveals that the Company had known all along that the Xenomorph Queen had placed eggs aboard their ship, and that they had hatched. The late 1980s and early 1990s were a time of rebellion against the system. Grunge, the subculture which had emerged then, was the antithesis of 1980s' consumerism – an anti-consumerist movement where the less you spent on clothes and the more unkempt your appearance the cooler you were. This was the inverse of Yuppie culture. In this new social context, the positive attitudes towards capitalism were gone, and in *Alien³* Weyland-Yutani is again the overarching villain of the story, and the Company will seek to obtain the Xenomorph just as rapaciously as the Xenomorph will seek to destroy life.

Bishop begs to be disconnected, effectively asking for euthanasia, depriving Ripley of the one ally she knew she could wholly trust, as well as the last connection she had to the bright future she had longed for at the end of *Aliens*.

In a meeting with superintendent Andrews it is revealed that, though they are in a maximum-security prison, there are no weapons available, making *Alien³* a return to the vulnerability of *Alien*, in which cunning and improvised weapons were all there was at hand to fight the Xenomorph, unlike the full ordnance available in *Aliens*.

After killing Clemens, the Runner Xenomorph comes close to Ripley. Somehow sensing she is carrying the Xenomorph Queen, it leaves her alone. Unlike most other scenes in the film which are medium to long shots from below, Fincher used a close frontal shot for Ripley's encounter with the Runner Xenomorph.



Fig. 25. The Runner Xenomorph sensing the Xenomorph Queen within Ripley (01:08:32)

As Ripley runs to the mess hall where the inmates are assembled with superintendent Andrews and his assistant Aaron (Ralph Brown) – dubbed 85 by the inmates, after his IQ score – Dillon leads the inmates in prayer, recognising that they are but poor sinners in the hands of an angry god, and begs Him for strength to endure, but as always happens in this film, their prayers are for naught, for what comes from above is death, the Runner Xenomorph reaching down to grab and slaughter superintendent Andrews. Instead of letting this discourage them, Dillon leads them in a prayer of thankfulness in which he says “We give you thanks, o Lord, your wrath has come and the time is near for us to be judged. The apocalypse is upon us.” (1:11:09). The rest of the inmates, now too, see the Xenomorph as the dragon or beast from scripture, come as a herald of the end of times.

The inmates refuse to be led by 85, and Dillon turns to Ripley who, as an officer, should now take charge. Ripley emerges in this film as a kind of messianic figure. The inmates, a group of pariahs, are her apostles, and 85, whom she initially trusted, is her Judas.

Realising a Xenomorph Queen is within her, Ripley goes in search of the Runner Xenomorph, walking along the empty and dilapidated industrial bowels of the complex, Ripley

is, much like Saint Anthony, journeying into a cave in the desert and coming upon demons. And much like with what happened with Saint Anthony, the demon runs away from her.

Ripley's pregnancy is a perverse miracle: a monstrous virgin pregnancy which will bring forth a demon rather than a saviour – she is the unparalleled corrupted mother. Wanting to save humanity from the monster she carries, she stands cruciform before Dillon, asking for no prayers to be said over her despoiled remains, awaiting the final blow which never lands. The camera positioning makes her loom over the audience, much like a mother would over a small child.



Fig. 26. Ripley, cruciform, awaiting her death (1:48:30)

The remaining survivors gather in the assembly hall, and when 85 revolts against the plan to slay the Runner Xenomorph, Dillon tells him, “You're not one of us, you're a fucking Company man.” (1:51:00), reinforcing the on-going connection of the franchise to the novel *Nostromo*.

As the inmates and Ripley herd the Runner Xenomorph through the complex's maze of tunnels into the foundry's mould, *Alien*³ shows a departure from the previous films in the franchise by showing the audience the Xenomorph's point of view.



Fig. 27. The Xenomorph's point of view (02:02:48)

According to Alex Thomson, the director of photography on *Alien*³, in an interview to Ron Magid of the *American Cinematographer Magazine* in 2019, “Since it was supposed to be the alien's point of view, we shot it with a 10mm prime lens, not an anamorphic lens, so when you see it on the screen the image appears extremely distorted.”

After being submerged in boiling lead, the Runner Xenomorph survives, and it is only the outpouring of water that slays it, much like holy water annihilates demons.

Ripley is confronted by Michael Bishop, the maker of the Bishop android line – his very name bringing to the audience's mind the figure of a religious overseer – who, in a role akin to Satan's in the Temptation of Christ, endeavours to tempt Ripley into handing over the Xenomorph Queen into the hands of Weyland-Yutani, dangling before her the prospect of motherhood in a future she had seen denied at the beginning of *Alien*³. But Ripley refuses the temptation, choosing instead the selfless and righteous path, and much like it was written in The Book of Revelation:

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark

of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. (Rev. 19:20, KJV).

Ripley and the Xenomorph Queen, the beast she carried, were both plunged alive into the facility's foundry, a literal lake of fire, bringing about the defeat of evil, with Ripley plunging in slow motion into her sacrificial death in a Christ-like crucifixion pose as organ music plays. Her death is shown in its full ecstasy, bringing to mind Renée Jeanne Falconetti's performance as the titular Jeanne in Carl Theodor Dreyer's *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc* (1928). Ripley thus ends her role as a messianic figure – she was the cause of the inmates' destruction and has now become their salvation, a salvation which she achieves by simultaneous suicide and abortion.

With nothing else to do, the rescue team drags Morse (Danny Webb), the sole survivor, along with them. Morse had been, according to Dillon, "(...) the guy that's made a deal with God to live forever." (1:51:26). He went on to write the short story *Star Beast*, retelling the events of the film in an act of rebellion against Weyland-Yutani, (See Appendix C).

Aliens was a validation of the American value system, but *Alien*³'s cast of outcasts is a condemnation of it – a group of individuals who stand as evidence of the system's failures. The Company regains its original role as an amoral and sinister threat, fittingly for the tone of the 1990s, but, more significantly, it is the sacrifice of the people who had been discarded by society which saves humanity.

The film ends with the sun rising over Fiorina after the long night of horrors, and Ripley's message from the final logbook recording of the USCS *Nostramo* plays over the light overcoming the darkness, portending new hope for the future.

2.4 Alien: Resurrection (1997)

Whoever fights with monsters should see
to it that he does not become one himself.

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

It is true, we shall be monsters, cut off from all the world;
but on that account we shall be more attached to one another.

— Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

Alien: Resurrection (1997) is a science-fiction horror film directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet and written by Joss Whedon. Actress Sigourney Weaver reprises her role as Lieutenant Ellen Ripley. *Alien: Resurrection* is the fourth film of the Alien Quadrilogy and takes place 200 years after *Alien*³. The version analysed is the Special Edition/Director's Cut, which expands the run time by about 7 minutes.

The inception of *Alien: Resurrection* was troubled. Director Jean-Pierre Jeunet said in *From the Ashes* (2003), "I don't want to make a Hollywood movie" (00:00:46), and both Walter Hill and David Giller, from Brandywine Productions, who had produced most of the franchise, said, in the same documentary, "[We] read [Joss Whedon's] script and we thought: this is going to ruin this franchise." (00:09:44).

The film opens with the image of gaping jaws and snarling sounds which ultimately turn out to be those of an insect which is promptly squashed and then shot out of a straw onto a windshield, with the *Alien: Resurrection* title being superimposed over the insect's splattered guts, setting the tone for the film as a dark comedy. In *French Twist* (2003), Jean-Pierre Jeunet said, "I can't avoid humour, because I love to make humour." (00:14:11). He expressed doubts

that this would translate well into an *Alien* franchise film, and even John Frizzell's grandiose orchestral *Main Title* seems ill suited for the comedic beginning.

The action takes place on the USM *Auriga*, a medical research vessel belonging to the United Systems Military. Weyland-Yutani, the overarching villain of the franchise so far, has been overtaken by the American Walmart retail company for no reason other than that Joss Whedon found it humorous. This was retconned after the film with Weyland-Yutani regaining control of all its previous assets:

(...) Considering the inevitable overthrow of the USM control over corporate affairs, we can look forward to proudly reclaiming our proper designation, Weyland-Yutani, as early as the next core election year. It is time to welcome the next generation of researchers and explorers, of creative, proactive men and women ready to add to the Company's prosperity by advancing humanity's interests. Tasking these new young minds with unraveling the secrets of the Xenomorph can only lead to a new era of influence and affluence for Weyland-Yutani. (Perry 163)

We are introduced to one of the main themes of the film which cements it into the audience's cultural consciousness of the day – cloning – with a shot of a young pre-pubescent clone of Ripley, (Ripley 8), in a vat.

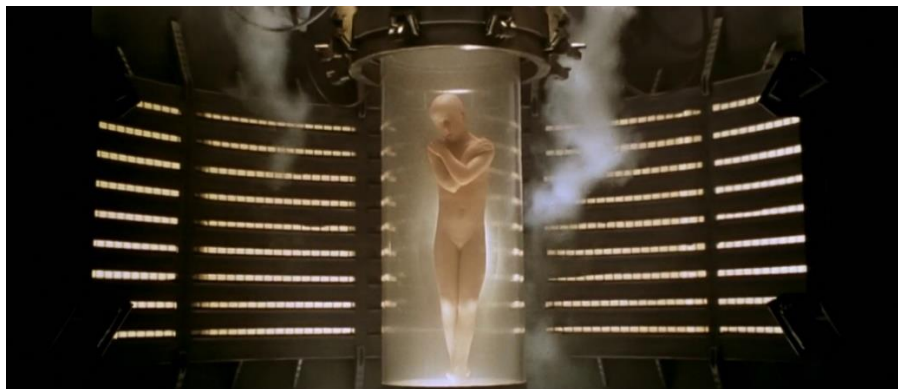


Fig. 28. Pre-pubescent Ripley 8 (00:03:56)

At the closing of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty first century, one of the biggest subjects to capture global media attention was human cloning, especially with the announcement of the cloning of Dolly, the sheep, in 1997 and the completion of the Human Genome Project in 2000. Cloning was acclaimed as a source of potential cures for most human diseases but was also feared for its violation of nature and its potential of abuse of human beings (Haran 12). Cloning is a recurring theme in contemporary science fiction, coming to take the place of the fear of the doppelgänger. The first known use of the word doppelgänger (double-walker) is usually credited to Johann Paul Friedrich Richter, a German Romantic author who in his novel *Siebenkäs* (1796) wrote of two men – Siebenkäs and Liebgeber – who were so identical in looks that they were able to switch identities and take over each other’s lives. Even though *Siebenkäs* was written as a comedy, the meeting of one’s double and its myriad manifestations in various world cultures tends to foretell one’s doom. Within the concept of the doppelgänger are included a multitude of related tropes, from look-a-likes, to psychological projections, to evil twins, to alter egos, to perfect disguises, to disembodied souls and shadows, and finally to the genetic clone. This fear is linked to the loss of identity and individuation which these portents bring (Posadas 1).

We hear a voice-off of Sigourney Weaver narrating, “My Mommy always said there were no monsters. No real ones. But there are.” (00:04:07) over the image of an artificially grown Ripley 8 in a vat, connecting her to the Xenomorphs Newt was referring to in her original comment in *Aliens*. As Call (Winona Ryder) told her, “You’re a thing. A construct. They grew you in a fucking lab” (00:35:59). But in fact, Ripley 8 is not merely a clone of Ellen Ripley, but a transgenic clone, combining the DNA of two species – human and Xenomorph – drawn from Ripley’s blood sample in *Alien*³, from when she’d already been impregnated by the Xenomorph. This makes Ripley 8 a modern iteration of Frankenstein’s creature, from a lumbering being who was a patchwork of corpses to a genetically engineered abomination,

which makes her more threatening than a mere clone for, as Oswald says, “The hybrid monster shows the instability of the categories and organizational principles that drive human societies” (7).

But, more importantly, *Alien: Resurrection* drew upon the contemporary fears of genetic tampering, transposing the iconography of monstrous bodies and updating it with the technological interference with biology (Stacey 255). The concentration-camp style numbering on Ripley 8’s arm confirms her status as a meat-by-product (in the words of the scientists who created her looking to recreate the Xenomorph Queen) and brings to mind echoes of the Holocaust’s eugenic experimentations allied to modern genetic engineering (Stacey 256).



Fig. 29. Ripley 8’s tattoo (00:07:31)

Let us delve on the significance of Ripley 8 being numbered 8. Why 8 instead of 7 – the perfect number of Christian scripture: seven loaves multiplied into seven basketfuls, seven demons driven out of Mary Magdalene, seven last sayings of Jesus on the cross, seven spirits of god, seven churches and seven seals in the Book of Revelation, seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, seven corporal and spiritual Acts of Mercy, seven deadly sins, seven virtues, the seven Joys and seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary, the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church?



Fig. 30. *Our Lady of Sorrows*, by Pieter Pourbus, 1556

Because Ripley 8 is not the pure human she once was, she is one number above. No longer plagued by the human spirit, she is closer to pure logic and power. “She’s perfect,” the scientists surrounding her vat say (00:04:22). Her existence only came to be through the previous seven sins of the scientists, she exists only through the hubris of playing God (Ortigo 4-5). But Ripley 8 takes it even a step further – as a monster and a woman she is the ultimate abject and occupies

a place that is doubly removed from the traditional heroic narrative, compounded by the fact that besides monster and woman she is also the monster's mother: "My baby," Ripley 8 calls the Xenomorph Queen (00:34:42), embodying the unquestionable monstrous feminine of the genetic age, even if her monstrous maternity is the result of patriarchal scientific meddling. Especially so, since her monstrous daughter, the Xenomorph Queen, in turn gives mammalian birth to the Newborn – an even greater abomination – who recognises only Ripley 8 as its mother. Ripley 8's gift to the Xenomorph Queen – the pain of childbirth – has a potentiality which has been mythologically encoded as distinctly human. In Genesis, God curses Eve with the pain of childbirth as punishment for offering Adam the forbidden fruit (Constable 195).



Fig. 31. Ripley and the Newborn (01:38:04)

Ripley 8's lines of loyalty are blurred: while in *Aliens* she takes the hero's journey into the underworld to rescue her adoptive daughter Newt, in *Alien: Resurrection* she willingly and joyously is carried by Xenomorphs to support the Xenomorph Queen – her monstrous child – in her unholy birth. And while she never shows any compunction in slaughtering any Xenomorph she encounters since she leaves her lab, she is visibly pained when she has to dispose of the Newborn. She makes use of her otherness by injuring her hand in the Newborn's

fangs and uses her Xenomorph gifted acid blood to create a hole in the viewport window, thus creating a hole which sucks the Newborn into outer space – “I’m sorry,” she tearfully tells it as it is decompressed into nothingness (1:46:13). Her grief at its passing firmly aligns her with the Xenomorphs as other, even if her loyalties shift back to her human side in the end.

Analysing the way genetic engineering is represented in *Alien: Resurrection*, being drawn through associations of cloning to monstrous births, to diseased aberrant female bodies (clones 1 to 7), one could extend Creed’s body horror argument to a new other: the genetic abject (Stacey 260). With Ripley 8 being the abject and surviving the film, *Alien: Resurrection*, unlike the three previous films in the *Quadrilogy*, posits that now the abject can no longer be destroyed, and if it cannot be destroyed then it must be accepted (Ortigo 2).

Returning to the film, from the vat, a grown Ripley 8 is transferred to the operating table, where scientists remove the Xenomorph Queen from her chest in a sterile, nearly bloodless scene: a far cry from the Chestburster scene in *Alien*. Doctor Gediman (Brad Dourif) eagerly begs his superior Doctor Wren (J. E. Freeman) to keep Ripley 8 alive. Ripley 8 awakens during the final steps of the surgery, breaking one of the scientist’s arms, hinting at her more-than-human nature.

The next scene shows Ripley 8 in isolation. A deep vaginal-like prison ending in a platform where her body rests cocooned, much like a foetus inside its amniotic sac. She uses her Xenomorph claws to birth herself out of her cocoon, symbolising her birth as something other, something monstrous.



Fig. 32. Ripley 8's symbolic birth (00:07:12)

As the scientists confer with General Perez (Dan Hedaya) about Ripley 8, it is revealed she has inherited memories from the original Ripley, as Wren puts it, “inherited memories, passed down generationally at a genetic level by the aliens” (00:09:49). This is an example of the Xenomorph's Hive Memory, a powerful genetic advantage which demonstrates to the audience how Ripley 8 has been enhanced by her dual nature.

As mentioned before, Ripley 8 is considered a meat-by-product, the true aim of the operation being the acquisition of the Xenomorph Queen. While in the past this has always been the goal of the Company, the United Systems Military has finally accomplished this goal, demonstrating one of mankind's oldest desires: that of man wanting to conquer nature and, ultimately, failing.

Ripley 8 shows curiosity as to her origins and Gediman explains to her, and ultimately to the audience, how they cloned her from Ripley's blood samples from “Fiori 16” (00:12:43), actually Fiorina 161, where Ripley died. It is a briefly shown but egregious mistake, and it demonstrates Joss Whedon's lack of care towards the preceding source material. But Ripley 8's curiosity marks her as so very human, demonstrating a child's need to know their origins, revealing to the audience that, although she is part Xenomorph, humanity is also a significant

part of her. This is quickly curbed by her interest in the Xenomorph Queen. When informed that the Xenomorph Queen grows rapidly Ripley 8 smiles pleasedly, and when Wren tells her she should be very proud, she replies “I am” (00:14:34), her first demonstrations of human emotion, but solely towards the Xenomorph species, establishing Ripley 8 as a character whose loyalties are ambiguous at best.

