

The Cinematic Boogeyman:
The Folkloric Roots of the Slasher Villain

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Abstract

This doctoral thesis complements earlier scholarship by Marina Warner concerning the Boogeyman as a figure representative of monstrosity and otherness by assessing these topics through an interdisciplinary lens. Employing a methodological approach that incorporates research from the fields of psychology, philosophy, and film studies, I analyse the Boogeyman within the context of the traditional fairytale and the modern horror film, and thereby reveal the key facets of this figure in the Western cultural imaginary. Specifically, I demonstrate that the villains of the contemporary slasher film (a subgenre of the horror film) are cinematic manifestations of the folkloric Boogeyman through a comparison of their physical and psychological attributes. Examining the archetypal properties of these characters, I argue that the traits that characterize the Boogeyman are the result of the fact that he is a composite of three archetypal forms: the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon.

I address three key questions: (1) what particular physical and psychological qualities are associated with the Boogeyman; (2) how the persona of the Boogeyman is constituted in the public consciousness; and (3) what moral, philosophical, and psychological role does he serve in Western culture. Over the course of this thesis, I demonstrate the fact that the Boogeyman represents the amalgamation of three archetypal components. Firstly, he embodies the role of the collective Shadow and functions to personify violent and anarchic characteristics that are repressed by the community and projected onto monstrous figures in the popular consciousness. Secondly, he is a manifestation of the negative attributes associated with the archetypal Father (referred to

in literature as the “Terrible Father”) who punishes individuals that defy hegemonic values. Finally, he is a cultural embodiment of the Death-Demon, a conceptual figure that personifies anxieties related to death, and the degeneration of the body.

This thesis provides a comparative analysis of a series of case studies that clearly illustrate the characteristics synonymous with the Boogeyman in the Western cultural imaginary. I begin with an examination of Bluebeard, a homicidal villain featured in Charles Perrault’s 1697 collection of fairytales titled *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*. In her seminal text *No Go the Bogeyman*, Warner posits Bluebeard as a clear example of the folkloric Boogeyman due to the fact that he is physically grotesque and morally repugnant. In Perrault’s story, Bluebeard is a villain who marries and then murders a series of women for disobeying him, and subsequently stores their bodies in his private chamber. Extrapolating the salient characteristics of Bluebeard as the folkloric Boogeyman, I assess these traits under an archetypal lens and demonstrate that Bluebeard/the folkloric Boogeyman is a manifestation of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon.

After determining the archetypal properties of the folkloric Boogeyman, I highlight the presence of these same qualities in popular villains from the contemporary American slasher films of the 1970s and ’80s. Specifically, these characters include Michael Myers from *Halloween* (1978), Jason Voorhees of *Friday the 13th* (1980), and Freddy Krueger featured in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984). Through my analysis of these terrifying figures, I situate them within a larger archetypal context of monstrosity and simultaneously establish their role as cinematic manifestations of the folkloric Boogeyman. This examination reveals the placement of the Boogeyman within the

cultural imaginary as a violent disciplinarian who reinforces moral boundaries through sadistic acts of violence and paradoxically brings both chaos and harmony to the collective by preserving social borders. By extension, I demonstrate the link between the slasher film and the fairytale, both of which serve a didactic function, imparting hegemonic values to the public concerning sexual politics, social propriety, and moderation.

Keywords:

Michael Myers; Jason Voorhees; Freddy Krueger; Boogeyman; Bluebeard; monstrosity; otherness; slasher film; archetype

Preface

As this thesis outlines my perspective on the themes of monstrosity and otherness, I believe it would be wise to include a brief overview of my theoretical positioning and methodological preconceptions. My background is rooted predominantly in visual culture and my research is therefore concerned with the structural nature of artistic and filmic works. Specifically, my training entails a Master of Arts in the field of Comparative Literature and Arts and, as a result, I find myself fascinated by overarching themes that transcend social and temporal boundaries. In my research, I have found that the presence of common motifs among works from disparate locations is often explained by the presence of the archetype. These innate forms based on universal characters and themes populate the human psyche and result in structured modes of thought that recur over long periods of time based on cyclical modes of behaviour.

The notion of the archetype, developed by the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung, has been a prevalent theme in my work over the years and provided the foundation for much of my research in the field of art history and film analysis. Though Jung's concept has been criticized for neglecting to account for social issues related to race, class, and gender, I firmly believe that it is the most fruitful method for examining cultural artefacts separated by large spans of time and space. At its core, the archetype hints at a global community, one that is predicated on the innate psychological mechanisms of the human mind. The universal vocabulary of visual language that Jung proposed is particularly relevant to researchers in the field of comparative studies, as it provides the tools to analyze texts that cross cultural, national, political, and social borders.