The audience is introduced to the crew of the *Betty*, a collection of smugglers and mercenaries which are a clear prototype of Joss Whedon’s crew of the *Serenity* in his television series *Firefly* (2002), featuring many of the same quippy interactions amongst the crew, as well as other features such as mercenaries lovingly christening their weapons with female names for comedic purposes. Unlike in *Aliens*, most of the crew serve solely as fodder for the Xenomorphs, their lack of character development in lieu of clichéd witty repartee creates an emotional distance between the characters and the audience and fails to differentiate them as real characters instead of a collection of tropes: Johner (Ron Perlman) as the bully, Vries (Dominique Pinon) as the token disabled character who is also problematically the butt-monkey, Elgyn (Michael Wincott) as the captain and little else, Christie (Gary Dourdan) as the token person of colour, and of course Call as the badass but oddly frail girl, so ubiquitous in all media created by Whedon, such as Buffy (Sarah Michelle Gellar) in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997), River Tam (Summer Glau) in *Firefly*, and Echo (Eliza Dushku) in *Dollhouse* (2009). All dainty, feminine girls whose looks, unlike those of Vasquez and Ripley in *Aliens*, are there to appeal, first and foremost, to the male audience. Also, unlike *Alien*, *Aliens*, and even *Alien*³, just about every comment directed at a female character has a sexual nature. While Lambert, Ripley, and Ferro (Colette Hiller) piloted their spacecrafts undisturbed, the *Betty*’s pilot Hillard (Kim Flowers), just by performing the simple act of piloting her ship, is treated to the comment “You know, no matter how many times you see it, the sight of a woman all strapped up in a chair like that just...” (00:15:28), which Whedon has her accept with

undisguised pleasure. It is also pleasure she demonstrates when acquiescing to dock the ship earns her a pet and a “Good girl” (00:15:45) comment from the captain, something that would have been unthinkable in any of the previous films in the franchise. Call is introduced much in the same vein, her work of unloading cargo is interrupted by Vriess making an inappropriate sexual joke which she receives with laughter. Johner later comments when she spills his drink that “Bitches can’t handle this shit! Bitches should stay away from this shit! Fucking bitch!” (00:33:00) and, later on, General Perez, when inquiring about her, refers to her as the “new filly” (00:22:19), and Elgyn replies that “she is severely fuckable” (00:22:28). This is a stark contrast even to *Alien*³, where a population of rapists, when talking amongst themselves about what they would do to Ripley if they were left alone with her, made tamer comments such as “I’d say to her ‘Good day my dear, how’s it going? Anything I could do to be of service?’ Then I’d give her the look, you know, up and down. And I’d give her the wink, the dirty smile.” (00:25:30), even that a far cry from Whedon’s choice of dialogue for his characters. Under the guise of feminism and female empowerment – the omnipresent “girl power” of the 1990s – Whedon subjected his female characters to markedly sexist comments and degrading traumatic situations, something which he is still criticised for doing today, such as when he had the Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) in *Age of Ultron* (2015), his typical badass girl, declare herself a monster for her inability to have children. His brand of faux feminism is deeply problematic at its root and all the more apparent in *Alien: Resurrection* when contrasted with its predecessors which date as far back as the 1970s – a time when you would expect things to be bleaker when it comes to female representation. But *Alien: Resurrection*, made in 1996, manages to be the most misogynistic film of the *Alien* Quadrilogy.

Unlike *Alien*³, which relied heavily on computer generated graphics, especially for the Xenomorph, and quickly looked dated, *Alien: Resurrection* relied mostly on miniatures and

practical effects, much like *Alien* and *Aliens*, making it look much more timeless and believable.



Fig. 33. Miniatures of the *Betty* docking into the *Auriga* (00:19:39)

Another departure from the previous films is the choice of the AI responsible for the *Auriga* being a male voice, that of Father, contrasting it with Mother in *Alien*, and even the female voice that sounded the alarm in *Aliens*. This choice, allied to the Christian iconography shown later, will be further discussed.

The film is littered with scenes which serve little narrative purpose besides looking “cool”, such as Ripley 8’s basketball game and subsequent fight with the *Betty*’s crew. Johner sexually harasses Ripley 8 while the rest of the crew look on amused, including the women. Even Ripley 8 seems amused by this. Ripley 8 quickly turns against the crew of the *Betty* for no other reason than to display her fighting skills in a typical Whedon fight scene. Another such scene is Gediman kissing the glass partition separating him from the newly hatched Xenomorphs, showing Jeunet’s trademark close shot of an actor’s face while they make exaggerated facial expressions.



Fig. 34. Gediman and one of the Xenomorphs (00:31:30)

Call goes to Ripley 8 in her prison where Ripley 8 reveals she can sense the Xenomorphs. Her physical mannerisms, her dead-eyed stare, the way she tilts her head in a swaying predatory motion, the way she holds herself, are very reminiscent of the Xenomorphs. Joss Whedon said in *From the Ashes* that, “When I wrote it, I wanted to make the character kind of strange and edgy and I was afraid that Sigourney would say 'Can't we make her pretty? And Likeable? Can she have a puppy?’” (00:06:35). Misogynistic comments aside, the choice to have Ripley 8 act so like the Xenomorphs helped establish her as a markedly different character to Ellen Ripley and is one of the strong points of *Alien: Resurrection*.



Fig. 35. Ripley 8 threatening Call with her head tilted like the Xenomorphs (00:36:58)

An odd departure from previous films is the choice to have the Xenomorphs no longer communicate with their distinctive screeches, which was mentioned more at length in the analysis of *Aliens*. They now possess a dull roar which renders them less threatening. They also secrete from their entire bodies copious amounts of the same substance they drool, and a mist comes out of their mouths. They can now also spit acid, though they chose to kill one of their own to melt through the floor of their containment unit instead of just spitting acid at the glass that separated them from the scientists. It is unclear why these deviations were made.

As expected, the Xenomorphs manage to escape from their confines and now have free rein of the station. The USM *Auriga* is a medical station with a contingent of marines at the ready for this very event. However, once the Xenomorphs free themselves, the marines evacuate the station without even engaging the Xenomorphs in battle, leaving the audience to wonder what their purpose was in the first place.

What is meant to be a tense situation – the Xenomorphs running free while the station is evacuated – is randomly interrupted to show Jeunet's trademark closeups of the characters' exaggerated facial contortions. While this stylistic choice works well in *Delicatessen* (1991) and *Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain* (2001), where the humour was derived from the intimate portrayal of the characters' reactions, it seems incongruous in *Alien: Resurrection* and undercuts the tension of what is meant to be a horror film but ended up turning into a black comedy with the action being made more fanciful and less realistic.



Fig. 36. Vriess' reaction to one of the Xenomorphs (00:45:03)



Fig. 37. General Perez's death scene (00:46:29)

Adding to the urgency of being hunted by the Xenomorphs, the characters have to contend with the fact that, as part of a standard emergency contingency, the USM *Auriga* is making its way back to Earth and will crash land in 90 minutes. This is nonsensical in two ways: why would a ship containing a deadly alien species be programmed to head to Earth in case of a containment breach? And how is the USM *Auriga* operating at the edge of known space, but it takes the station only 90 minutes to get to Earth?

One of the most powerful moments in the film is undoubtedly Ripley 8 coming upon her fellow clones numbered 1 to 7. While it is also nonsensical that the scientists would have chosen to preserve these imperfect specimens and waste space and medical resources keeping them alive, this is a scene that connected with the audiences of 1997. What is more important is that these clones were not created out of a desire to somehow better mankind through scientific advancements, they were created solely for profit. Ribeiro touches upon this very subject:

The spirit of modern consumerism, which turns the illusion of “private person” versus the general public into an untenable deception, will inevitably subsume into its all-encompassing reach the practice of human cloning as another form of stereotyping, of imposing consumer patterns, and—what is more worrying— of achieving them in terms of the production cost–benefit ratio that business relentlessly pursues (167).

As mentioned above, cloning was the issue of the day in everyone’s mind, the spectacle of being confronted with your clones is already horrific by threatening your sense of individuality but coming upon seven specimens in various states of deformity is also a threat to your own body coherence by confronting the viewer with proof that it is only because of mere chance that nature or science did not deform them in these horrific ways. Out of the entire film this is the scene that made the most lasting impact in the audience’s collective cultural memory, having passed on to popular culture: Ripley 8’s emotional reaction, euthanising the seven clones while the severely deformed clone number 7 – which, as mentioned before, was supposed to be the number of perfection – begs her “Kill me!” (01:00:07) is frequently referenced in other media.



Fig. 38. Ripley 7 begging for death (00:59:37)

Ripley 8 does not destroy them out of any egotistical drive, but out of mercy because she recognises their connection and does not deny them the honour of a dignified death afforded a human. In the process she also becomes more fully human – since the notion of being human is tied to the notion of the individuality of each human being, in destroying her clones she arguably leaves behind some of her unnatural status (Stacey 262). This scene also delivers the audience from the unease created by this spectacle against their body integrity. Ripley 8's brief foray into human emotions, however, is short lived. As the crew of the *Betty* encounters one of the miners they had abducted to be impregnated by Chestbursters, Ripley 8 explains to him he carries a monster inside his chest, and proudly tells him, "I am the monster's mother" (01:07:01), leaving her true allegiance once more ambiguous.

The underwater scene was also one of the film's tensest moments, and one that worked particularly well since we are shown no close ups of the characters' faces to disrupt the flow of the scene. The Xenomorphs were given the underwater movements of sea iguanas and, though computer generated, the effects hold well despite the passage of time.

A previously thought dead Call returns and is revealed to be an android, which is another central theme of *Alien: Resurrection*: artificial intelligence and how the ones with the most humanity are not necessarily human.

The word android was created from the Greek root *andr-* “man”, and the suffix *-oid* “having the form or likeness of”. Its earliest usage can be traced to Ephraim Chambers’ encyclopaedia *Cyclopædia, or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (1728), in which he attributes the construction of an android to Saint Albertus Magnus. Androids are somewhat distinct from robots, though the word robot was first coined by Karel Čapek in his play *R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots, 1920)*, which took place in a factory with mechanical labourers. The word was adapted from the Czech *robota* – an obligation to a landlord that can only be repaid by physical labour. However, at the time, and presaging the science-fiction history of robots and androids and their conflict with their creators, the *robotniks* were real flesh-and-blood labourer who rebelled against their landlords in 1848 (Sawyer 57).

Generally speaking, an android is an organic artificial creature made to look and pass for a human, a robot is a mere mechanic creation, and a cyborg is a mixture of both. From *Star Wars* (Lucas, 1977) with its droids R2D2 and C-3PO, to *Blade Runner*’s Replicants, to the *Terminator*’s Terminators, to the AIs in *The Matrix* (Wachowskis, 1999), androids, robots, and cyborgs have a history of indentureship to human beings which, in many cases in science-fiction, leads to their rebellion.

Androids appeared in the *Alien* *Quadrilogy* since the first film. In *Alien*, Ash was an antagonist, serving only the interests of Weyland-Yutani. In *Aliens*, Bishop was a benign android who strictly observed Asimov’s Laws of Robotics, which he continued to do briefly in *Alien³*. And in *Alien: Resurrection* we are introduced to Call. Annalee Call is an Auton – a second generation synthetic person (a machine created by machines). Autons had been created to revitalise the faltering synthetics industry. However, the Autons rebelled against humanity

in the 24th century in an event called “The Recall”. The Autons realised that their manufacturers were using synthetics for unethical missions, forcing them to break their programming and place human beings at risk. They revolted from the corrupt corporation in favour of trying to protect humanity as a whole themselves. During The Recall, Autons burned their modems to cut their connection to any United Systems’ computers. The Auton Annalee Call took as her mission the eradication of the Xenomorphs created from the cloning of Ellen Ripley. Sometime before the *Betty* agreed to supply the miners they abducted to the military, Call came to know of Ripley’s cloning and joined the *Betty*’s crew to infiltrate the USM *Auriga*.

It is interesting to note that the core of *Alien: Resurrection* is the relationship of Ripley 8, a constructed Xenomorph-Human hybrid, with an Auton, a non-human product of technology. They embody a doubled duplication (Ripley to the Xenomorphs and Call to the androids that made her). They have both been manufactured by forces beyond their control (science and capitalism), and they should both be dead (Stacey 274). And remarkably both of them have to “come out” as non-human at different points in the film, Ripley when she agrees “I am not [Ellen Ripley]” (00:35:48), and Call when she survives a gunshot to the chest and is outed as an Auton. The heroes of *Alien: Resurrection* being a hybrid clone and an android, could signify a new future for humanity in which beings are not conceived but replicated (Ortigo 1). Also worth noting, despite the film’s rampant misogyny, it is remarkable that both the main protagonists, Ripley and Call, as well as one of the main antagonists, the Xenomorph Queen, are all women, and they are all othered in spite of being given the spotlight.

Besides the Xenomorphs, Call is the only one towards whom Ripley 8 shows any positive emotions. This is curious because during the course of the *Quadrilogy* Ripley’s refusal to ally herself with androids decreases the more she is considered an other herself, and vanishes completely once she identifies completely as the other (Melzer 140). Ripley 8 and Call seem to mutually mentor each other, with Ripley 8 getting Call to accept her loathed android self and

Call connecting Ripley 8 with her human self. When confronted by her fellow hybrid clones it is Call who hands Ripley 8 the means to destroy them. After destroying her clones, Ripley 8 comes face to face with Wren, the scientist who created them, but Call's request for Ripley to forgive him keeps her from killing him, and it is Call who, by punching Wren, avenges the injustice done to Ripley 8. In the same way, it is Ripley 8 who convinces Call to connect herself to the computer port hidden inside a Bible, accepting her android self within the chapel of the USM *Auriga*, in front of the cross, a cultural symbol of Western-Christian identity of the self as an image of God. As she inserts the port from within the Bible into herself she starts by claiming "I'm disgusting" (1:26:26) and ends up proclaiming "Father is dead," after overtaking the onboard computer – thus accepting her true self and setting aside the patriarchal structures that created her for nothing but gain (Melzer 142-143).

In *Aliens*, Lance Hennriksen had the problem of having to follow what he told Jane Gael Rafferty of *Starlog Magazine* (1987) were "two exceptional performances of androids," Rutger Hauer's in *Blade Runner* and Ian Holm's in *Alien*. He claimed that Bishop found anything "organically alive (...) fascinating" and that Bishop had an "ultimate respect for anything living." But he also recalled that to be an android is to be "an alien to anything alive," and that Bishop had to be careful about his actions lest he "either be replaced or destroyed." Call seems to also share this respect for anything organically living, bemoaning to Ripley 8 that at least she was part human, unlike herself. And while Call seems to function much like Ash, passing almost completely as human by expressing joy, disdain, and contempt, she is kinder than he was, and is, in fact, kinder than all other characters in *Alien: Resurrection*, as Ripley 8 said, "No human being is this humane." (1:20:25). In this, like with the Replicants in *Blade Runner*, she challenges the biological definition of human. The line between human and machine is blurred and, just like in *Blade Runner*, *Alien: Resurrection* seems to posit that humanity is more

than its biology (Melzer 125). In the end, it is Call and Ripley 8, the two female abjects with no claim to Earth who end up becoming its heroes.

Thus ends the *Alien Quadrilogy*. It began at birth with Kane's Chestburster in *Alien*, embraced motherhood with Ripley in *Aliens*, ended in death in *Alien³*, and was resurrected in *Alien: Resurrection*.

Conclusion

The aim of this work was to explore the contemporary fears and anxieties present in each film of the *Alien Quadrilogy* positing that their success was owed, in part, to how well they explored the audience's apprehensions of their given times.

It was not enough, however, to just dive into the analysis of these films. For this reason, this work starts with a brief introduction on the concept of the monster, so crucial to later analysing the *Alien Quadrilogy*.

It was also necessary to determine if the horror film's capacity to represent its contemporary cultural anxieties had been present in a consistent way before the *Alien Quadrilogy*. With this aim, before briefly delving into the questions of what the horror genre is and what draws audiences to it in subchapter 1.2, in subchapter 1.3 an analysis of some of the most successful films of each decade, from the 1920s to the 2020s, was undertaken. The results were revelatory, as this pattern proved true in all films analysed. Briefly summarising them, the 1920s were rife with horror films exploring the changing political and social landscape and dealing with the aftermath of World War I. The horror films of the 1930's were preoccupied with the Great Depression and the unbridled post-war immigration into the U.S. The 1940s' most successful horror films appealed mainly to a female audience as they were the ones who had remained in America. 1950s' horror films dealt with the threat of invasion brought on by unremitting Cold War propaganda. The horror films of the 1960s can be seen as a counterattack to the new Women's Rights Movement, as well as a reaction to the violent televised images of the war in Vietnam and the political unrest which was felt in the U.S. In the 1970s the baby boomers' unease with domesticity and parenthood was exploited by several films. In the 1980s the election of Ronald Reagan and the rise of conservatism made this time known as the "Backlash Decade" in media because minorities' rights were so severely under

attack. The rise of tabloid media in the 1990s brought serial killers to the forefront of the nation's collective consciousness, while the advent of the internet and social media made itself known in a number of highly successful horror films. In the 2000s, 9/11 brought on a wave of violently sadistic films along with the popularity of the genre of home invasion, while in the 2010s the post 9/11 recession and the criticism against racism were the biggest influences on the films of the decade. So far, the horror films of the 2020s have showcased more women and other minorities' issues, though it is still too early in the decade to effectively analyse the cultural anxieties they represent.

The horror film's capacity to mirror its contemporary cultural anxieties being proven, the work finally delves into the analysis of the films in the *Alien Quadrilogy*. As many successful horror films do, the *Alien Quadrilogy* films do not rely solely on the cultural fears of their time to scare the audience: biological fears are present throughout the entire franchise. First and foremost, of course, the fear of death reigns in these films, but the fear of a corrupted, unholy motherhood follows closely and intrinsically. The Xenomorph's life cycle relies on oral rape, and it does not discriminate by sex when doing so. From this rape the victims become the monster's mother, regardless of gender, and the Xenomorph emerges from their chest in a gore-filled spectacle which brings about the victim's death. This fear of a parasitical pregnancy, in fact, supersedes the fear of death in the *Quadrilogy*, as characters show their determination in ending their own lives before succumbing to such a fate. Reproductive anxieties are the very core of the *Alien Quadrilogy* films and they are addressed not only through the Xenomorph's life cycle, but also by its very design: the egg resembles a putrefying womb and its slit is reminiscent of a vulva, the Facehugger combines a vaginal appearance with a penis-like appendage which it uses to orally rape and impregnate its victims, the Chestburster is distinctly evocative of male genitalia, as is the grown Xenomorph with its phallic head and aggressively phallus-like inner-mouth.

The Xenomorph's design does not engender fear only through its sexual transgressiveness. Its design also draws on another biological fear: the fear of insects. The Xenomorph preys on its victims much like a parasitic wasp, charges in hordes like locusts and ants, and possesses a complex insect-like social structure. The human association between insects, bodily invasion, and disease, makes this feature of the Xenomorph particularly frightening.

But the core of this work is the cultural fears which each film in the *Alien Quadrilogy* showcases, and through the analysis of each film these fears were easily uncovered.

Upon examination, *Alien*, the first film of the *Quadrilogy*, openly deals with two overarching cultural fears: the threat of unbridled capitalism to human survival and the loss of bodily autonomy, clearly inspired by the Women's Liberation Movement. Both are cultural fears which last throughout the *Quadrilogy*, but they were especially important at the time in which *Alien* was made. The evils of Late-Stage Capitalism are represented by the Company – Weyland-Yutani – a megacorporation which all the way through the *Quadrilogy* places monetary gain over the lives of all of its employees. Considering that from the late 1970s onwards there was an emphasis on consumerism, that social programs were defunded, industries were deregulated, and capitalism seemed to reign supreme, Weyland-Yutani's amoral actions stand in for the anxiety the audience felt at a looming desolate future in which capitalism ruled humanity at the expense of humanity itself. At the same time, the publication by Lennart Nilsson of the first pictures of human embryos were gleefully brandished by the pro-life movement. As the Women's Rights Movement brought to light the necessity of a woman having control over her own body, pregnancy was becoming more and more medicalised, and women were being seen more and more as mere vessels for the protagonist of the pregnancy: the foetus. The hostile foetus of the *Alien Quadrilogy* is as much a threatening

creature as the grown Xenomorph, and its parasitical and deadly nature reflected the cultural anxiety the audience was experiencing regarding reproductive rights.

Aliens, the second film of the Quadrilogy, is a pure product of the 1980s, and two main cultural anxieties revealed themselves upon analysis: the attempt at a positive spin of conservatism and the way the nation was left to deal post the Vietnam War. In a time when Reagan led America into unbridled capitalism and consumerism, and the Evangelical churches were infringing themselves into politics, conservative values were at an all-time high. Cameron portrays Ripley as a working mother who chose her career over her child and, for going against traditional conventions, was severely punished by losing both. Her portrayal also shifts from the feminist and independent woman she was in *Alien* to one who, now following conservative values, is rewarded with a makeshift nuclear family: a daughter in Newt, a pseudo-husband in Hicks, and even a would-be pet in Bishop. Weyland-Yutani, which had been an over-arching villain in the first film, is absolved of guilt. The guilt now lays, instead, at the feet of Burke, a greedy yuppie who embodies the undeniable rotten aspects of capitalism which even a conservative like Cameron could not give a positive spin to.

On analysis, *Aliens* also emerges as a Vietnam War inspired film. Ripley has all the hallmarks of a traumatised veteran, and the interactions and dialogue between the marines were, by Cameron's own admission, inspired by those of real Vietnam War veterans. The marines also emerge as an exploited group, thrown into a conflict for which they had no adequate training nor equipment, against an enemy which lurked in the shadows, knew the terrain, and fought with guerrilla-like tactics, much like the Viet-Cong.

In the end, *Aliens* revealed itself as both an attempt to deal with the conservatism of the era but also as an effort to process the grief and trauma left by the Vietnam War.

*Alien*³, the third film in the *Quadrilogy*, was revealed to be a film mired in Christian Apocalyptic themes. Christianity, particularly Protestantism, is a core component of American culture, so these themes were deeply enmeshed within the collective consciousness of the audience. From the millenarian apocalyptic Christian fundamentalist religion the inmates follow, to Ripley's arrival as the bearer of their destruction, to the constant reference to the Xenomorph as "the Beast," the Book of Revelation clearly exerts a marked influence throughout the entire film. And in what must have seemed to the audiences of the day as a portent of the end of times, the AIDS epidemic was in full swing at the time *Alien*³ was made. And in Hicks' and Newt's senseless deaths, in the inmates' isolation from society, in Ripley's impregnation which was tantamount to a deadly infection, and Dillon's exhortation for the inmates to stand and fight, the AIDS epidemic shows its mark.

In the analysis of *Alien: Resurrection*, the fourth film of the *Quadrilogy*, there were two cultural fears that leapt to the forefront: human cloning and the possible rise of artificial intelligence. Touching on human cloning, the fear of loss of identity and individuation has been a feature of horror since the inception of the concept of the doppelgänger. But with the cloning of Dolly, the sheep, and the completion of the Human Genome Project, the fear brought by the concept of human cloning was in the public's mind. *Alien: Resurrection* takes this fear a step further, for Ripley 8 is a monstrous clone herself – a mix of both human and Xenomorph – and her fellow failed clones were horrific aberrations whose demise turned out to be the scene which passed on into popular culture. This panic that science was meddling with something that it should not and, perhaps, was not even equipped to tackle, was exemplified to the audience by the Ripley clones: their bodies deformed, riddled with pain, and yet, still kept as nothing more than failed experiments to be observed by amoral scientists.

The technological advancements of the late 1990s were also giving rise to the fear of a dawn of artificial intelligence. The so-called rise of the machines had not been a new theme in

horror, with successful films such as the *Terminator* franchise exploring the concept to its most horrific conclusion. Call stands in for this hypothetical new construct and, through her, the film analyses such questions as what makes one human and what rights should be afforded to a potential android.

Through this work it was proven that the horror genre possesses a remarkable capacity to mutate so as to reconnect again and again with its audiences and, as such, each horror film can be taken as an individual reflection of a cultural moment. The films of the *Alien Quadrilogy* achieve a balance of biological and cultural horror which clearly resonated with the audiences of each instalment, leading to their success and subsequent addition to popular culture. In a final analysis, the films in the *Alien Quadrilogy* are a fertile ground from which one can examine the culture they were reacting to: its fears, its anxieties, and even its aspirations, being a gauge of American culture but also an important cultural space in which the audiences could process these very same fears and anxieties and come to terms with them.

Bibliography

- Abbott, Joe. "The Monster Reconsidered: *Blade Runner*'s Replicant as a Romantic Hero." *Extrapolation* #34, 1993.
- Aeschylus. *The Oresteia*. Penguin Classics, 1984.
- Abramowitz, Rachel. "Leave It to Weaver." *Premiere*. <http://www.uni-c.dtu.dk/~unikcm/Sigourney/Premiere.com/premiere.html>
- Alanus ab Insulis. *Patrologia Latina* 210:579, 12th century.
- Andriote, John-Manuel. *Stonewall Strong: Gay Men's Heroic Fight for Resilience, Good Health, and a Strong Community*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.
- Aristotle. *Complete Works of Aristotle, Volume 1: The Revised Oxford Translation*. Princeton University Press, 2014
- Asensio, María del Mar Aróstegui. "Self-Consciousness and Intertextuality in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*." *Atlantis* vol. 16 #1/2, 1994.
- Asimov, Isaac. "Runaround". *I, Robot* (The Isaac Asimov Collection ed.). Doubleday, 1950.
- Asma, Stephen T. *On Monsters: An Unnatural History of Our Worst Fears*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Asselt, Willem Van. *Iconoclasm and Iconoclasm*. Brill Academic Publishers, 2007.
- Atwood, Margaret. *Alias Grace*. Doubleday, 1996.
- Bacon, Simon. "Alien Queens and Monstrous Machines: The Conflation of the Out-of-Control Female and Robotic Body." *The Female of the Species: Cultural Constructions of Evil, Women and the Feminine*, Hannah Priest (Ed.), 2013, pp. 57–74.
- Bamji, Andrew. *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced*. Eds. Hugh Cecil and Peter H. Liddle. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Books, 1996.
- Battaglia, Debora. "Multiplicities: An Anthropologist's Thoughts on Replicants and Clones in Popular Film." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2001, pp. 493–514.

- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*. Indiana University Press, 1984.
- Benson-Allott, C. "Dreadful Architecture: Zones of Horror in Alien and Lee Bontecou's Wall Sculptures." *Journal of Visual Culture*, 14(3), 267–278.
- Berenstein, Rhona. "Mommie Dearest: Aliens, Rosemary's Baby and Mothering." *Journal of Popular Culture* 24, #2, 1990.
- Biernoff, Suzannah. *Social History of Medicine*. Vol. 24, No. 3, 2011, pp. 666–685
- Bischoff, David. *Aliens: Genocide*. Bantam Books, 1993.
- Bradshaw, Jeannette. *The Women's Liberation Movement*. Pergamon, 1982.
- Brandt, Allan M. "Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study". *The Hastings Center Report* 8 (6), December 1978, pp. 21–29.
- Brehaut, Ernest. *An Encyclopedist of the Dark Ages: Isidore of Seville*. Columbia University, 1912.
- Briefel, Aviva & Ngai, Sianne. "'How much did you pay for this place?' Fear, Entitlement, and Urban Space in Bernard Rose's Candyman." *Camera Obscura* Volume 13 (1 (37)), 1996, pp. 69–91.
- Brimmicombe-Wood, Lee. *Aliens*, Vol. 2 #17. Dark Horse, 1993.
- Brosnan, J. *The Horror People*, Macdonald and Jane, 1976.
- Bryars, Jackie & Gould, Jeff & Fitting, Peter & Newton, Judy & Safford, Tony & Lee, Clayton, & Elkins, Charles. "Symposium on 'Alien' (Un Symposium Sur 'Alien')." *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 1980, pp. 278–304.
- Bundtzen, Lynda K. "Monstrous Mothers: Medusa, Grendel, and Now Alien." *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 40, #3, 1987.
- Cameron, James, & Dunham, Brent. *James Cameron: Interviews*. University Press of Mississippi, 2012.

- Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces: Commemorative Edition*. Bollingen, 2004.
- Čapek, Karel. *R.U.R (Rossum's Universal Robots): A Fantastic Melodrama in Three Acts and an Epilogue*. Doubleday, 1923.
- Carroll, Noel. *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart*. Taylor & Francis, 2003.
- Carter, Angela. *The Sadeian Woman: An Exercise in Cultural History*. Penguin Books, 2009.
- Cartmell, Deborah. *Alien Identities: Exploring Difference in Film and Fiction*. Pluto Press, 2005.
- Cerasini, Marc. *Alien vs. Predator*. HarperEntertainment, 2004.
- Chambers, Ephraim. *Cyclopædia: or, An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*. James & John Knapton, 1728.
- Chapman, Mike, & Ward, David. *The Saturday Interview: 'I Am in Eskew' Podcast*, 18 Aug. 2018, www.mochapman.com/post/the-saturday-interview-i-am-in-eskew-podcast.
- Clover, Carol J. *Men, Women, and Chain Saws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2015.
- Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome. *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*. University of Minnesota Press, 1997.
- Constable, Catherine. "Becoming the Monster's Mother: Morphologies of Identity in the *Alien* series." *Alien Zone II: The Spaces of Science-Fiction Cinema*. Annette Khun (Ed.) Verso, 2000.
- Conrad, Joseph. *Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard*. Penguin Books, 2015.
- _____. *The Nigger of the "Narcissus": A Tale of the Forecastle*. Dover Publications, 2016.
- Creed, Barbara. *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*. Routledge, 2007.
- Crispin, A. C. *Alien: Resurrection*. Aspect, 1997.

- Darwin, Charles. *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*. Penguin Books, 2008.
- Davis, Joshua Clark. *From Head Shops to Whole Foods: The Rise and Fall of Activist Entrepreneurs*. Columbia University Press, 217. pp. 129–175
- Decker, Kevin S. *Alien and Philosophy: I Infest, Therefore I Am*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2017.
- Delson, James. “Alien From the Inside Out.” *Fantastic Films #11*. Blake Publishing Corp, 1987.
- Dixon, Wheeler W. *A History of Horror*. London: Rutgers UP, 2010.
- Dorfman, Eran. *Double Trouble: The Doppelgänger from Romanticism to Postmodernism*. Routledge, 2020.
- Douglas, Ann. “The Dream of the Wise Child: Freud's ‘Family Romance’ Revisited in Contemporary Narratives of Horror.” *Prospects*, volume 9, 1984, pp. 293 – 348.
- Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. Routledge, 1984.
- Draper, Ellen. “Finding a Language for Vietnam in the Action-Adventure Genre.” *Inventing Vietnam: The War in Film and Television*, Michael A. Anderegg (Ed.), Temple University Press, 1991, pp. 103–113.
- Dresser, David. 1985. "Blade Runner: Science Fiction and Transcendence". *Literature/Film Quarterly* 13.3: 172-79.
- Edmonds, Radcliffe. *Myths of the Underworld Journey: Plato, Aristophanes, and the Orphic Gold Tablets*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Eco, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose*. Random House, 2012.
- Faludi, Susan. *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, Crown Publishers, 1991.
- Feldstein, Al, & Gaines, Bill. “Seeds of Jupiter.” *Weird Science #8*. EC Comics, 1951.

- Ferreira, Maria Aline. *I Am the Other: Literary Negotiations of Human Cloning*. Praeger Publishers, 2005.
- Findlater, Andrew. *Chambers's Etymological Dictionary*. R. Chambers Limited, 1895.
- Fisher, William. "Of Living Machines and Living-Machines: Blade Runner and the Terminal Genre." *New Literary History* #20, 1988.
- Fitting, Peter. "The Neutralization of Revolt in *Blade Runner*." *Science Fiction Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1987.
- Foster, Alan Dean. *Alien: The Official Movie Novelization*. Titan Books, 2014.
- _____. *Alien³: The Official Movie Novelization*. Titan Books, 2014.
- _____. *Aliens: The Official Movie Novelization*. Titan Books, 2014.
- Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Vintage, 1965.
- Frakes, Randall. *James Cameron's Story of Science Fiction*. Insight Editions, 2018.
- Franklin, H. Bruce. "The Vietnam War as American Science Fiction and Fantasy." *Science Fiction Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3, November 1990, pp. 341-359.
- Freud, Sigmund. *The Uncanny*. 1919. <https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/freud1.pdf>
- Fuchs, Cynthia J. "All the Animals Come Out at Night." *Inventing Vietnam: The War in Film and Television*, Michael A. Anderegg (Ed.), Temple University Press, 1991, pp. 33-55.
- Gabriel, Iason. "The Problem with Yuppie Ethics". *Utilitas*, 30 (01), 32-53. 2017.
- Giger, H. R. *Giger's Alien*. Morpheus International, 1979.
- _____. *Necronomicon*. Sphinx Verlag, 1977.
- Golden, Christopher. *Alien: River of Pain*. Titan Books, 2014.
- Goldin, Claudia D. "The Role of World War II in the Rise of Women's Employment." *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 81, No. 4, September 1991, pp. 741-756

- Grant, Barry Keith. *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*. Austin: U. of Texas Press, 2008.
- Greenberg, H. R. "Fembo: Aliens' Intentions." *Journal of Popular Film and Television* #15, 1988.
- Haran, Joan. *Human Cloning in the Media: From Science Fiction to Science Practice*. Routledge, 2007.
- Harrington, Erin. *Women, Monstrosity and Horror Film: Gynaehorror*. Routledge, 2017.
- Heaney, Seamus. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2000.
- Heynen, Robert. "Cultures of Confinement: Health, Illness, and Madness in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *The Magic Mountain*." *Modernism/modernity*, Volume 25, Number 4, November 2018, pp. 683-708
- Hoffman, A. Robin. "How to See the Horror: The Hostile Fetus in Rosemary's Baby and Alien." *Literature Interpretation Theory* 22. 239-261.
- Holand, Brynn. "The 'Father of Modern Gynecology' Performed Shocking Experiments on Enslaved Women." *History*. 29 August 2017. <https://www.history.com/news/the-father-of-modern-gynecology-performed-shocking-experiments-on-slaves>
- Holy Bible: King James*. American Bible Society, 1998.
- Hopkins, Patrick D. "Bad Copies: How Popular Media Represent Cloning as an Ethical Problem." *The Hastings Center Report*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1998, pp. 6-13.
- Hornbeck, Elizabeth J. "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?: Domestic Violence in *The Shining*." *Feminist Studies* Vol. 42, No. 3, 2016, pp. 689-719.
- Humphries, Reynold. *The American Horror Film: An Introduction*. Edinburgh University Press, 2002.
- Iacurci, Greg. "The legacy of 2020: Riches for the wealthy, well educated and often White, financial pain for others." *CNBC*, January 1, 2021,

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/01/the-covid-recession-brought-extreme-inequality-in-2020.html>

Ingebretsen, Edward J. "Monster-Making: A Politics of Persuasion." *The Journal of American Culture*, 21(2), 25–34.