Though the notion of composing a thesis in 2019 that utilizes a Structuralist methodology may strike certain readers as anomalous, I not only found that Jung's writings provided intriguing insights about the case studies I was researching, but also lent itself to an interdisciplinary approach. Since the archetype is deeply influenced by extrinsic factors, I was able to merge Jung's writings with contemporary theoretical research from the fields of philosophy, feminist studies, and film studies. By observing the way scholarship from these various disciplines interacted, I have generated new perceptions concerning the phenomenon of the Boogeyman and his ominous presence in the Western cultural imaginary. This thesis therefore entails an amalgamation of disparate areas of research that do not traditionally correspond with one another. By merging these modes of inquiry, I have been astounded at the degree of intellectual synchronicity that became increasingly self-evident as this thesis progressed. The alchemical nature of this interdisciplinary research accounts for the numerous mutations that this thesis underwent during its gestation and the enormous challenges and rewards that this work produced.

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Introduction:

The Boogeyman and the Cultural Imaginary

The objective of this thesis is to examine representations of monstrosity and otherness in the fairytale and the modern horror film through an interdisciplinary methodology. This notion of Otherness, which is central to my research, has taken on a broad role within the contemporary academic landscape and has become a particularly integral component in scholarship concerning marginalized groups and minorities. However, I believe it is in relation to the study of monstrosity that the notion of otherness serves its greatest purpose, as the monster is not simply the symbolic, but also the *literal* Other. Indeed, the strangeness of the monster is predicated on the fact that it exhibits physical and psychological traits that clearly distinguish it from its human counterpart, thereby creating a schism that is largely unbridgeable.

In this project, I focus primarily on the role that cultural artefacts play in contributing to, as well as reflecting collective values related to alterity. The “cultural imaginary” that I refer to throughout this thesis is predicated on Benedict Anderson’s notion of the “imagined community,” a phenomenon that occurs when the members of a group ascribe to a communal identity despite the fact that they “will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them” (6). Graham Ward further characterizes the cultural imaginary as the “magma of social significations [that] makes many forms of sociality possible” and includes religious traditions as a key factor in shaping this phenomenon (163-4). Furthermore, I assert that the cultural imaginary is made possible through the shared myths, symbols, practices, rituals, superstitions, and

values that create a relatively cohesive collective ideology.¹ These stories and images form the foundation for the cultural fabric that binds together a group of individuals and establishes the boundaries between that which is prized and revered within a society and, most importantly for this thesis, that which is considered taboo, abject, and consequently repressed.

Adopting a Jungian lens, I use the practice of archetypal criticism to assess the monstrous figure of the Boogeyman, a frightening and enigmatic character that has appeared in popular narratives throughout the world. Despite his ubiquity, there are surprisingly few scholarly sources that discuss the specific traits that compose his persona in the cultural imaginary.² The fact that this topic is such a neglected area of scholarship offers an intriguing opportunity to research the psychological mechanisms involved in the creation of such a terrifying figure, as well as how monstrosity is conceptualized within the cultural imaginary. In my research I specifically assess the central qualities associated with the Boogeyman through a comparative analysis of his appearance in the fairytale and the contemporary slasher film. Due to the presence of the Boogeyman in multiple areas of the globe and in a variety of media, I believe that the work of Carl Jung and his successors provides the most effective methodology for assessing this cultural figure and his social function.

¹ The term “cultural imaginary” is used quite extensively in various texts addressing the notion of the monstrosity such as Longinović (2011) and Santos and Spahr (2006).

² Other scholars who have discussed the figure of the Boogeyman include Goldman (1998) and Phillips (2005). Goldman examines the Boogeyman from an anthropological perspective, analysing the relationship he shares with children and his role as a menacing figure that instils discipline through fear. Phillips, on the other hand, assesses cultural representations of the Boogeyman in film and specifically looks at how Michael Myers from *Halloween* contrasts traditional depictions of the Boogeyman from folklore.

Amongst the most notable writers to tackle the topic of the Boogeyman are folklorist John Widdowson (1971) and historian Marina Warner (2000).³ In his article “The Bogeyman: Some Preliminary Observations on Frightening Figures,” Widdowson examines terrifying creatures from Western popular culture, explaining how these figures embody anxieties related to the unknown (100). He goes on to offer a taxonomy of frightening figures that includes: (1) supernatural beings, (2) unusual humans, and (3) animals/objects capable of inflicting punishment (104). Among these categories, Widdowson singles out the Boogeyman, and describes him as a supernatural being that threatens members of the public (106). Indeed, the Boogeyman is a dangerous and foreboding figure in the cultural imaginary and serves a punitive role in the narratives examined in this thesis.

Historian Marina Warner supports many of Widdowson’s observations about the Boogeyman in *No Go the Bogeyman: Scaring, Lulling and Making Mock* (2000) in which she examines themes related to monstrosity and otherness in a variety of cultural artefacts. Cataloguing the key characteristics associated with depictions of the Boogeyman, Warner claims that he is a violent figure who possesses physical abnormalities, and operates outside the communal boundaries of the civilized world (*No Go* 25-8).⁴ She then demonstrates the validity of her criteria by analysing a series of monstrous male characters associated with the Boogeyman that populate cultural texts such as myths, legends, folktales, fairytales, lullabies, jokes, literature, paintings, and horror movies. Though the qualities outlined by Warner may vary slightly between each

³ In his paper “Some Observations on American Frightening Figures” delivered at the *American Folklore Society* in Toronto in 1967, anthropologist Herbert Halpert pointed out that the study of frightening figures is one of the most neglected areas of both British and American folklore (Widdowson 103).

⁴ For further discussion on the etymology of the term “Boogeyman” see Warner (2000) pp. 42-3, and Widdowson pp. 106-15.

case study, they remain largely unchanged—a phenomenon which, as I demonstrate, is the result of their archetypal properties. Though Warner's book is detailed in its analysis of the Boogeyman and other terrifying incarnations of monstrosity, it employs a purely literary and historical lens, and therefore overlooks broader trends that characterize the monstrous Other over large spans of time. This thesis both complements and supplements Warner's scholarship by addressing this topic from a psychological and philosophical perspective. In my analysis, I build upon the findings communicated by Warner and Widdowson to construct an expanded definition for the Boogeyman and offer a nuanced study of this mythic monster.⁵

One of the most prominent figures that Warner references in her text is Bluebeard from Charles Perrault's *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* (1697), a homicidal bridegroom who marries and murders a series of women for defying his authority. I employ the example of Bluebeard in my analysis of the folkloric Boogeyman as he epitomizes the central qualities that Warner associates with this figure. As I outline later in this chapter, Perrault's character embodies the quintessential traits that compose the Boogeyman persona and therefore provides an ideal point of departure to discuss the slasher villain as a filmic iteration of the monstrous Other. Juxtaposing Bluebeard with the cinematic antagonists Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, and Freddy Krueger, I demonstrate the presence of similar attributes in these characters and thereby establish their link to Warner's definition of the Boogeyman.

The Boogeyman is a complicated mythical figure to examine due to the fact he is known under a series of pseudonyms that function as derivatives of a single persona.

⁵ As the case studies included in my analysis are exclusively male, I will be using masculine pronouns throughout the course of this thesis. Also, as the Boogeyman represents a particular manifestation of monstrosity, I will be using the terms "monstrous Other" and "Boogeyman" interchangeably.

Among the case studies Warner cites in her examination of the Boogeyman is the Sandman, a character originating out of Scandinavia, who hurls sand into the faces of youths who refuse to slumber—causing their eyes to fall out of their skulls (*No Go* 32-3). Also noted is the story of the Erl King, a ghostly monster associated with the marshy areas of northern Europe who seduces and abducts unruly children in order to carry them away into the forest (*No Go* 23-5). Examples of the Boogeyman are also found outside the Western tradition, such as the character of El-Cucuy, a mythic male monster featured in songs and folklore from Latin America who is believed to abduct and eat children that misbehave. Similar qualities are observed in Sack Man, a fictional male figure featured in the cultures of Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Asia who kidnaps disobedient children for nefarious purposes. These figures represent a small fragment of the plethora of diabolical characters that populate the cultural imaginary and, as outlined in this thesis, demonstrate the key traits that define the Boogeyman.

In order to clearly outline the characteristics that compose the Boogeyman persona, I develop a checklist of physical and psychological properties associated with this figure that may be consulted to determine his presence in a cultural artefact. Among these attributes is his proclivity towards violence, as demonstrated through the acts of torture and murder that he frequently commits against his victims. Such behaviour elicits terror and marks the limits of socially acceptable conduct and the boundary point between humanity and monstrosity. Thus, creatures such as the Boogeyman are inevitably exiled from the community and, through their expulsion, harmony is restored among the collective. Yet, the Boogeyman is not simply a dangerous intruder that

threatens the foundations of society, but also a violent disciplinarian who reinforces moral boundaries through sadistic acts of violence.

The Boogeyman therefore paradoxically brings both chaos and harmony to the collective by preserving hegemonic borders and uniting the community through its shared hatred of him. In this regard, the monstrous Other is a necessary component to a functioning society, as he defines the parameters of personal and communal identity by embodying the dangers of excessive conduct. Simultaneously, he polices the community's overarching moral standards and penalizes deviant behaviour through cruelty and violence. To achieve this goal, he frequently subjects his victims to a test that determines their obedience to the prevailing ideology and, upon failing, he administers a severe punishment.⁶ His capacity to assess and chastise "illicit" behaviour perpetrated by members of the collective places the Boogeyman outside the social realm. Thus, the Boogeyman is posited as a monstrous foreigner who defines the shared boundaries of the group by reprimanding disobedient members of the community.⁷

Furthermore, the Boogeyman's use of brutality in the pursuit of his objectives is another source of his monstrosity since this behaviour creates a psychological gulf between him and others that is largely unbridgeable. I am specifically referring to his inclination towards unsolicited violence directed primarily towards young women that we witness in the case studies included in this thesis. This dynamic reflects Stephen Asma's definition of monstrosity which is predicated on the "breakdown of intelligibility" that

⁶ This dynamic is evident in the Bluebeard fairytale which imparts didactic cautionary lessons concerning the dangers of curiosity and transgressing the authority of patriarchal figures.