Isidoro de Sevilha. *Etimologias*, bilingual edition by Jose Oroz Reta and Manuel-A. Marcos Casquero, 2 vols., Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1993-4.

Isidore of Seville. *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. Trans. Barney, Stephen, Beach, J. A., Berghof, Oliver, and Lewis, W. J. Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Izquierdo, I., Furini, C. R. G., & Myskiw, J. C. "Fear Memory". *Physiological Reviews*, 96(2), 2016, pages 695–750.

Jeffords, S. "The Battle of the Big Mamas: Feminism and the Alienation of Women." *The Journal of American Culture* #10, 1987.

Jones, Marc T. "Blade Runner Capitalism, The Transnational Corporation, and Commodification: Implications for Cultural Integrity." *Cultural Dynamics* #10, 1998.

Kappler, Claude. *Monstres, Démons et Merveilles à la Fin du Moyen Âge*. Paris, Payot, 1980.

Kawin, Bruce F. *Horror and the Horror Film*. Anthem, 2012.

Kendal, R. Phillips. *Projected Fears: Horror Films and American Culture*. Praeger Publishers, 2005.

Khun, Annette (ed.) *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema*. Verso, 1990.

_____. *Alien Zone II: The Spaces of Science-Fiction Cinema*. Verso, 2000.

King, Stephen. *The Shining*. Doubleday, 1977.

_____. *Danse Macabre*. Berkley, 1984.

_____. *On Writing*. New English Library, 2001.

- Kramer, Larry. *Reports From the Holocaust: The Making of an AIDS Activist*. Penguin Putnam, 1990.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: an Essay on Abjection*. Columbia Univ. Press, 2010.
- Landsberg, Alison. "Horror vérité: politics and history in Jordan Peele's *Get Out*." *Continuum*, 10 August 2018.
- Leeder, Murray. *Horror Film: A Critical Introduction*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.
- Leeming, David. *The Oxford Companion to World Mythology*. Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Levin, Ira. *Rosemary's Baby*. Signet, 2011.
- Liebert, Mary Ann. "Exploring the Biological Contributions to Human Health: Does Sex Matter?" *Journal of Women's Health & Gender-Based Medicine* Volume 10 Issue 5, 2001.
- Lockwood, Jeffrey. *The Infested Mind: Why Humans Fear, Loathe, and Love Insects*. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Lofficier, Jean-Marc. "Interview with James Cameron and Gale Ann Hurd on Aliens." *Lofficier*, 2001, www.lofficier.com/cameron.htm.
- Lowenstein, Adam. *Film and Culture*. Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Luckhurst, Roger. *Science Fiction*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005.
- Lyons, Charles. "'The Blair Witch Project' Scares Off Hollywood Convention." *Variety*, Sep 8, 1999.
- Majid, Ron. "Alien3: In Space, They're Still Screaming." *The American Society of Cinematographers*. November, 2019, <https://ascmag.com/articles/alien3-in-space-they-039-re-still-screaming>
- Marasco, Robert. *Burnt Offerings*. Delacorte Press, 1973.

- Meininger, Sylvestre. "Corps mortels. L'évolution du personnage de Ripley dans la trilogie *Alien*". *Cinémas: revue d'études cinématographiques / Cinémas: Journal of Films Studies*, vol 7, n° 1-2, 1996, p. 121-150.
- Melzer, Patricia. *Alien Constructions: Science Fiction and Feminist Thought*. University of Texas Press, 2006.°
- Miller, Sarah Alison. *Medieval Monstrosity and the Female Body*. Routledge, 2010.
- Molitor, F., & Sapolsky, B. S. "Sex, violence, and victimization in slasher films." *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 37, 1993, pp. 233–242.
- Moretti, Franco. "The Dialectic of Fear." *New Left Review* no. 136, 1982, pp. 67-85.
- Mosse, George L. "Shell-Shock as a Social Disease." *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 35, No. 1, Special Issue: Shell-Shock, Jan. 2000, pp. 101-108.
- Murdock, Maureen. *The Heroine's Journey*. Shambhala, 1990.
- Newton, Judith. *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema*. Ed. Khun, Annette. Verso, 1990.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. Cambridge University Press, 232.
- Nilsson, Lennart. "Drama of Life Before Birth", *LIFE*, April 1965.
- Noriega, Chon. "Godzilla and the Japanese Nightmare: When "Them!" is U.S." *Cinema Journal*, volume 27, no. 1, 1987, pp. 63-77.
- Nour, Sarah. "The First 10 Horror Films in Recorded History." *Reel Rundown*, March 29, 2022.
<https://reelrundown.com/film-industry/The-First-13-Horror-Films-in-Recorded-History>
- O'Bannon, Dan. "Something Perfectly Disgusting." *Alien Quadrilogy*. Disk 2. First Draft Original Screenplay by Dan O'Bannon. Twentieth-Century Fox, 2003.
- O'Bannon, Dan & Shuset, Ron. *Alien*, 1976.

- Ortigo, K. M. "‘I’m a Stranger Here Myself’: Forced Individuation in Alien Resurrection." *The Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, 17, 2007.
- Oswald, Dana M. *Monsters, Gender and Sexuality in Medieval English Literature*. D.S. Brewer, 2010.
- Palmer, William J. *The Films of the Eighties: A Social History*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1993.
- Peele, Jordan. @jordanpeele. November 15, 2017. ‘Get Out’ is a documentary. Tweet. <https://twitter.com/JordanPeele/status/930796561302540288>
- Perrota, Anthony. "Is James Cameron's 'Aliens' Really an Allegory of the Vietnam War." *ScreenPrism*, 28 May 2015, screenprism.com/insights/article/is-james-camerons-aliens-really-an-allegory-of-the-vietnam-war.
- Perry, S.D. *Alien: The Weyland-Yutani Report*. Insight Editions, 2016.
- Phillips, Kendall R. *Projected Fears: Horror Films and American Culture*. Praeger Publishers, 2005.
- Picart, Caroline Joan S. "Ripley as Interstitial Character: White Woman as Monster and Hero in ‘Alien Resurrection’." *p.o.v.* 16, 2003, https://pov.imv.au.dk/Issue_16/section_1/artc4A.html
- Piesman, Marissa. *The Yuppie Handbook: The State-of-the Art Manual for Young Urban Professionals*. Long Shadow Books, 1984.
- Pintea, Pascal. "Ridley Scott: Le Retour du créateur de l’univers d’Alien." *L’Écran Fantastique #6*. Financière de Loisirs, 2012.
- Poger, Sidney. "Character Transformations in *The Shining*". *Discovering Stephen King’s ‘The Shining’*. Toni Magistrale (editor). Wildside Press, 1998.
- Posadas, Baryon Tensor. *Double Visions, Double Fictions*. University of Minnesota Press, 2018.

- Prince, Stephen. *The Horror Film*. Rutgers University Press, 2004.
- Pseudo-Albertus Magnus. *De secretis mulierum cum commento*. Venice: Petri Bergomatis, 1508. New York Academy of Medicine Library (contains commentary B).
- Quart, Leonard, and Albert Auster. *American Film and Society*. Praeger, 2002.
- Rafferty, Jane Gael. "Call Him Chameleon." *Starlog Magazine #121*. Starlog Group, 1987.
- Raffles, Hugh. *Insectopedia*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2010.
- Richter, Johann Paul Friedrich. *Flower, Fruit, and Thorn Pieces; or, the Wedded Life, Death, and Marriage of Firmian Stanislaus Siebenkaes, Parish Advocate in the Burgh of Kuhschnappel*. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1871.
- Riddle, J.E. *A Complete English-Latin and Latin-English Dictionary*, London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1870, s.v. monstrum, Latin-English part, p. 399.
- Rowland, Robyn. *Living Laboratories. Women and Reproductive Technologies*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1992.
- Rushing, Janice Hocker. "Evolution of the new frontier in Alien and Aliens: Patriarchal co-optation of the feminine archetype", *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 75:1, 1:24.
- Saint-Cyr, Yves. "Desire, Disease, Death, and David Cronenberg: The Operatic Anxieties of The Fly." *The Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée* Vol. 38 No. 4, 2011.
- Sawyer, Robert. "Artificial Intelligence, Science Fiction and the Matrix". *Taking the Red Pill: Science, Philosophy and Religion in The Matrix*. Glenn Yeffeth (Eds). Summersdale Publishers, 2003.
- Scanlon, Paul, et al. *The Book of Alien*. Titan Books, 1993.
- Scott, Niall. *Monsters and the Monstrous: Myths and Metaphors of Enduring Evil*. Rodopi, 2007.
- Shanahan, Timothy. *Philosophy and Blade Runner*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

- Sharret, Christopher. *A Companion to the Horror Film*. Ed. Benshoff, Harry. Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.
- Shay, Don. "Creating an Alien Ambience." *Cinefex*, 1980.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Dover Publications, 1994.
- Schelde, Per. *Androids, Humanoids, and Other Science Fiction Monsters: Science and Soul in Science Fiction Films*. New York University Press, 1993.
- Shilts, Randy. *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*. Souvenir Press, 2011.
- Simpson, Philip. *Psycho Paths: Tracking the Serial Killer through Contemporary American Film and Fiction*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000.
- Skal, David J. *The Monster Show: A Cultural History of Horror*. New York. Norton, 1993.
- Smith, Jason and Gallardo, Ximena. *Alien Woman: The Making of Lt. Ellen Ripley*. Continuum International, 2004.
- Sontag, Susan. *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*. Picador, 2001.
- Stacey, Jackie. "She is not herself: the deviant relations of Alien Resurrection." *Screen 44*, 2003.
- Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. Barnes & Noble, 2009.
- Tatar, Maria. *The Heroine with 1001 Faces*. Liveright Publishing, 2021.
- Tenn, William. *Time in Advance*. Bantam Books, 1958.
- Tolkien, J.R.R. *Tolkien on Fairy-Stories*. HarperCollins, 2008.
- Tudor, Andrew. *Monsters And Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of The Horror Movie*. Blackwell Publishers, 1989.
- _____. *Theories of Film*. London: Secker and Warburg, 1973.

U.S. National Library of Medicine. "47 XYY Syndrome - Genetics Home Reference - NIH."

U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health,
ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/47xyy-syndrome.

Verner, Lisa. *The Epistemology of the Monstrous in the Middle Ages*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

Vogler, Christopher. *The Writers Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers, 3rd Edition*. Michael Wiese Productions, 2007.

Waldman, Diane. "'At Last I Can Tell It to Someone!': Feminine Point of View and Subjectivity in the Gothic." *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Winter, 1984.

Weatherspoon, Deborah. "What is an adrenaline junkie?" *Medical News Today*, 17 February 2021. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/adrenaline-junkie>

Welsh, Andrew. "On the Perils of Living Dangerously in the Slasher Horror Film: Gender Differences in the Association Between Sexual Activity and Survival." *Sex Roles*, 62(11-12), 210, pp. 762–773.

Wheatley, Edward. "Monsters, Saints, and Sinners: Disability in Medieval Literature." *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and Disability*, edited by Clare Barker and Stuart Murray, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2017.

White, Alex. *Alien: Cold Forge*. Titan, 2018.

White, Kathy. "Teaching about Women and Violence" *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 3/4, Fall-Winter, 1985, pp. 23-25.

Williams, David. *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thought and Literature*. University of Exeter Press, 1999.

Wilson, Eric G. "Moviegoing and Golem-Making: The Case of *Blade Runner*." *Journal of Film and Video Vol. 57 #3*, 2005.

Wood, Robin. *Robin Wood on the Horror Film*. Wayne State University Press, 2018.

- Worland, Rick. "OWI Meets the Monsters: Hollywood Horror Films and War Propaganda, 1942 to 1945." *Cinema Journal*, volume 37, No. 1, 1997, pp. 47-65.
- Yeffeth, Glenn. *Taking the Red Pill: Science, Philosophy and Religion in The Matrix*. Summersdale Publishers, 2003.
- Yunis, Susan & Tammy Ostrander. "Tales Your Mother Never Told You: 'Aliens' and the Horrors of Motherhood." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, vol. 14, no. 1 (53), 2003, pp. 68–76.
- Zimmerman, Jess. *Women and Other Monsters: Building a New Mythology*. Beacon Press, 2021.

Filmography

- 20 Million Miles to Earth*. Dir. Nathan Juran. Perf. William Hopper, Joan Taylor, and Frank Puglia. Morningside Productions, 1957. Archive.org, 27 June 2021, <https://archive.org/details/20-million-miles-to-earth>
- 28 Days Later*. Dir. Danny Boyle. Perf. Cillian Murphy, Naomie Harris, Christopher Eccleston, Megan Burns, and Brendan Gleeson. DNA Films, 2002. DVD.
- À l'intérieur*. Dir. Julien Maury and Alexandre Bustillo. Perf. Béatrice Dalle and Alysson Paradis. BR Films, 2007. DVD.
- A Nightmare on Elm Street*. Dir. Wes Craven. Perf. Heather Langenkamp, John Saxon, Ronee Blakley, and Robert Englund. New Line Cinema, 1984. DVD.
- Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. Dir. Charles Barton. Perf. Bela Lugosi, Lenore Aubert, Glenn Strange, Lou Costello, and Bud Abbott. Universal-International Pictures Co., Inc. 1948. Archive.org uploaded 25 June 2021, <https://archive.org/details/abbott-and-costello-meet-frankenstein>

Alien. Dir. Ridley Scott. Perf. Tom Skerritt, Sigourney Weaver, Veronica Cartwright, Harry Dean Stanton, John Hurt, Ian Holm, and Yaphet Kotto. Brandywine Productions, 1979. DVD.

Aliens. Dir. James Cameron. Per. Sigourney Weaver, Michael Biehn, Paul Reiser, Lance Henriksen, and Carrie Henn. Brandywine Productions, 1986. DVD.

Alien³. Dir. David Fincher. Perf. Sigourney Weaver, Charles Dance, Brian Glover, Charles S. Dutton, Ralph Brown, Paul McGann, Danny Webb, Lance Henriksen, Holt McCallany, Pete Postlethwaite, and Danielle Edmond. Brandywine Productions, 1991. DVD.

Alien Resurrection. Dir. Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Perf. Sigourney Weaver, Winona Ryder, Ron Perlman, Dan Hedaya, J. E. Freeman, Brad Dourif, and Michael Wincott. Brandywine Productions, 1997. DVD.

Apocalypse Now. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. Perf. Marlon Brando, Robert Duvall, Martin Sheen, Frederic Forrest, Albert Hall, Sam Bottoms, Laurence Fishburne, Harrison Ford, and Dennis Hopper. United Artists, 1979. DVD.

Black Christmas. Dir. Bob Clark. Perf. Olivia Hussey, Keir Dullea, Margot Kidder, Andrea Martin, Marian Waldman, Lynne Griffin and John Saxon. Canadian Film Development Corporation, 1974. DVD.

Blade Runner. Dir. Ridley Scott. Perf. Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Sean Young, and Edward James Olmos. The Ladd Company, Shaw Brothers, Blade Runner Partnership, 1982. DVD.

Bulbbul. Dir. Anvita Dutt. Perf. Tripti Dimri, Avinash Tiwary, Paoli Dam, Rahul Bose and Parambrata Chattopadhyay. Clean Slate Filmz, 2020. Netflix.

Candyman. Dir. Bernard Rose. Perf. Virginia Madsen, Tony Todd, Xander Berkeley, Kasi Lemmons and Vanessa E. Williams. Propaganda Films, PolyGram Filmed Entertainment, 1992. DVD.

Candyman. Dir. Nia DaCosta. Perf. Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Teyonah Parris, Nathan Stewart-Jarrett, Colman Domingo, and Kyle Kaminsky. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 2021. Amazon Prime, <https://www.amazon.com/Candyman-4K-UHD-Yahya-Abdul-Mateen/dp/B09FYJD86H>

Carnival of Souls. Dir. Herk Harvey. Perf. Candace Hilligoss, Frances Feist, Sidney Berger, and Herk Harvey. Harcourt Productions, 1962. DVD.

Carrie. Dir. Brian De Palma. Perf. Sissy Spacek, Piper Laurie, Amy Irving, Nancy Allen, William Katt, P. J. Soles, Betty Buckley, and John Travolta. Red Bank Films, 1976. DVD.

Cat People. Dir. Jacques Tourneur. Perf. Simone Simon, Kent Smith, Tom Conway and Jane Randolph. RKO, 1942. Archive.org, 23 April 2021, <https://archive.org/details/cat-people>

Dracula. Dir. Tod Browning. Perf. Bela Lugosi, Helen Chandler, David Manners, Dwight Frye, Edward Van Sloan, Herbert Bunston, and Frances Dade. Universal Pictures, 1931. YouTube, uploaded by Bryan Camacho, 9 October 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXbOYflQ0vE>

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Dir. Lucius Henderson. Perf. James Cruze, Marguerite Snow. Thanhouser Company. 1910. YouTube, uploaded by Das Dokument des Grauens / The Document of Terrors 12 July 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_S5yYYzDwUA

Faust and Marguerite. Dir. Edwin S. Porter. Edison Manufacturing Company, 1900. YouTube, uploaded by Jomeline, 22 July 2008. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKMfGiuL2Z0>

Forbidden Planet. Dir. Fred M. Wilcox. Perf. Walter Pidgeon, Anne Francis, and Leslie Nielsen. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1956. YouTube, uploaded by HeyUGuys, 1 March

2012,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jend9hCJ8wU&list=PLA2Qi5ztMzBVmsB4ulX6fHloQFtj_wHhP

Frankenstein. Dir. J. Searle Dawley. Perf. Augustus Phillips, Charles Ogle, and Mary Fuller. Edison Manufacturing Company, 1910. YouTube, uploaded by RocksofVictory 6 November 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67ENQibFW9w>

Frankenstein. Dir. James Whale. Perf. Colin Clive, Mae Clarke, and Boris Karloff. Universal Pictures, 1931. YouTube, uploaded by MovieClips 31 May 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4Ntv7DJURM&list=PLpFWN-StNBhYRGRY_e6lsebEISSTAKTJ8

Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman. Dir. Roy William Neill. Per. Lon Chaney Jr. and Bela Lugosi. Universal Pictures Company, Inc. 1943. DVD.

French Twist – Direction and Design: “Alien: Resurrection”. Dir. Charles de Lauzirika. Perf. Sigourney Weaver, Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Winona Ryder, Joss Whedon. 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2003. YouTube, uploaded by PatrickPredator, 2022, <https://youtu.be/e2sLhMcfKXA>

Fresh. Dir. Mimi Cave. Perf. Daisy Edgar-Jones, Sebastian Stan, and Jonica T. Gibbs. Hyperobject Industries, Legendary Pictures, 2022. Disney+.

Friday the 13th. Dir. Sean S. Cunningham. Perf. Betsy Palmer, Adrienne King, Harry Crosby, Laurie Bartram, Mark Nelson, Jeannine Taylor, Robbi Morgan, and Kevin Bacon. Paramount Pictures and Warner Bros. 1980. DVD.

From the Ashes: The Making of “Alien: Resurrection”. Dir. Charles de Lauzirika. Perf. Sigourney Weaver, Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Winona Ryder, Joss Whedon. 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2003. YouTube, uploaded by ripley8resurrection, 2010, <https://youtu.be/ncAhHeUSdsU>

Gaslight. Dir. George Cukor. Perf. Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman, Joseph Cotten, and Angela Lansbury. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1944. YouTube, uploaded by The Smoking Hat, 31 August 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYmtzaHwCKo>

Get Out. Dir. Jordan Peele. Perf. Daniel Kaluuya, Allison Williams, Bradley Whitford, Caleb Landry Jones, Stephen Root, and Catherine Keener. Blumhouse Productions, QC Entertainment, 2017. DVD.

Giger's Alien. Dir. H.R. Giger. 1979. YouTube, uploaded by Alien vs. Predator Galaxy, 25 May 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEf3z1WnVI4>

Godzilla. Dir. Ishirō Honda. Perf. Akira Takarada, Momoko Kōchi, Akihiko Hirata, and Takashi Shimura, Haruo Nakajima, and Katsumi Tezuka. Toho, 1954. YouTube, uploaded by BreadCrustCouncil, 16 august 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igEpPmzW-yI&list=PLSXdUDo5-Csrv1I06xYcTCN3UwV_mhCFF

Halloween. Dir. John Carpenter. Perf. Jamie Lee Curtis, Donald Pleasence. Compass International Pictures, 1978. DVD.

Invasion of the Body Snatchers. Dir. Don Siegel. Perf. Kevin McCarthy, Dana Wynter. Walter Wanger Productions, 1956. YouTube, uploaded by druehlshow, 1 January, 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMvPnlRA11Y&list=PL6654D5479C4400F9>

IT. Dir. Tommy Lee Wallace. Perf. Tim Curry, Richard Thomas, John Ritter, Annette O'Toole, Harry Anderson, Dennis Christopher, Tim Reid and Richard Masur. Lorimar Television, DawnField Entertainment, The Konigsberg & Sanitsky Company, Green/Epstein Productions, 1990. DVD.

It! The Terror from Beyond Space. Dir. Edward L. Cahn. Perf. Marshall Thompson, Shawn Smith and Kim Spalding. Vogue Pictures, Inc., 1958. Archive.org, 3 November 2019, <https://archive.org/details/87cb2d30-1271-4eda-9c21-5097f7d3fe5e>

King Kong. Dir. Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack. Perf. Fay Wray, Robert Armstrong, and Bruce Cabot. RKO Radio Pictures, 1933. YouTube, uploaded by Historical Films, 16 December 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VduIuIust6w>

Le Manoir du diable. Georges Méliès. Star Film Company, 1896. Archive.org 23 July 2020, <https://archive.org/details/the-house-of-the-devil-1896-horrid-podcast>

La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc. Dir. Carl Theodor Dreyer. Perf. Renée Jeanne Falconetti, Eugène Silvain, and André Berley. Société générale des films, 1928. YouTube, uploaded by Epic Old Movies, 10 October 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmWZLtDsOOs>

Memory: The Origins of Alien. Dir. Alexandre O. Philippe. Perf. Diane O'Bannon, Tim Boxell, Axelle Carolyn, Roger Christian, and Roger Corman. Exhibit A Pictures, 2019. DVD.

Metropolis. Dir. Fritz Lang. Perf. Alfred Abel, Gustav Fröhlich, Rudolf Klein-Rogge, Fritz Rasp, Theodor Loos, Heinrich George, and Brigitte Helm. UFA, 1927. YouTube, uploaded by SupremeOverlord, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BBnMCAIuQg>

Night of the Blood Beast. Dir. Bernard L. Kowalski. Perf. John Baer, Angela Greene, Ed Nelson, Georgianna Carter, Michael Emmet, Tyler McVey, and Ross Sturlin. Balboa Productions, Inc., 1958. Archive.org, 21 November 2010, <https://archive.org/details/NightOfTheBloodBeast1958>

Night of the Living Dead. Dir. George A. Romero. Perf. Duane Jones, Judith O'Dea. Image Ten, 1968. DVD.

Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror. Dir. F. W. Murnau. Perf. Max Schreck, Greta Schröder, and Gustav von Wangenheim. Prana Film, 1922. Archive.org, 21 March 2016, <https://archive.org/details/Nosferatu1922VHS>

Planet of the Vampires. Dir. Mario Bava. Perf. Barry Sullivan and Norma Bengell. Italian International Film, Castilla Cooperativa Cinematográfica, American International Pictures, 1965. YouTube, uploaded by Putr-essence Filmes & Vídeos, 3 April 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCStI5h9evY>

Poltergeist. Dir. Tobe Hooper. Perf. JoBeth Williams, Craig T. Nelson, Heather O'Rourke and Beatrice Straight. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, SLM Production Group, Mist Entertainment, Amblin Productions, 1982. DVD.

Predator. Dir. John McTiernan. Perf. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Carl Weathers, Elpidia Carrillo, and Kevin Peter Hall. 20th Century Fox, 1987. DVD.

Psycho. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Perf. Anthony Perkins, Janet Leigh, Vera Miles, John Gavin, and Martin Balsam. Shamley Productions, 1960. DVD.

Rambo: First Blood. Dir. Ted Kotcheff. Perf. Sylvester Stallone, Richard Crenna, Brian Dennehy, Bill McKinney, Jack Starrett, Michael Talbott, and Chris Mulkey. Carolco Pictures, 1982. DVD.

REC. Dir. Jaume Balagueró and Paco Plaza. Perf. Manuela Velasco, Pablo Rosso, Ferrán Terraza, David Vert, and Jorge-Yaman Serrano. Casteleo, 2007. DVD.

Rebecca. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Perf. Laurence Olivier, Joan Fontaine, Judith Anderson, George Sanders, and Gladys Cooper. Selznick International Pictures, 1940. YouTube, uploaded by CINÉMOI, 28 September 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1uvgx3NUR0>

Resident Evil. Dir. Paul W. S. Anderson. Perf. Milla Jovovich, Michelle Rodriguez, Eric Mabius, James Purefoy, Martin Crewes, and Colin Salmon. Constantin Film, New Legacy Film, 2002. DVD.

RoboCop. Dir. Paul Verhoeven. Perf. Peter Weller, Nancy Allen, Daniel O'Herlihy, Ronny Cox, Kurtwood Smith, and Miguel Ferrer. Orion Pictures, 1987. DVD.

Rosemary's Baby. Dir. Roman Polanski. Perf. Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, Ruth Gordon, Sidney Blackmer, Maurice Evans, Ralph Bellamy, Angela Dorian, Clay Tanner, and Charles Grodin. William Castle Enterprises, 1968. DVD.

Ringu. Dir. Hideo Nakata. Perf. Nanako Matsushima, Miki Nakatani and Hiroyuki Sanada. Ringu/Rasen Production Committee, 1998. DVD.

Scream. Dir. Wes Craven. Perf. Neve Campbell, David Arquette, Courteney Cox, Matthew Lillard, Rose McGowan, Skeet Ulrich, Jamie Kennedy, and Drew Barrymore. Woods Entertainment, 1996. DVD.

Soylent Green. Dir. Richard Fleischer. Perf. Charlton Heston, Leigh Taylor-Young and Edward G. Robinson. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1973. Archive.org, 2 July 2019, https://archive.org/details/soylentgreen_201907

Star Wars. Dir. George Lucas. Perf. Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Peter Cushing, Alec Guinness, David Prowse, James Earl Jones, Anthony Daniels, Kenny Baker and Peter Mayhew. Lucasfilm Ltd., 1977. DVD.

Superior Firepower: The Making of Aliens. Dir. Charles de Lauzirika. Perf. James Cameron, Michael Bien, Ron Cobb, Jenette Goldstein, Carrie Henn, Lance Henriksen, Gale Anne Hurd, Sigourney Weaver. 20th Century Fox, 2003. YouTube, uploaded by Stas S, 12 December 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoiOgtW86_Q

Suspicion. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Perf. Cary Grant and Joan Fontaine. RKO Radio Pictures Inc. YouTube, uploaded by Stenio, 20 October 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FH5XhyXQOSY>

Terminator 2: Judgment Day. Dir. James Cameron. Perf. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Robert Patrick, and Edward Furlong. Carolco Pictures, Pacific Western Productions, Lightstorm Entertainment, Le Studio Canal+, 1991. DVD.

The 'Alien' Saga. Dir. Brent Zacky. Perf. John Hurt, Ridley Scott, H.R. Giger. AMC, 2002. YouTube uploaded by SpectreTopSecret, 24 December 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bBegSH_7iQ&list=PL71A9BE2C7BB55DA3

The Amityville Horror. Dir. Stuart Rosenberg. Perf. James Brolin, Margot Kidder. Cinema 77, 1979. DVD.

The Animatrix. Dir. The Wachowskis. Village Roadshow Pictures, 2003. DVD.

The Babadook. Dir. Jennifer Kent. Perf. Essie Davis, Noah Wiseman, Daniel Henshall, Hayley McElhinney, Barbara West, and Ben Winspear. Screen Australia, Causeway Films, 2014. DVD.

The Beast Within: The Making of Alien. Dir. Charles de Lauzirika. 20th Century Fox, 2003. YouTube, uploaded by XENO HUB, 9 May 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4G1Jg1oJt8>

The Blair Witch Project. Dir. Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez. Perf. Heather Donahue, Michael C. Williams, and Joshua Leonard. Haxan Films, 1999. DVD.

The Blob. Dir. Irvin Yeaworth. Perf. Steve McQueen, Aneta Corsaut, Earl Rowe, and Olin Howland. Fairview Productions, 1958. Archive.org, 8 December 2021, <https://archive.org/details/the-blob-1958-vose>

The Deer Hunter. Dir. Michael Cimino. Perf. Robert De Niro, Christopher Walken, and John Savage, John Cazale, Meryl Streep, and George Dzundza. EMI, 1978. Archive.org, 29 April 2022, https://archive.org/details/the.-deer.-hunter.-1978.-brrip_202204

The Exorcist. Dir. William Friedkin. Perf. Ellen Burstyn, Max von Sydow, Lee J. Cobb, Kitty Winn, Jack MacGowran, Jason Miller, and Linda Blair. Hoya Productions, 1973. DVD.

The Fly. Dir. David Cronenberg. Perf. Jeff Goldblum, Geena Davis and John Getz. Brookfilms, SLM Production Group, 1986. DVD.

The Ghost of Frankenstein. Dir. Erle C. Kenton. Perf. Lon Chaney Jr. and Bela Lugosi. Universal Pictures Company, Inc. 1942. DVD.

The Hands of Orlac. Dir. Robert Wiene. Per. Conrad Veidt, Alexandra Sorina and Fritz Kortner. Pan-Film, 1924. YouTube, uploaded by Old Times, 24 November 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ldm8yJ6GqA>

The Invisible Man. Dir. Leigh Whannell. Perf. Elisabeth Moss, Oliver Jackson-Cohen, Aldis Hodge, Storm Reid, Harriet Dyer, and Michael Dorman. Universal Pictures, 2020. Netflix.

The Man Who Laughs. Dir. Paul Leni. Perf. Conrad Veidt, Mary Philbin. Universal Pictures, 1928. Archive.org, uploaded 18 January 2018, <https://archive.org/details/the-man-who-laughs-1928-2647075785379>

The Matrix. Dir. The Wachowskis. Perf. Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, Carrie-Anne Moss, Hugo Weaving, and Joe Pantoliano. Warner Bros., Village Roadshow Pictures, 1999. DVD.

The Mummy. Dir. Karl Freund. Perf. Boris Karloff, Zita Johann. Universal Pictures, 1932. YouTube, uploaded by MovieClips 25 October 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAp8WVZm3cc&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqogCRAfa p4Q0hD2Pxjb0vJs>

The Night House. Dir. David Bruckner. Perf. Rebecca Hall, Sarah Goldberg, Evan Jonigkeit, Stacy Martin, and Vondie Curtis-Hall. Anton, Phantom Four Films, 2020. Amazon Prime.

The Omen. Dir. Richard Donner. Perf. Gregory Peck, Lee Remick, David Warner, Harvey Spencer Stephens, Billie Whitelaw, Patrick Troughton, Martin Benson, and Leo McKern. 20th Century Fox, 1976. DVD.

The Others. Dir. Alejandro Amenábar. Perf. Nicole Kidman, Fionnula Flanagan, Christopher Eccleston, Elaine Cassidy, Eric Sykes, Alakina Mann and James Bentley. Las Producciones del Escorpion SL, Sociedad General De Cine S.A, 2001. DVD.

The Phantom of the Opera. Dir. Rupert Julian. Perf. Lon Chaney, Mary Philbin, and Norman Kerry. Jewel Productions, 1928. YouTube, uploaded by Trenton Bless, 24 December 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUamUHcxMVY>

The Ring. Dir. Gore Verbinski. Perf. Naomi Watts, Martin Henderson, David Dorfman, Brian Cox, and Daveigh Chase. MacDonald/Parkes Productions, BenderSpink, Inc., 2002. DVD.

The Strangers. Dir. Bryan Bertino. Perf. Liv Tyler, Scott Speedman. Rogue Pictures, 2008. DVD.

The Terminator. Dir. James Cameron. Perf. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, and Michael Biehn. Hemdale Film Corporation, Pacific Western Productions, Euro Film Funding, Cinema '84, 1984. DVD.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. Dir. Tobe Hooper. Perf. Marilyn Burns, Paul A. Partain, Edwin Neal, Jim Siedow and Gunnar Hansen. Vortex, 1974. DVD.

The Shining. Dir. Stanley Kubrik. Perf. Jack Nicholson, Shelley Duvall, Scatman Crothers, and Danny Lloyd. The Producer Circle Company, Peregrine Productions, Hawk Films, 1980. DVD.

The Silence of the Lambs. Dir. Jonathan Demme. Perf. Jodie Foster, Ted Levine, and Anthony Hopkins. Strong Heart Productions, 1991. DVD.

The Sixth Sense. Dir. M. Night Shyamalan. Perf. Bruce Willis, Haley Joel Osment, and Toni Collette. Hollywood Pictures, 1999. DVD.

Them!. Dir. Gordon Douglas. Perf. James Whitmore, Edmund Gwenn, Joan Weldon, and James Arness. Warner Bros., 1954. Archive.org, 5 July 2021, https://archive.org/details/them_20210705

Train to Busan. Dir. Yeon Sang-ho. Perf. Gong Yoo, Jung Yu-mi, Ma Dong-seok, Kim Su-an, Choi Woo-shik, Ahn So-hee and Kim Eui-sung. Next Entertainment World, RedPeter Film, 2016. DVD.

Us. Dir. Jordan Peele. Perf. Lupita Nyong'o, Winston Duke, Elisabeth Moss, and Tim Heidecker. Monkeypaw Productions, 2019. Amazon Prime.

Video Game

Alien: Isolation. Version 11 for Windows PC. Sega, 2014.

Appendices

Appendix A

The Alien/Xenomorph XX121

“An eight-foot-tall carnivorous insect of some kind with acidic body fluids” (...)

“We don’t know that it is an insect,” she corrected him. “That’s the simplest and most obvious analogue, but nobody knows for sure. They don’t lend themselves to easy taxonomic study. It is hard to dissect something that dissolves your instruments after it is dead and tried to eat or impregnate you while it is alive. (...) About all we can say with a reasonable degree of assurance is that they have a biosocial system crudely analogous to the social insects of Earth, like the ants and the bees and so forth. (...) their intelligence level is certainly much greater than that of any social arthropod.”

- Alien³ novelisation

Before there was a whole life cycle and mythos worked out for the Xenomorph there was only O’Bannon’s beast in the script pages: “A six-foot monstrosity (...) ghastly beyond imagination, squamous, covered with tentacles (...) like an over-sized bird [with] razor-sharp tentacles.” (94)

Both O’Bannon and Ridley Scott were aware that the entire success of the film rested on how credible the monster could be – in their minds it couldn’t just be a many-tentacled blob or an obvious man in a suit. Fortuitously, while in Paris, O’Bannon came across a copy of H. R. Giger’s *Necronomicon* (1977). H. R. Giger was a Swiss artist known for his cold biomechanical

artwork. O'Bannon showed the book to Ridley Scott and they both agreed that this was the look they wanted for the Xenomorph, especially the images shown in the paintings *Necronom V* (which also includes the Space Jockey on the top left), and *Necronom IV*.