⁷ Throughout this thesis, I will frequently be using the term "community" to refer to the group of characters within the narrative (whether fairytale or film), that are set in opposition to the character of the Boogeyman. The community may adopt the form of a group, region, or nation that is often geographically and/or socially connected.

occurs when an individual's actions exhibit such cruelty that it is no longer possible for the public to "relate to the emotional range involved" (*On Monsters* 10). Based on Asma's observations, I propose that the Boogeyman epitomizes the notion of monstrosity, as he frequently engages in sadistic acts to appease his violent appetites. Such behaviour reflects an arrested state of psychological development, as well as a flagrant disregard for communal values by rejecting all alternative methods of communication (a topic I discuss in Chapter 3). Furthermore, I argue that the Boogeyman personifies the most reprehensible aspects of human nature, manifesting the abhorrent and undesirable characteristics that are reviled by the collective.

By engaging in acts that are considered taboo and socially unacceptable, monsters such as the Boogeyman mark the moral borders of the collective. Exhibiting behaviour that conflicts with the overarching values of the community, the monster demonstrates the reprehensible qualities that are synonymous with excess and savagery and, in an ironic twist, thereby indicate the appropriate modes of conduct. Roger Adkins touches on this notion when he argues that the monster serves a necessary and vital role in the hegemonic ideology by defining the foundations that constitute humanity:

the human *needs* the monstrous to serve as its foil, as the outside to the boundary of the human. Without the multifarious and unstable category of the monstrous, the human would cease to exist *as* such, since there would no longer be any threat against which to define the normalizing and homogenizing category of 'human.' (not my italics; 10)

This notion of an interdependent relationship between the “normal” human and the “abnormal” monster is similarly discussed by Jonathan Lake Crane who asserts that changing the image of the monster subsequently alters the self-image of the individual:

When monsters are accorded a new ontological status, what it means to be human changes as well. Monsters, because they are our enemies, work to define who we are by offering us an inverted portrait of ourselves. The ideal image we have of ourselves, based on what we struggle to extinguish, is altered when who and what we hate is changed. Anytime that monsters are created anew, humans are also remade. (73)

Departing from both Adkins’ and Crane’s observations, I assert that the monster reflects those facets of the human condition that create unease and represent the destructive forces which the community wishes to repress. As I reveal in this thesis, the Boogeyman fulfills these criteria for monstrosity by embodying anxieties related to torture, suffering, and death—fears that are manifested in his terrifying appearance.

Indeed, the Boogeyman’s relationship with monstrosity manifests both internally, through his propensity for brutish behaviour, as well as externally, in the form of physical ugliness.⁸ As Margrit Shildrick indicates, monstrosity is “the external manifestation of the sinner within” and I would therefore assert that the Boogeyman’s grotesque appearance serves a metaphoric purpose by highlighting his inner corruption (17).⁹ Furthermore, Judith Halberstram argues that appearance, and by extension, skin, is a pivotal component in characterizing monstrosity:

⁸ Michael Uebel (1996) notes this connection when he states that monsters “signify the condition into which an individual might degenerate, the result of the interior becoming as horrible as what was imagined to be exterior” (281).

⁹ Alixe Bovey (2002) claims that monsters are generally hideous because “their outward ugliness [is] a cipher for inward moral corruption” (25).

Skin, I will argue with reference to certain nineteenth-century monsters, becomes a kind of metonym for the human; and its color, its pallor, its shape mean everything within a semiotic of monstrosity. Skin might be too tight (Frankenstein's creature), too dark (Hyde), too pale (Dracula), too superficial (Dorian Gray's canvas), too loose (Leatherface), or too sexed (Buffalo Bill). (7)

Indeed, the Boogeyman's connection with monstrosity often manifests in the form of a physical defect that references the abject aspects of the body.¹⁰ Specifically, each of the case studies examined in this thesis possess a disfigurement that obscures his face, such as a monstrous abundance of hair (as in the example of Bluebeard), a scar (as in the case of Freddy Krueger), or a mask that mimics the look of a corpse (as demonstrated by Michael Myers and Jason Voorhees). The Boogeyman's appearance largely dehumanizes him and serves as a physical manifestation of his emotional remoteness, distancing him from others and marking him out as subhuman.

These characteristics align the Boogeyman with established definitions of monstrosity within the field of philosophy and sociology as outlined by Richard Kearney (2002) and Julie B. Wiest (2016). According to Wiest, monsters are universally "depicted with animalistic characteristics—emotionally void, predatory, and savage" and include "elements of insanity or possession, depravity, and wickedness" (330). Kearney similarly echoes these sentiments when he describes the monster as any liminal creature that breaches natural and human boundaries in both shape and character (117). I assert that

¹⁰ In *The Powers of Horror* (1980) Julia Kristeva defines the abject as the collapse of the interior/exterior boundaries of the body that disturbs "identity, system, [and] order" (232). By inverting/perverting these borders, the subject is brought into close contact with those facets of the self that are considered repulsive (such as bodily fluids, excrement, and other forms of filth that are commonly featured in depictions of monsters).

physical monstrosity often assumes one of two forms: (1) a chimera that includes an unnatural combination of physical features, or (2) a figure that possesses abject traits that reference the degeneration of the body. It is this latter form of monstrosity in particular that is central to this thesis, as the Boogeyman often appears as a humanoid male with features that reflect death and decay.¹¹ In the succeeding chapters, I outline how these characteristics are clearly expressed in both the behaviour and appearance of the Boogeyman in the *Bluebeard* fairytale and the slasher film.¹² These attributes that distinguish and alienate him from members of the collective ultimately results in his expulsion to the fringes of society. These characteristics constitute a basic criterion for the Boogeyman, one which I revisit throughout the thesis in my analysis of his role in the Western cultural imaginary.

Over the course of this dissertation I focus on three key questions related to the monstrous Other: (1) What physical and psychological qualities are associated with the Boogeyman? (2) How is the persona of the Boogeyman constituted in the public consciousness? (3) What moral and philosophical role does he serve in the Western cultural imaginary?¹³ In answering these questions, I examine the Boogeyman's relationship with the human psyche and demonstrate how he represents the amalgamation of three archetypal forms—the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-

¹¹ Shildrick (2002) points out that the monster threatens not only “to overrun the boundaries of the proper,” but also “to dissolve them” (11).

¹² Cynthia Freeland (2000) explains that monsters are beings that exist beyond all boundaries: “monsters [are] beings that raise the specter of evil by overturning the natural order, whether it be an order concerning death, the body, God's laws, or ordinary human values” (8). It is this liminal and otherworldly quality of monsters that accounts for their marginalized status and feared role as the outsider.

¹³ In this thesis the terms “social” and “cultural” are utilized to broadly address two abstract realms of human activity which both reflect and complement one another. Namely, the term “social” functions to designate daily human interactions in the political, judicial, and economic realms. Conversely, the term “cultural” will be used within this thesis to designate those projects and undertakings which reflect and shape social trends and attitudes such as folklore, myth, literature, and film.

Demon. Firstly, he embodies the role of the collective Shadow and functions to personify violent and anarchic characteristics that are repressed by the community and projected onto monstrous figures in the popular consciousness. Secondly, he is a manifestation of the negative attributes associated with the archetypal Father (referred to in literature as the “Terrible Father”) who punishes individuals that defy hegemonic values. Finally, he is a cultural embodiment of the Death-Demon, a conceptual figure that personifies anxieties related to death, and the degeneration of the body.¹⁴ These individual archetypes (the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon) are transformed into facets of the monstrous Other’s overarching character and account for his appearance, actions, and behaviour. By examining the role that these three archetypal forms play in constructing the persona of the Boogeyman, I highlight the specific anxieties that he manifests within the collective psyche. Simultaneously, I reveal the social function of the monstrous Other in both the fairytale and the slasher film as a menacing figure that imparts discipline and reinforces hegemonic values through the threat of violence and death.

Since the Boogeyman appears in popular narratives throughout the globe, I have chosen to narrow my focus to manifestations of this mythic figure from Perrault’s fairytale and the modern slasher film. In this thesis, the character of Bluebeard from Charles Perrault’s 1697 fairytale serves as a prototypical example of the folkloric Boogeyman and illustrates the salient traits associated with this figure. This choice was based upon the fact that my scholarship is heavily informed by the research of Marina

¹⁴ Marie Louise von Franz briefly touches on the notion of archetypal forms merging in her essay “The Process of Individuation.” She argues that the Anima (the feminine principle in the male ego) and the Death-Demon (the personification of death) can fuse and “express itself in irritable, depressed moods, uncertainty, insecurity, and touchiness” (178).

Warner and she frequently references Perrault's villain as a case study to demonstrate her findings concerning the monstrous Other. As such, Bluebeard is used here as a foundational template against which to contrast and define the slasher villains of Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger as cinematic manifestations of the Boogeyman.

Essentially, this thesis is a comparative analysis that looks at Bluebeard and juxtaposes him with a selection of the most well-known villains from the contemporary American slasher film. This examination will specifically include the characters of Michael Myers from *Halloween* (1978), Jason Voorhees of *Friday the 13th* (1980) and Freddy Krueger featured in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984).¹⁵ Through this examination, I demonstrate the physical and psychological similarities between Bluebeard and the antagonists of the selected films and thereby illustrate their adherence to Warner's definition of the Boogeyman. Furthermore, through the assessment of these figures under a Jungian lens, I place them within a larger archetypal context and make the argument that the monstrous Other (in both folkloric and cinematic manifestations) represents an amalgamation of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon.