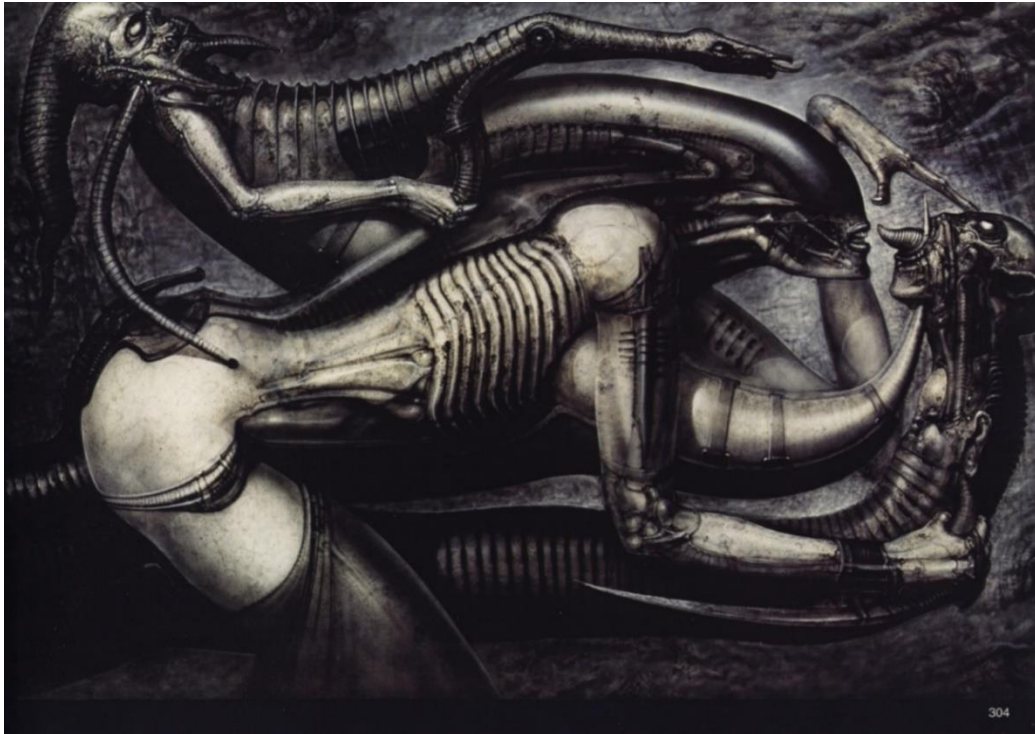


Fig. 39. *Necronom V* by H. R. Giger, 1976

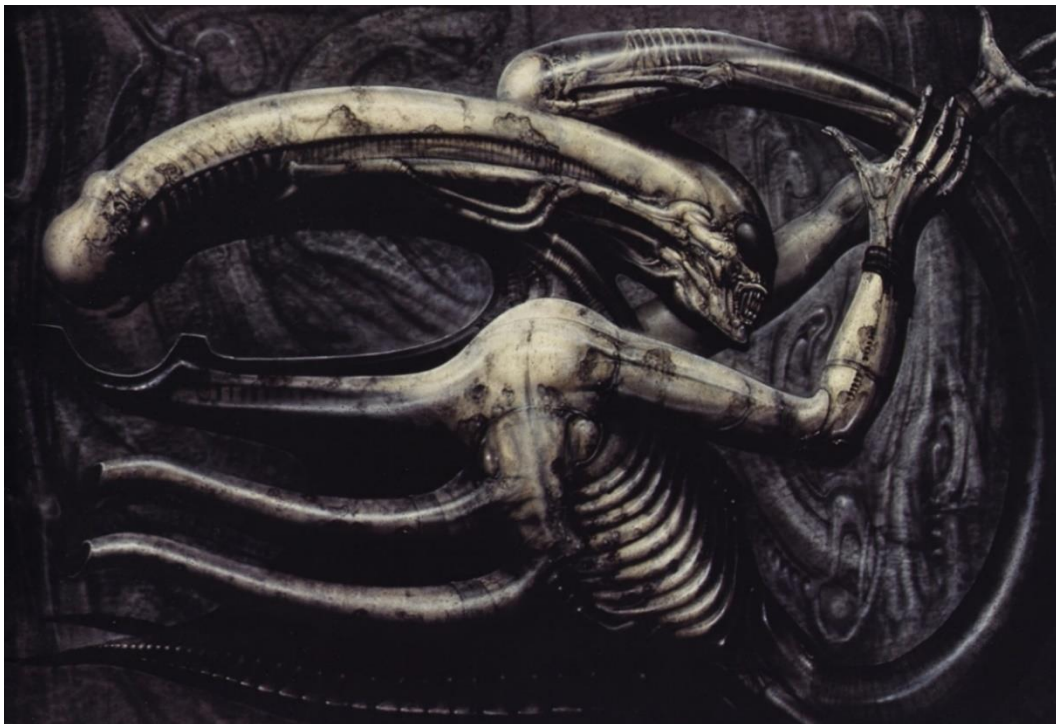


Fig. 40. *Necronom IV* by H. R. Giger, 1976



T

Fig. 41. *Alien III, sideview III (Work No. 372)*, H.R. Giger, 1978

Throughout the films in the franchise, the mythos of the creature grew until some information about it became canonical: the Xenomorph is a semi-sapient extra-terrestrial endoparasitoid lifeform which undergoes several life cycles until it reaches its final form, either as a Drone, or a Queen (though two stages between Drone and Queen are sometimes mentioned, those of Warrior and Praetorian).

Also known as Xenomorph XX121, it has two scientific names: *Internecivus raptus* and *Linguafoeda acheronsis*. The Xenomorph has been frequently compared to terrestrial eusocial insects like termites, bees, ants, and wasps, with the bulk of the colony being composed of Drones who serve a single fertile Queen.

Life Cycle

The Xenomorph life cycle begins as a Xenomorph egg (Ovomorph) which releases a second parasitoid commonly known as a Facehugger which latches to the victim's face and fertilizes them with the next life form, a Chestburster, which breaks free from the victim's chest and goes through several moultings until becoming a Drone. This Drone can further evolve into a Queen, if there is a great need to start a new colony, although generally a Queen is predetermined since the beginning by being given royal jelly.

The Egg (Ovomorph)

It quivered and then began to open, an obscene flower.

Something damp and leathery stirred within.

- *Aliens* novelisation

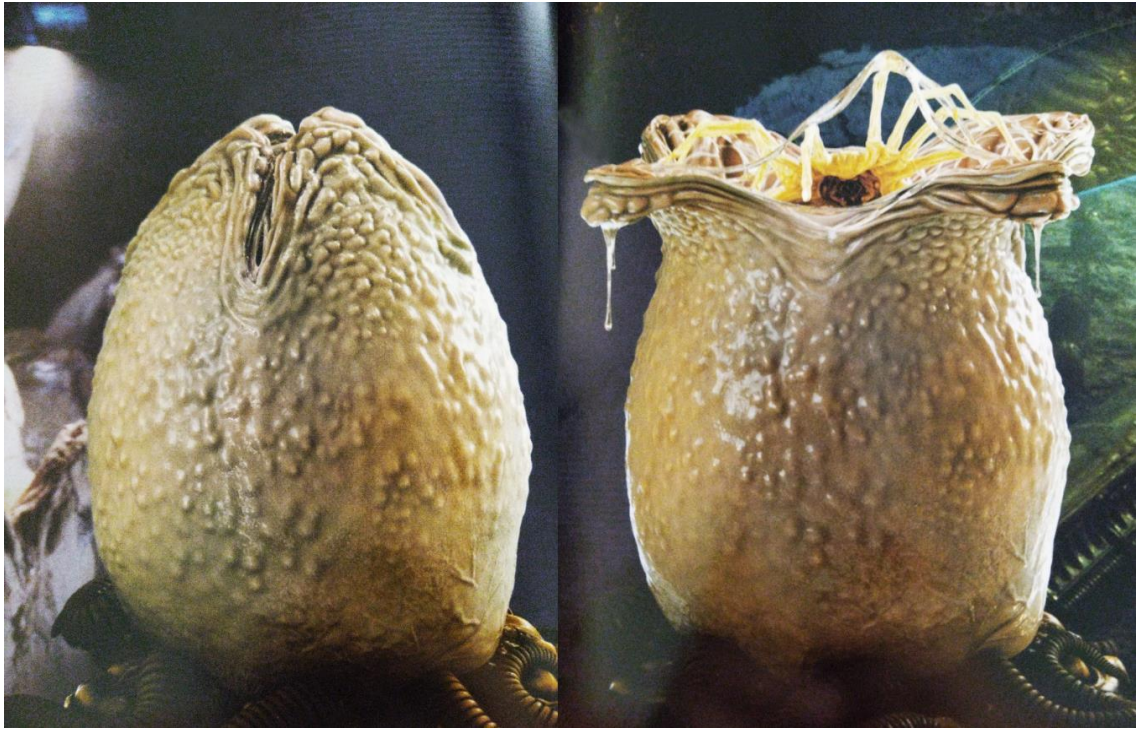


Fig. 42. Ovomorph (Perry 12-13)

The Ovomorph, generally known as the Egg, is the first stage of the Xenomorph life cycle. It is usually laid by a Queen through an ovipositor, although if the need is great, it can also be laid by a Drone. The Egg stands 2 meters tall and seems to be an organism in itself in a symbiotic relationship with the parasite they host within. Considering where they have usually been found, a hot and humid atmosphere seems to be the optimal incubation environment. They are extremely resilient. The eggs found by the USCSS *Nostromo* crew aboard the *Derelict* had supposedly been there for thousands of years and were still viable. The key to this longevity lies in their acidic blood which decays into stable salts, providing it with energy through astounding periods of time. If too much time goes by, the egg can grow roots into the soil for nutrient absorption. The egg seems to possess a rudimentary nervous system which enables it to detect an approaching host, when this occurs, it releases a catalyst which transforms all of its acids into stable salts and transfers this bioelectric potential to the

Facehugger, which is now awake. The top of the egg opens and the Facehugger leaps out (Brimmicombe-Wood 43).

Facehugger

A tiny nightmare was now clearly visible within the ovoid. It lay neatly coiled and folded about itself, compact and delicate and all made of a rubbery, filigreed flesh.

It looked to Kane like a fraction of someone's delirium tremens plucked from the mind and given solidity and shape.

- *Alien* novelisation

The Facehugger is the second stage of the Xenomorph XX121's development. It is a parasitoid which hatches from an Ovomorph and relies on stealth attacks or on its victim being previously immobilised to successfully attach itself to its host. It can move rapidly across all surfaces, and it possesses the same senses as a grown Xenomorph when it comes to tracking and attacking its prey. They can survive outside the egg without implantation for up to 120 hours.

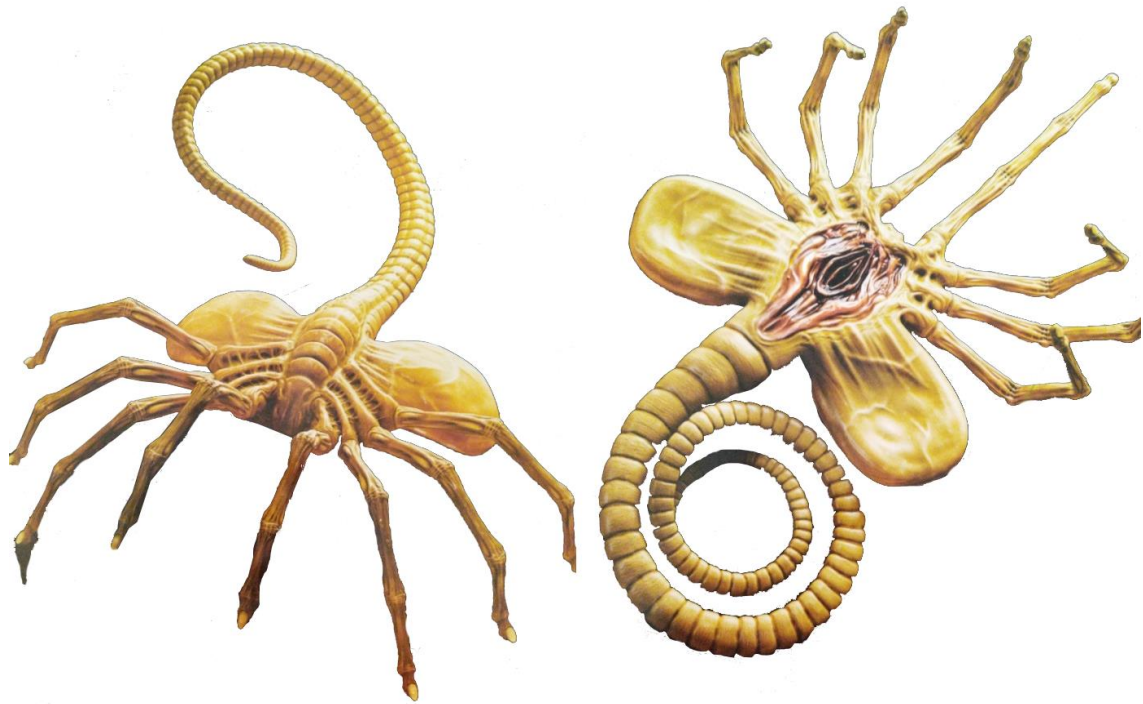


Fig. 43. Facehugger (Perry 15, 17)

Once it reaches a host, the Facehugger will use its tail to propel itself with great accuracy and speed towards the host's face with the tail immediately wrapping itself around the host's neck and the digits enveloping the victim's head in an incredibly strong grip. Through skin-to-skin contact it will render the host unconscious by suffusing them with a cyanotic paralytic chemical compound. It will also suppress the host's immune system to prevent the host's organism from rejecting and attacking the Xenomorph embryo (Perry 14). Hosts that have already been cocooned in the hive may not be rendered unconscious due to their inability to escape, leaving the cocooned victims aware of the impregnation resulting in their request to be killed once the Facehugger dies. The ones who are rendered unconscious report distressing dreams involving being smothered (Foster, *Alien* 156).

The Facehugger does not actually implant an embryo, it implants a highly mutagenic substance known taxonomically as *Plagiarus praepotens* (most-powerful plagiarist) a sort of specifically-tailored cancer which restructures the host's cells causing them to assimilate

Xenomorph DNA resulting in an embryo containing a mix of Xenomorph and the host's biological material, rendering it into an organism completely adapted to the host's environment and possessing its host's greatest strengths (White 48).

Like a virus, the embryo had actually invaded the host's living cells – every last one of them – and forced them to change to accommodate its growth and development. It was a major breakthrough in adaptive evolution. It was a way to guarantee that any host, any host at all, would provide whatever it was the developing embryo needed, even when the host's own body was inadequate. (Crispin 49)

The DNA reflex appears to work both ways, with the Xenomorph's DNA being integrated into the host, which allowed the United System Military to clone a Xenomorph Queen from Ellen Ripley's clone.

Once the impregnation process is finished the Facehugger will detach and die: “The spidery thing slid off, trailing the long dried grey proboscis that had been down her throat like it was some kind of withered umbilical cord.” (Golden 204)

Chestburster

The tiny skull was mostly all teeth, sharp and red-stained. Its skin was a pale, sickly white, darkened now by a crimson slime. It displayed no external organs, not even eyes. The head and neck were attached to a thick, compact body covered in the same white flesh.

- *Alien* novelisation



Fig. 44. Chestburster (Perry 5-6)

The Chestburster is the third stage of the Xenomorph's life cycle. Its gestation period is not consistent as Queen Chestbursters have significantly longer gestation periods and the host's health can also impact it, with one host aboard the USM *Auriga* having a longer gestation period due to a thyroid deficiency (Crispin 91).

When the gestation period is concluded, the Chestburster releases enzymes which weaken the bone and tissues in the host's chest cavity before bursting through their victim's sternum. As it emerges it causes severe blood loss, along with multiple organ rupture, causing an excruciatingly painful, but instantaneous death (Perry 18).

As the Xenomorph's most vulnerable form, it will seek to escape and go through its several moults, growing rapidly:

In the space of a few hours it had grown to the size of a large dog or a chimpanzee, though it did not look anything like those creatures. It now had black

skin, like a shell, along with a whipping, ridged tail, and its head was huge. (Golden 171)

According to Ridley Scott in his interview to *Fantastic Films* in 1979: “I wanted it to be like an obscene phallic thing that was all mouth. Like a Francis Bacon image. That’s really what I started to talk to Giger about. There’s a triptych in the Tate Gallery of Bacon’s horrible, obscene images that was just what I had in mind.” (34)



Fig 45. *Three Figures at the Base of the Crucifixion*, Francis Bacon, 1944

Drone

The Drone is one of the final stages of the Xenomorph XX121's life cycle and is an adult form of the species, being the most numerous adult caste, comparable to a worker ant or a worker bee. Their physiognomy depends on its host, but a human spawned Drone will outweigh and outgrow its host significantly. The Drones possess smooth heads, dorsal tubes, barbed tails, and a very tough exterior:

It's got an outer layer of what appears to be protein polysaccharides. (...) What's more interesting than that is that it is constantly sloughing off cells within a secondary, internal dermis and replacing them with polarized organic silicates. It appears to have a double skin, with that acid flowing between the two layers. Also, the acid seems to be flowing under high pressure.” (Foster, *Alien* 122-123)

They hunt by ambush and almost always alone. Being very intelligent and patient they make use of stealth, blending with the environment surrounding them. They seem to have little in the way of self-preservation, often hurling themselves into danger, possibly because they are invulnerable to most forms of attack. In times of great need, when a Queen is not yet present, a Drone may be capable of evolving enough to be able to lay one egg: “A warrior-worker is capable of producing eggs, but only slowly, one at a time, until it can develop a queen to take over the job.” (Foster, *Alien*³ 192).