In discussing the Boogeyman, as well as the broader theme of monstrosity, it is necessary to establish a vocabulary that will allow me to analyze this topic with clarity and specificity. Central to this study will be the concept of "evil"—an idea that is closely aligned with the Boogeyman and his sadistic actions. This elusive construct has been the subject of debate among scholars for millennia and reaches into all realms of human discourse. From the ancient Greeks to contemporary theorists, the existence of evil has

¹⁵ As I argue that these villains of the slasher film (Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, and Freddy Krueger) function as filmic manifestations of the folkloric Boogeyman, I will heretofore refer to each of them as the "cinematic Boogeyman."

been a perpetual area of discourse for artists, theologians, philosophers, sociologists, and politicians. Though an overall analysis of the various writings concerning evil is beyond the scope of this project, an outline of the specific facets of this notion as it relates to the topic of monstrosity is germane to my argument.

With the advent of the Enlightenment and the subsequent Age of Reason, the term evil has become increasingly unfashionable within academic vernacular, as it is considered archaic and entrenched in pre-modern theological beliefs.¹⁶ Regardless of the antiquated nature of this notion, it has persisted within popular consciousness, and, as Andrew Delbanco points out, evil appears to be an unavoidable topic when discussing the treacherous nature of malevolent human behaviour: “despite the shrivelling of old words and concepts, we cannot do without some conceptual means for thinking about the sorts of experience that used to go under the term evil” (9). Within the modern era, the notion of evil has been defined by numerous scholars under various disciplinary lenses: Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) characterized it as a systemic force that resulted from social hierarchy and formality, while contemporary philosopher Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) viewed it as the result of moral ignorance and an absence of conscience.¹⁷ Despite the lack of consensus among scholars, there are certain recurrent themes that are inescapable when one looks at the corpus of writing that surrounds this concept. For example, in the cultural artefacts that I examine in this thesis, the Boogeyman is continually portrayed as perpetrating acts of unprovoked brutality against others to satisfy his desire for sadistic pleasure. This interaction, which entails an extension of the

¹⁶ For further discussion of this topic see Keohane (2006).

¹⁷ Rousseau discusses the relationship between social hierarchy and evil in his texts *Emile* (2013) and *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (1992). Conversely, Arendt discusses the notion of evil as a by-product of moral ignorance in the series of articles she published in *The New Yorker* concerning the trial of Nazi leader Adolf Eichmann, which were later published as the book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (2006).

villain's will over that of another individual, shall serve as the foundation for my conception of evil.¹⁸

In my analysis of this topic, I have turned to philosophers Alasdair MacIntyre (2006) and Ruth Grant (2006), as well as psychologist C. Fred Alford (1997) to help forge a comprehensive definition for this term within the context of my research. A common theme amongst these writers is the triadic relationship between evil, malice, and victimhood. Specifically, Grant's 2006 anthology *Naming Evil, Judging Evil* includes a series of essays from leading scholars in the field of philosophy that address the themes of treachery and betrayal through a socio-political lens. In the Introduction, Grant claims that evil results from the conscious will to exert pain on others and is characterized by "suffering caused by human choice" (5). MacIntyre, in his foreword to the same text, reiterates Grant's sentiments, describing evil as the product of an excessive preoccupation with one's own ego. As MacIntyre illustrates in his description of the malicious act, narcissism and the desire to subjugate the will of others are the primary motivations for evil:

I/we are going to impose my/our will. This may be a matter of *my/our* visiting affliction upon you—whether there is one of you or six million of you—to achieve what it pleases *me/us* to achieve, no matter what the cost in pain, humiliation, and death to you, no matter what norms and values may be violated, and for no sufficient reason except that it is *my/our* will

¹⁸ This thesis will strictly focus on acts of violence perpetrated against unwilling victims since such behaviour requires a high degree of cruelty and sadism on the part of the aggressor (a characteristic central to the Boogeyman). Though the act of inflicting pain on willing participants also raises certain moral concerns, these are beyond the scope of this thesis. Likewise, the choice to be the recipient of violence transforms a victim into a participant and therefore shifts the balance of agency and power, diminishing the degree of malice involved on the part of the perpetrator.

to do so. Or it may be a matter of *my/our* will and pleasure in securing a tranquil and pleasant existence for *me/us*, no matter what evils are being visited upon others. But, either way, let *my/our* will be done, just because it is mine, just because it is *ours*. (not my italics; ix)

MacIntyre here suggests that the act of exerting one's power over another with malevolent intent permits the perpetrator to garner an inflated sense of self-importance and satisfy his narcissistic impulses at any cost. I agree with this assertion and further add that a pathological fixation on control and possession are foundational components of evil and contribute to the hubristic ego. These characteristics are clearly reflected in depictions of the Boogeyman, who often engages in wanton acts of cruelty so as to establish his supremacy over his victims.

Similarly, in *What Evil Means to Us*, Alford also makes some compelling observations concerning the connection between narcissism and evil. According to Alford, the evil act is a means of purging the perpetrator of the dread implicit within the human condition. Specifically, he suggests that by causing suffering, the aggressor is able to alleviate his own misery and project it onto his victims: "Dread is ... being human, vulnerable, alone in the universe, and doomed to die ... *Doing* evil is an attempt to evacuate this experience by inflicting it on others, making them feel dreadful by hurting them" (not my italics; 3).¹⁹ Alford proposes that by placing an individual in the role of victim, the perpetrator attempts to temporarily purge himself of existential anxieties tied to mortality by controlling the forces of life and death. Through such interactions the aggressor can momentarily escape the human condition and occupy a psychological

¹⁹ These sentiments are echoed by Austrian psychoanalyst Otto Rank (1884-1939), who claimed that "the death fear of the ego is lessened by the killing ... of the other; through the death of the other, one buys oneself free from the penalty of dying, of being killed" (130).

position beyond humanity. This dynamic is reflected in the actions of the Boogeyman when he assumes the illusory state of godliness by torturing and murdering his victims.

Such acts of unsolicited aggression often conflict with the overarching moral practices of the collective and represent a rejection of the prevailing ideology. This repudiation of communal values places the Boogeyman in opposition to his peers and necessitates his exile to the fringes of society as he represents a threat to the collective that must be protected. This notion is reflected in the work of Michael Stone who points out that evil occurs when there is “a flagrant deviation from the standards of acceptable behaviour” (21). These ethical guidelines function as a cohesive force, binding together a particular group of people, and by defying them the Boogeyman in essence breaches the social contract and attacks the moral grounding of the community. The Boogeyman therefore comes to embody “the other, the enemy, the outsider” and must be cast out of the collective (Baumeister 72-3).²⁰ Once he has been expelled, harmony is once more regained among the group whose members are intrinsically bound together through their shared disdain for the monstrous Other. In my analysis of the case studies included in this thesis, I demonstrate that this pattern of behaviour is repeated in narratives that feature the figure of the Boogeyman and is indicative of his desire to acquire a position of control and domination.

²⁰ This vision of pure evil also invokes the notion of Manichaeism, a religious concept which represents a rigid dualism in the delineation of good and evil. Initially functioning as a religion founded in Persia in the third century, Manichaeism holds the view that “good and evil, associated with the spiritual and the material ... were created by different gods and that they are in eternal conflict with one another” (R. Grant 12, n.13). Perhaps the most disturbing facet of Manichaeism is the possibility it offers for an individual or group to operate entirely within the realm of good or evil, and therefore outside the sphere of humanity. Luke Russell adds that such moral conceptions are dangerous, as they introduce “an unrealistic dualism, a binary opposition between good and evil” that fails to account for the vast spectrum between these two extremes (48).

Ultimately, this thesis examines the role of artistic works in relation to nature and the human psyche and is, therefore, firmly rooted in the area of cultural studies. Traditionally, this realm of discourse is associated with the work of Stuart Hall, Jürgen Habermas, and Louis Althusser and focuses on issues related to social and political identity as well as modes of power embedded within established institutions (White 29). However, as Fred Inglis (1993) outlines, this definition is quite narrow and fails to account for the complexity of art and, by extension, human nature, which are both implicit aspects of cultural studies:

The power-maniacs dissolve art into power, and both into ideology. But art is, before anything else, a *product*, and production ... draws upon, expresses and replenishes far more of human and social life than can be entered into the debit or credit columns of power. Production transacts with nature: nature at times absorbs production, in good sex, good work, or good art. ... Making and creating in all societies carry a surplus of meaning going well beyond the realm of power. (187)

Inglis' distinction between culture and ideology is similarly reflected in the writings of Terry Eagleton, who also argues that power is the defining factor between these two forces (53). Both Inglis and Eagleton highlight the relationship culture shares with the natural world, and the fact that the production of artistic works entails interactions that operate outside the political sphere. I argue that the archetype is an example of such an alliance, whereupon the mind responds to, and subsequently expresses images related to the human condition. Employing the definition for the cultural product proposed by these

writers, this thesis examines the psychological underpinnings of a selection of popular narratives featuring the Boogeyman.

Much of the theoretical framework that I employ in this thesis is derived from Carl Jung (1875-1961) and his notion of the collective unconscious, a reservoir located in the deepest recesses of the mind that houses a set of archetypal forms inherent to the individual. The archetype is developed through personal experiences and evolves into images which emerge in the conscious mind and are projected into the cultural imaginary. These images help to construct popular narratives that are featured in artefacts such as folklore, myth, literature, and film. Manifestations of archetypal forms may vary superficially according to sociological conditions; however, they ultimately express elemental notions that are inherent to the mind—and by extension—the human condition.