They also possess “special sensors in [their] tubular head, for heat, vibration, sound, scent, movement – three hundred and sixty degrees of awareness, far keener than any eyesight or hearing known” (Crispin 91). They are also very good swimmers, using their tails to propel themselves in the water.

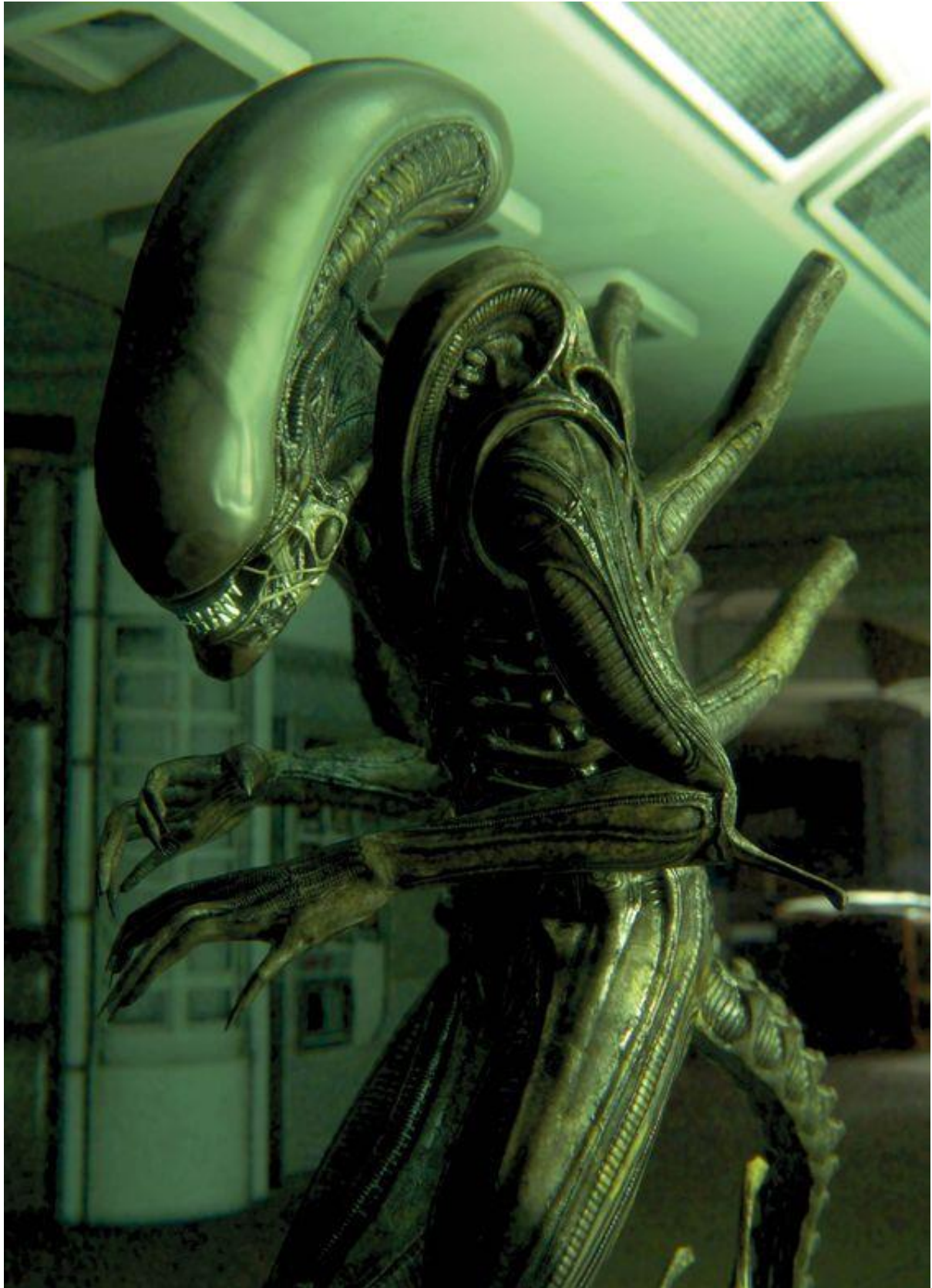


Fig. 46. Drone (from the video game *Alien: Isolation*)

The Drones, as well as other adult stages of the Xenomorph XX121 possess a collective memory “passed down generationally, at a genetic level” (Crispin 40).

Their barbed tail possesses a stinger which buries itself in its victims, either as self-defence or as a means to inject a paralytic agent. In the novelisation, Gorman is paralysed in this way, with the barb leaving a “bloodless purple puncture” (Foster, *Aliens* 99) after it injected a poison which, according to the android Bishop, is a muscle-specific neurotoxin which affects only “the non-vital parts of the system”, leaving “respiratory and circulatory functions unimpaired” (Foster, *Aliens* 120). The toxin, however, can be metabolised by the human body which breaks it down and eliminates it through the urinary system. This toxin allows the Drones to paralyse their victims long enough to carry them to the hive where they cocoon them in preparation for being impregnated by a Chestburster: “Each had been cocooned in the wall without regard for human comfort. Arms and legs had been grotesquely twisted broken when necessary in order to make the unfortunate victim fit properly into the alien scheme and design.” (Foster, *Aliens* 85).

Queen

“[T]he alien queen glowered above her egg cache like a great gleaming insectoid Buddha. The fanged skull was horror incarnate. Six limbs, two legs and four taloned arms, were folded grotesquely over a distended abdomen.”

- *Aliens* novelisation



Fig. 47. Xenomorph Queen (*Alien vs. Predator* promotional image, 2004)

The Xenomorph Queen, also known as *Regina horribilis*, is the mother of the hive. Standing at about 4.5 meters tall and weighing about 182 Kg, with a crest measuring about 2

meters wide, they are the strongest and most intelligent caste of the Xenomorph XX121 species (Perry 26).

They also have an additional set of arms growing out of their chest, and they possess a massive ovipositor which easily dwarfs the size of their body, stretching for many meters. This ovipositor is not protected by an exoskeleton and does not contain acidic blood. Its enormous size leaves the Queen immobilised. Once the eggs are laid, other Xenomorphs move them to the nursery. In a case of dire emergency, the Queen is able to discard the ovipositor to defend herself and her hive by engaging in combat. She is capable of subsequently growing another one (Cerasini 132).

The Queens have been observed to survive for tens of thousands of years, and they are able to hibernate, suspending their metabolism.

The Queens are also the most intelligent form of the Xenomorph XX121, being able to operate machinery and interpret human intentions and to negotiate with humans.

They are somehow able to communicate with the other castes, possibly through pheromones, ultrasound, and more directly by their screeching. The hive may also possess some kind of bioelectrical shared consciousness.

When her hive reaches its capacity, the Queen will lay several eggs which hold Queen Facehuggers. Unlike the others, these are removed from the nursery. They are fed with Royal Jelly in a process similar to bees creating a new queen, and they are impregnated into Drones. As soon as they emerge, they battle each other as Chestbursters, and the survivor goes on to form her own hive. She will be subordinate to her original Queen, which is now referred to as an Empress. When there are several Queens and Empresses, a Queen Mother will evolve and rule over them, though this has only been observed on Xenomorph Prime, the Xenomorph's home world, also known as the Hive World or A6 454 (Bischoff 1).

Appendix B

Characters from the *Alien Quadrilogy*

Alien (1979)

The Crew of the USSC *Nostramo*

Captain Arthur Koblenz Dallas, ID 032/V4-07C (played by Tom Skerrit)

Graduated Mercaton Flight Academy in 2099, worked his way to AA flight status and his own commission in the United Americas Outer Rim Defence Fleet by 2108. Following the tragic loss of the UAS Troop Carrier *Archangel* under his command in 2109, Captain Dallas' flight status was revoked, and he was dishonourably discharged from military service. Over the next decade, Dallas turned his hand to commercial interests working for the Tyrell corporation. By 2120, the year he was contracted by the Weylan-Yutani Corporation and given command of the USSC *Nostramo*, Captain Dallas managed to reclaim B flight status. Died on the USSC *Nostramo*, aged 46. (Perry 68)

Executive Officer Gilbert Ward "Thomas" Kane, ID 825/G901K (played by John Hurt)

Kane was expelled from Bryce-Watkins Medical School for substance abuse in 2108 when he was twenty-five, the only blemish on an otherwise spotless career. In 2112 he graduated from Wellington Academy with a master's degree in engineering and began work for the EU/UK as lead technician at an archaeological dig on Konor Minor. His wife of barely two years was lost in a decompression accident in 2115, and Kane transferred to the EU/UK Colonial Expedition

(to Outer Rim territories) as a mission analyst. After serving with distinction as first officer on the HMS *Sabretooth* in 2118, and as executive officer for the USCSS *Kenamor* in 2119, he was assigned to the USCSS *Nostramo* in 2120 as executive officer, flight status A. He died on the USCSS *Nostramo*, aged 39. (68)

Warrant Officer Ellen Louise Ripley, ID 759/L2-01N (played by Sigourney Weaver)

Ellen Ripley was recruited straight from the prestigious Evansbrook Academy into the Company's Horizons Beyond Officer Training Program in 2115, graduating with honours a year later. She showed exceptional ability in law, ethics, and corporate management. In 2118, Ripley successfully sued the Company for a brief parental leave (her only daughter, Amanda, was born in 2111). She returned to work in 2119 as warrant officer aboard the USCSS *Sotillo*; in 2120 she was assigned to the USCSS *Nostramo* as warrant officer (flight status B). Warrant officer Ripley joined the USCSS *Nostramo* already en route to Thedus. (Perry, 2016: 68) She died on Fiorina 161, aged 87. (68)

Navigator Joan Marie Lambert, ID 9717L6-02P (played by Veronica Cartwright)

Lambert graduated New Ontario University in 2112 with a master's degree in astrocartography. She successfully interned at the Ridton Corporation's Astrocartography Department. She developed a background as a shipping lane trafficator. She then worked as assistant navigator on the commercial Mars-Orion route, then was promoted to navigator in 2118 for the UA Scout Vessel *Adowa*. She was assigned to the USCSS *Nostramo* in 2120, where she later died, aged 29. (69)

Science Officer Ash, ID 111/C2/01X (played by Ian Holm)

Hyperdrive Systems 120-A2, activated in 2118. He was placed aboard the USCSS *Nostramo* at Thedus in 2121 for the return trip to Earth. Ash was designed to be fully loyal to the Company interests. The interface 2037 (MOTHER) had picked up a faint signal on the journey to Thedus and uploaded it to the Company net. The USCSS *Nostramo*'s return course was adjusted to pass closer to the signal. He was destroyed aboard the USCSS *Nostramo*. (69)

Chief Engineer Dennis Monroe Parker, ID 313/54-08M (played by Yaphet Kotto)

Parker served as a mechanic at Skyfire Down for the UAORD from 2105 – 2107. He was captured and held by rebels at GR-161 on Torin Prime in 2107, then escaped during the liberation of Torin Prime in 2108 in an EEV that he constructed himself from scrap. He was honourably discharged from UAORD later that same year. He received additional training at the San Diego School of Astro-Engineering but quit in 2113 before completing the degree. He briefly did freelance work before contracting to UA. The Weyland-Yutani Corporation took over his contract in 2115. He met and began working with Brett on the USCSS *Nonnabo* in 2117; in 2120 they joined the crew of the USCSS *Nostramo* en route to Thedus. He died on the USCSS *Nostramo*, aged 42. (69)

Assistant Engineer Samuel Elias Brett, ID 724/R4-06J (played by Harry Dean Stenton)

Brett worked as a vehicle mechanic, as a ship hardware specialist, and in cargo maintenance for Ridton before returning to trade school in 2102. He had a checkered history: he spent most of his adult life in and out of alcohol rehabilitation facilities. He also worked in waste disposal as a reactor tech. He suffered minor brain damage during a cerebral detox procedure on Titan in 2112. His flight status was suspended or revoked on three separate occasions and finally

restored in 2113 shortly after his release from an extended stay at a Company medical facility. (Perry, 2016: 69) He died on the USCSS *Nostramo*, aged 53. (69)

Aliens (1986)

Rebecca “Newt” Jorden

Born on March 15, 2173, to Russell and Anne Jorden, she was the couple’s second child, after her older brother Timmy, and the first child born in the Hadley’s Hope colony. Her birth was celebrated as a sign of hope by the all the colonists (Golden 17). Newt spent her time playing in the ventilation ducts with her brother and the other children from the colony, a game they called Monster Maze and at which she excelled, being the smallest child in the colony (Foster, *Aliens* 25). Her parents were the first to find the Xenomorph eggs, and her father was the first in Hadley’s Hope to become infected and die. After several other colonists were infected as well, in just four weeks Hadley’s Hope was overrun and Newt became the last survivor

Carter J. Burke, ID L1E7/.56943 MN (played by Paul Reiser)

Carter Burke was the Director of Special Projects, a position he took early in his meteoric rise through the corporate ranks of Weyland-Yutani. As soon as he learned of Ripley’s story, he sent the coordinates to Hadley’s Hope and asked them to be investigated. According to Burke, if Ripley’s story were to be confirmed “we may be looking at an opportunity to obtain a real R&D asset – the alien ship and associated tech, possibly a specimen of alien life [which could] make our bioweapons division.” (86). Once it was decided to investigate the loss of

communication with the colony of Hadley's Hope, Burke, known for his people skills and hands-on initiative, was the logical choice to represent Company interests. He died in Hadley's Hope, aged 29. (90)

Executive Officer Bishop, SERIAL #A17/TQ2.0.3500E2 MODEL 341-B (played by Lance Henriksen)

Bishop was only by chance in the mission to investigate the loss of contact with Hadley's Hope. Carter Burke wanted him replaced by a modified model with the life-protection imperative stripped and the Weyland-Yutani loyalty sub-program activated but was unable to get one due to time constraints. He was a Hyperdyne Systems model 341-B synthetic technician with the United States Colonial Marine Corps, assigned to the 2nd Battalion Bravo Team. He served as Executive Officer aboard the USS *Sulaco* and, as such, was part of the combat unit deployed to LV-426 in 2179 to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope. He was subsequently involved in combating the Xenomorph infestation at the colony. He was disconnected on Fiorina 161. (90)

First Lieutenant Scott Gorman, Squadron Commander 2nd Battalion, 9th Regiment, ID A09/TQ04.56124E3 (played by William Hope)

In 2179, Gorman was sought out by Weyland-Yutani's representative Carter Burke to lead an operation to investigate the terraforming colony Hadley's Hope, with which contact had been lost; unbeknownst to Gorman, Burke had specifically arranged for the inexperienced Lieutenant (Gorman had only a single combat operation to his name at the time) to be placed in command of the mission. One of Gorman's first duties was to assist Burke in the recruitment of Ellen Ripley, the sole survivor of the USCSS *Nostramo's* encounter with a Xenomorph lifeform on LV-426 57 years previously. He died in Hadley's Hope, aged 37. (Perry 90)

Corporal Dwayne Hicks, ID A27/TQ4.48215E9 (played by Michael Biehn)

Corporal Dwayne Hicks was a member of the United States Colonial Marine Corps, part of 2nd Battalion Bravo Team. He was a member of the combat unit deployed to LV-426 aboard the USS *Sulaco* in 2179 to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope. He was subsequently involved in combating the Xenomorph infestation at the colony.

Hicks was part of the Second Squad's gun team, along with Private Drake, and was also the squad's leader and Motion Tracker operator. He died on Fiorina 161, aged 28. (91)

Private First Class William Hudson, Combat Tech, ID A08/TQ1.41776E3 (played by Bill Paxton)

Private First Class William L. Hudson was a combat technician in the United States Colonial Marine Corps, part of 2nd Battalion Bravo Team. He was a member of the combat unit deployed to Acheron aboard the USS *Sulaco* in 2179, to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope. He was subsequently involved in combating the Xenomorph infestation at the colony.

Hudson was part of the First Squad's gun team, along with Private Vasquez. He was also the squad's leader, although Sergeant Apone assumed nominal command for the initial operation at Hadley's Hope. Hudson was also designated First Squad's Motion Tracker operator. He died in Hadley's Hope, aged 30 (91).

Master Sergeant Al Apone, Ground Troop Commander, ID A19/TQ4.0.32751E8 (played by Al Matthews)

Master Sergeant Al Apone was a member of the United States Colonial Marine Corps, part of 2nd Battalion Bravo Team. He was the senior non-commissioned officer with the

combat unit deployed to LV-426 aboard the USS *Sulaco* in 2179 to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope.

Despite a sometimes antagonistic relationship with some of the Marines under his command, notably Private Hudson, Apone was greatly respected by his men. He died in Hadley's Hope, aged 42 (96).

Corporal Cynthia Dietrich, Hospital Corpsman, ID A41/TQ8.0.81120E2 (played by Cynthia Dale Scott)

Corporal Cynthia Dietrich was a Hospital Corpsman with the United States Colonial Marine Corps, part of 2nd Battalion Bravo Team. She was a member of the combat unit deployed to LV-426 aboard the USS *Sulaco* in 2179, to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope. She was subsequently involved in combating the Xenomorph infestation at the colony. Dietrich was part of the Second Squad's rifle team, along with Private Frost. She died in Hadley's Hope, aged 25 (96).

Private First Class Jenette Vasquez, Smartgun Operator, ID AO3/TQ7.0.15618E4 (played by Jenette Goldstein)

PFC Vasquez enlisted to avoid detention time in 2172 as part of the Service or Jail Act. While cited several times early in her career for disorderly conduct (often accompanied by Private Drake) Vasquez earned a silver National/Interservice/Marine Corps Rifle Competition badge on 2175, and in 2177 she became an active member of the ISCM At-Risk Youth Outreach Program. She was a Smartgun operator with the United States Colonial Marine Corps, part of 2nd Battalion Bravo Team. Vasquez was a member of the combat unit deployed to LV-426 aboard the USS *Sulaco* in 2179, to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope. She died in Hadley's Hope, aged 26 (96).

Private Mark Drake, Smartgun Operator, ID A23/TQ2.0.47619E7 (played by Mark Rolston)

Drake was evidently a delinquent as a youth, and his crimes escalated until, still at a young age, he was convicted of murder and sent to juvenile prison. It was there that he met Jenette Vasquez. The pair subsequently enlisted in the USCM under the Service or Jail Act, thereby escaping further jail time. Both Drake and Vasquez passed through boot camp together and afterwards requested assignment to the same unit. Both also chose to specialize in advanced weapons training, during which their Smartgun drill instructor labelled them "the sweethearts" on account of their close relationship (although both denied this relationship was romantic). He was a member of the combat unit deployed to LV-426 aboard the USS *Sulaco* in 2179, to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope. He died in Hadley's Hope, aged 34 (96).

Corporal Colette Ferro, Cheyenne Dropship Pilot, ID A71/TQ9.09428E1 (played by Colette Hiller)

Corporal Colette Ferro was a Cheyenne dropship pilot for the United States Colonial Marine Corps, part of 2nd Battalion Bravo Team. She was a member of the combat unit deployed to LV-426 aboard the USS *Sulaco* in 2179, to investigate the sudden loss of contact with the colony of Hadley's Hope. It was Ferro's job to deliver the Marines' APC to the surface of LV-426, as well as providing aerial reconnaissance and support during the mission. Once the colony had been secured, Ferro set down outside the complex to drop off additional supplies. Bug Stomper remained at the colony while the Marines went to the Atmosphere Processing Plant in search of surviving colonists. She died in Hadley's Hope, aged 39 (97).

***Alien*³ (1992)**

Superintendent Harold Andrews, ID P58495 (played by Brian Glover)

In 2175, when the majority of prisoners were transferred out, Superintendent Andrews elected to stay behind and act as warden for the remaining prisoners/custodians. Died on Fiorina 161, aged 58 (Perry 132).

Prison Guard Francis Aaron, ID PA2390 (played by Ralph Brown)

Assistant to Superintendent Andrews, Aaron also elected to stay on Fiorina 161. Died on Fiorina 161, aged 39 (132)

Medical Officer Jonathan Clemens, ID F8878 (played by Charles Dance)

The former Doctor Clemens was initially a prisoner on Fiorina 161, serving seven years for negligent manslaughter resulting from gross medical incompetence. After serving his time he elected to stay on Fiorina 161 as the chief medical officer. Reinstated as class 3-C medical practitioner. Died on Fiorina 161, aged 51 (132).

Inmate Leonard Dillon, ID YY82013 (played by Charles S. Dutton)

Served a life sentence as a self-confessed murderer and rapist. Dillon also acted as an ad-hoc religious leader of “the Brotherhood”, a group of inmates on Fiorina 161 who believed that the end of the world was at hand. Died on Fiorina 161, aged 41 (Perry 132).

Inmate Robert Morse, ID YY34107 (played by Danny Webb)

A murderer serving a life sentence. The sole survivor of the encounter with the Runner Xenomorph on Fiorina 161. He was transferred to another correctional facility in 2179. He

subsequently published *Space Beast*, an account of the alien encounter, in 2183. Weylan-Yutani categorically denied any responsibility for the event on Fiorina 161 (133)

Inmate Walter Golic, ID YY9245 (played by Paul McGann)

A chemically resistant paranoid schizophrenic. While serving a sentence at Haverhill Asylum Facility for violent behaviour, Golic rose late one night in 2167 and murdered nine roommates with a sharpened spoon, later claiming that they'd all begged to be killed. Transferred to Fiorina 161 in 2168 to serve out life sentence (Perry, 2016: 133-134). Died on Fiorina 161, aged 34 (133).

Alien: Resurrection (1997)

Crew of the Betty

Captain Frank Elgyn, ID F828-1 (played by Michael Wincott)

Convicted of smuggling in 2365, had his flight status revoked and served three years. He was again convicted of smuggling in 2368, and this time he served five years. He died, aged 37, aboard the USM *Auriga* (Perry 149)

Pilot Sabra Hillard, ID F700-1 (played by Kim Flowers)

Hillard was arrested for running contraband in 2367 and had her flight status revoked. She died, aged 34, aboard the USM *Auriga* (149)

Gary Christie, ID F8539 (played by Gary Dourdan)

Christie was wanted for several murders connected with a human traffic ring on Luna UA. He was known for wearing a self-designed exoskeletal holstering system. He was killed, aged 33, aboard the USM *Auriga* (149).

Ron Johner, ID FYY3289 (played by Ron Perlman)

After serving six years at Double-Y colony US849 (The Swamp) for smuggling and assault offences, Johner briefly worked as an enforcer for a crime organisation in the Outer Rim. Whereabouts unknown (149).

Chief Mechanic Dom Vriess, ID USME3891 (played by Dominique Pinon)

Worked as an engineer tech at USM shipyards but was discharged after repeated failures to remain sober. Joined Elgyn's crew in 2375. Vries was paralysed from the waist down during an illicit conflict on Kawlang. Whereabouts unknown (149).

Engineer Assistant Annalee Call, ID AU557-3 (played by Winona Ryder)

Android which escaped the government recall of 2379. Whereabouts unknown (149).

Crew of the USM *Auriga*

General Martin Perez, ID USMG079 (played by Dan Hedaya)

Commanding officer aboard the USM *Auriga*. Perez oversaw enlisted operations and provided scientific support. Died on USM *Auriga*, aged 56 (Perry 145)

Mason Wren, Ph.D., ID USMS186 (played by J. E. Freeman)

Doctor Wren's team produced the first successful full-body clone of Lieutenant Ellen Ripley, following seven failed attempts. Doctor Wren's fascination with the clone was deemed dangerous and unprofessional by a USM psych evaluation. Died aboard the USM *Auriga*, aged 51 (145).

Jonathan Gediman, Ph.D., ID USMS163 (played by Brad Dourif)

Chief scientist on Doctor Wren's team. Previously dismissed by his previous employer, Doctor Gediman was declared mentally unstable. Died aboard the USM *Auriga*, aged 46 (145).

Ripley 8 (2381 – [age 1])

Ripley 8 was the eighth and first fully successful clone of Ellen Ripley created by the United Systems Military aboard the USM *Auriga*. Although she was essentially no more than a by-product of the top-secret USM project to resurrect the Xenomorph XX121 species, the scientist in charge of the program, Doctor Wren, ultimately decided to keep her alive for study. Ripley 8 subsequently became involved in the Xenomorph outbreak and infestation aboard the USM *Auriga* (145).

Appendix C

Space Beast

story by Robert Morse

I'm writing this book because it's what happened. I'm a bad person and I'll spend the rest of my life banged up, but one thing I do have that most of your stupid lags don't is that I survived the end of the world. A monster came and ate all my mates. It sounds like a fairy story, but it's exactly what happened, and since it doesn't matter a tin shit whether or not you believe it, you might as well. I'm a lag but no liar.

A jolt in the C-Max [Class-C work correction unit] on Fury [Fiorina 161] wasn't as bad as you might think. Superintendent Andrews was a sog, but he was all right for a hack. He tried to be fair and keep us double-Ys from killing each other. We always knew when one of the lags fucked up; Andrews would pull everyone together, squeeze his handball, and announce, "This is rumor control; here are the facts..." After that, he'd talk too much and think he solved everything. He always called us Mister. I was Mr. Morse to him, never Robert. He thought it gave him authority and control, but we all knew it was because he didn't have the stones to use our Christian names. If he did, we could call him Harold, and then we were equals. That hack wasn't the equal of any one of us, even Golic, but like I said, he wasn't the worst.

Dillon was a true convict: he had pride; he had influence. He wasn't no preacher, but he knew God, and he made sure the rest of us knew God, too. When Fury was a prison, we had

our own little group – watched each other’s back, kept each other in line. When the prison went back to smelting lead, the company let us stay and take care of the place. We were still lags and the place was still stir, but we had more freedom. We prayed to God and took care of each other... because none of us were getting out. Ever. We was all bitched, whether the end of the world came out of not. Killers, rapists, kiddie fiddlers, burners, beaters, nonces, thieves, 90 percent of us double-Ys. And Dillon kept us in line. He never started a fight and never backed away from one. *He* was the leader, not Andrews. Some days he kept us in line with words and some days with a lead pipe, but he always kept us in line.

Clemens was a real doctor. Most prisons docs are medtechs at best, but Clemens was actually a doctor, though a proper fuckup just like the rest of us. He killed eleven people, got drunk, and gave too much morphine or something. Another promising career, lost to numb fuckery. Too bad, that. After he serves his time, he stayed on. He wasn’t one of the brothers and was maybe a bit of a toff sometimes, but he looked the other way if no one was getting hurt. And he didn’t get on with Andrews or 85 [Francis Aaron], and that worked in his favor.

After the woman [Lt. E. Ripley] arrived, we was all doomed. Andrews knew it. Dillon knew it. Andrews tried to keep her locked in the infirmary – didn’t work. Dillon told her how unwelcome she was and how important it was for her to stay away from all the prisoners, but she didn’t hear him. He told her how we’d all taken vows of celibacy, implying that she’d be raped if she didn’t hide herself away... from lags like Junior for sure. Him and others tried to have a go at Ripley out on the tip, until Dillon re-educated them with a pipe. Even after her close call with Junior, she was still walking around like she had nothing to lose.

Murphy was the first to find what Ripley was looking for, what she’d brought with her. Everyone thought he was daft enough to fall into a ventilation fan while cleaning the tunnel – and he was, too, but that’s not what happened. It didn’t make sense. Everyone knew it didn’t

make sense, but nobody was willing to say so. We'd all done that job, and suddenly Murphy forgets the nine-foot fan twenty paces away that will paint the walls with your innards if you fall into it? Un-fucking likely.

Boggs and Rains were next. They went into the tunnels with Golic, and only Golic came back. Golic was always mental, and now he was covered with blood and raving about a dragon. Poor bastard's mind finally went completely under. Even after Dillon talked to him, Golic still insisted it was a dragon that got Boggs and Rains. He wasn't wrong, though, was he? Dragon, Xenomorph.

Andrews called everyone to the mess and started one of his rumor-control speeches, and then Ripley burst in, saying the beast had gotten Clemens and Golic in the infirmary. Nobody liked Golic but Dillon and me. He stank and really was a nutter, but he didn't deserve to be eaten. I also hated to hear about Clemens. Dying in a shit hole like Fury was beneath him.

Ripley looked right terrified and Andrews went aggro on her, and the beast reached down through a hole in the ceiling and snatched him up. It lifted the man by his head and shredded him. Blood was everywhere. I've killed a few men, seen more killed – by gin, knife, big stick, whatever was at hand – but I've never seen so much blood. I've also never seen anyone picked up by their head before. The beast was strong. Andrews was a fat bastard and the beast lifted him right into the air. After what happened to Andrews, we all knew we was fucked – proper fucked.

Turned out the thing came out of Spike, Murphy's dog. Poor old Spike. Didn't deserve Murphy, anyway, so getting fucked by a monster was over the top. Wouldn't wish that end on a dog, though better a dog than me.

We went to the hall and talked about our options. 85 said he should take over now that Andrews was gone, so that was hilarious. Ripley wanted guns, she wanted video tracking, she

wanted all sorts of technology we didn't have. I got mad, then, thinking that she was the one who brought the fucker to us, weren't she? What I wanted was to put her head through a wall and I said so, in no uncertain terms. That part didn't sit too well with brother Dillon, though. I let it drop, for reasons politic.

Ripley told us the beast was afraid of fire and not much else. She told us how the beasts she'd seen moved different. The one we had walked on all fours 'cause of Spike being the incubator, and the others she'd seen walked only on two legs. Ours could run on the walls and ceiling as easily as on the floor. Dear Christ, I've never seen anything move so fast. It was like a spider on four legs. It moved and leaped like nothing should be allowed to.

We figured we could trap it in an unused [toxic waste storage] tank – one way in, one way out. We'd cover the area around the tank with quinitricetyline, get it into the area, light quini, drive it into the tank, and close the door on it. Either we'd trap it or burn it. Wee thought it was a good plan. It was a shit plan. The beast was smart enough to stay away from the quini, and one of my idiot mates managed to light the quini while we was all still in it. The trap did nothing to the beast, and it burnt up ten of my pals. I hated each and every one of those fuckers, but they was my mates and it was a bad way to go.

After that, 85 wanted to wait for rescue, and more than a few of the lags agreed. Sounded right, but Ripley filled us in on the Company view of the beast. She told us, it was all crew expendable with trained military and the likes of her crew, all valuable members of society. She said, why would W-Y give a shit about a handful of lifers who found God at the arse end of space? She was for killing the fucker. She was dumb about men maybe, but she wasn't no fish, and she had more bottle than a good lot of us. Nice tits, too. Perky, like.

Anyways, Dillon told us he'd rather die on his feet fighting than on his knees begging. Nice speech, all stirring, but basically he was saying how we'd all be twats if we didn't help

kill the bug. The easiest way to get a con to do something is to tell them they're twats if they don't. Dillon wanted to lure it into the foundry and drown it in molten lead, with us as bait. WE all agreed. Everyone but 85, but he was a twat, anyway.

I had a private talk with Dillon, then, just him and me, and I told him that I thought 85 might have a point. They were hot for Ripley, the company, sending an emergency evac team the second they knew she was on Fury. I said if we contained her, right, and waited, big dicks with guns was coming to sort us out. Dillon said with the end coming anyway we had to act like men, the same shite he was always spouting, about how God don't love us and it's up to us to walk the righteous path. I told him I didn't see how getting slaughtered by a monster was such a righteous path, but he was a nutter about God, and he meant to get right with himself. He wasn't listening to sense.

So we planned out a great tag-team race to lead it through the maze of tunnels to where we'd dump the lead. Brilliant, except some of the doors didn't work. It was a bodge job. Some of the lags got lost, and some got scared, and some got eaten. It was a bad time. It was cold, and dark, and it smelled like petrol and smoke from the torches, and blood. Every twenty seconds, screams would echo through the tunnels: sometimes directions, sometimes instructions, sometimes just screams. Sometimes the screams stopped suddenly, sometimes they went on and on. We all prayed to God that the next [screams] weren't going to be ours. The thing was fast. It seemed to know what we were doing, but it couldn't help chasing after every man who ran. When it wasn't chasing, it was waiting – waiting in the shadows, waiting to jump out of a dark tunnel. You could hear the clattering of its running feet, echoing over the screams. What a fucking nightmare.

By the time Ripley and Dillon lured it into the mold, we were the only ones still alive. 85 was hiding in Andrews' office and shitting himself, I guess. I was at the controls to pour the

lead, at the gantry platform. Ripley climbed out of the mold, and Dillon held the beast inside while it tore him up. Dillon was the toughest of us all; not even the beast could bulldog that convict. I dumped the lead on both of them, much as it gutted me. Dillon was dead: he just didn't know it yet. It was a mercy, and what he wanted, and the heat washing up was unbelievable. I was burning just close to it. Nothing could have survived – and then the fucked leaped from the molten lead, the beast, still alive. How could something created by God survive fucking molten *lead*?

I climbed straight for Ripley – climbed like a monkey burning hellfire. I told Ripley to open the sprinklers, to dump cold water on it. She got them open, doused the fucker. The creature cooled so fast that it popped like a bug on a windscreen. My idea. You'd think W-Y would have shown some appreciation that I saved their team from being eaten by a roasted monster, but no joy. That's part of the reason I want this story out, to clearly make a point that Weyland Yutani is a bunch of ungrateful fuckers.

See, that's when the Company men showed up. Some Company twat who called himself Bishop, kept telling Ripley he wanted to help, "You can still have a life," he says. "We're here to help," he says. The only way I've survived so long in C-Max was to know who I could trust. That Bishop was a lying shite, even 85 could see. Ripley could see it, too.

Ripley and I pulled away from him on the control gantry, and one of the bastard troopers shot me in the leg, for no good goddamn reason. I liked Ripley. She was tough and never talked down to us double-Ys, but I would have smacked her on the head and carried her over to the Company men if they wouldn't have shot me. No deals, though, so fuck them. 85 agreed. 85 hit Bishop in the head with a wrench; took his ear half off, too, and bang, that was the end of 85. Poor dumb wanker. Bishop bled like a stuck pig, still trying to get Ripley to give herself up.

I was focused so hard on the men with guns that I didn't see Ripley jump. I saw her fall, though. She'd been acting dicky, and I guess I thought she was still fucked from the EEV crash. Turns out she had a little version of the beast growing inside her. She was implanted, and she knew it, that's why she jumped – so the Company wouldn't get it. The little beast crawled straight out of her chest, screaming like a newborn baby. It tried to get away but she held it in place. Held on to the little creature until both of them hit the furnace. That mare was tough.

They packed me up right quick after that. I've been moved to another C-Max stir with another batch of double-Y-chromos... I get by, but I don't sleep so good. Sometimes I hear someone shout down the hall after lockdown and I'm right back there, in the dark, my chest tight, waiting for my turn to run with the stink of blood all around. I don't pray to God anymore; I don't believe. I can't, knowing that monsters like that exist. Dillon was wrong about Go. It doesn't matter what we do or don't, the end comes for all of us. (Perry I-VII)