Jung specifically discussed the role of the archetype in relation to the ubiquitous nature of certain characters and themes that reappeared in popular narratives throughout the world and argued that this phenomenon resulted from the structure of the human psyche. He noted the patterned organization of these stories and the persistent elements that continually surfaced within religious and mythical tales. Psychiatrist Anthony Stevens (2003) explains:

[Jung] was struck by the way in which analogous motifs cropped up in the most diverse cultures, as far removed from each other in geography as they were in historical time: in other words, he noted that mythological and religious themes were, as the ethologists say, ‘environmentally stable’ ... Jung, therefore, concluded that [these patterns] ... must correspond to

‘typical dispositions’, ‘dominants’ or ‘nodal points’ within the structure of the psyche itself. (45-6)

The recurrent nature of narrative elements in myth and other cultural artefacts was foundational to Jung’s contribution to the field of psychoanalysis. As Jeffrey Burton Russell (1987) points out, Jung argued that the nature of the unconscious psyche is “constant” and “unchanging,” resulting in the appearance of similar tropes and motifs all over the world (*The Devil* 51). Underpinning the corpus of Jung’s writings is the belief that the minds of all individuals organize and internalize experiences in a similar fashion. Out of this core argument emerged the notion of the archetype which entails an instinctive vocabulary of stock themes and characters that are universally understood.²¹

Conceived by Jung around 1912, the notion of the archetype became a central feature of his theoretical framework and a continual theme throughout his career. In discussing the archetype, Jung claimed that it was an innate component of the psyche that could “rearise spontaneously, at any time, [and] at any place” and was therefore unbound by temporal or geographical boundaries (*Four Archetypes* 13).²² Furthermore, William Indick notes in *Psychology for Screenwriters* (2004) that the foundation for the archetype is built on experiences applicable to all individuals:

All people have mothers and fathers, all people face conflicts within their own personality, and all people face crises of identity as they develop and adjust into society. The archetypes expressed in legend, myth, literature,

²¹ Stevens reveals the original definition for the term “archetype” is derived from the Greeks, and commonly referred to “an original manuscript from which later copies were made” (52).

²² In my discussion of the psychological development of the subject, I will be referencing cis-gendered heterosexual individuals. This does not nullify my observations in regards to minority groups that do not fit within these confines (such as homosexual, transgendered, and transsexual individuals), though it will alter the details of their psychological development in relation to the Jungian framework.

art, and film represent these universal issues, and the collective unconscious is merely the basic human “predisposition” to share and understand these archetypes on an unconscious level. (114)

Bikkhu Sujato (2012) expresses similar sentiments regarding the universal nature of the archetype due to the fact that “the nature of life follows regular patterns, such as birth, ageing, and death” (137). As Indick and Sujato indicate, the emotional and psychological interactions of our daily lives provide the material for the formation of archetypal images that are expressed in the cultural imaginary. As these archetypal images emerge from the unconscious, they are drawn upon when forging cultural texts such as films and fairytales and help form the visual language that ties together all forms of artistic expression. It is therefore unsurprising that we should see recurrent characters appear in popular narratives from disparate locations and at various time periods.

However, archetypal images are deeply impacted by environmental factors resulting in a wide spectrum of variety in regard to their physical manifestation. This phenomenon is due to the dualistic nature of the archetype, as it is the product of two components: the image and the form which function symbiotically to express the overall concept. Though the form of the archetype remains relatively unchanged over time, the image is heavily informed by sociological elements, altering the way the archetype is visually expressed. Jung stipulated that the content of an archetypal image was determined only “when it has become conscious and is therefore filled out with the material of conscious experience” (*Four Archetypes* 13).²³ Extrinsic influences that

²³ Jung discussed this facet of the archetype in his essay “Approaching the unconscious,” explaining that the archetype is “often misunderstood as meaning certain definite mythological images or motifs. But these are nothing more than conscious representations; ... The archetype is a tendency to form such

impact the conscious psyche therefore have a dramatic effect on the archetype and the manner in which it is externalized. Luke Hockley (2001) comments on this aspect of the archetype, indicating that the form is “inherited and passed from generation to generation” and will therefore remain constant while the image is transient and “will vary from culture to culture and age to age” (30). Jeffrey Burton Russell makes a similar observation regarding myths, stating that they are the “products of the unconscious refined and modified by the conscious” (*The Devil* 52). This dual character of the archetype plays an integral role in my assessment of the Boogeyman, as I demonstrate that the figure of the monstrous Other is simultaneously eternal and ever-changing: he retains his permanent role as the enforcer of communal boundaries, while superficial aspects of his external façade change according to environmental conditions.

Within academic discourse, the notion of the archetype has come to be viewed as somewhat outdated and incongruent with modern methodological practices in the Humanities. Many of Jung’s theories, including the archetype, were widely abandoned during the late twentieth century because, as Chris Baldick (2008) points out, his universalizing approach to the human psyche has been accused of adopting a reductive lens that largely overlooks “cultural differences” of race, gender, and class (24). I disagree with this criticism of the archetype, as it is predicated on a fundamental misunderstanding of Jung’s writings concerning this topic. Jung never argued that the images created by the archetype were static and unchanging, but instead that they were fluid and adapted to suit the social and political attitudes of the time to which they were applied (*C.W. Vol. 16* 196). I further assert that the archetype is dependent on a notion I

representations of a motif—representations that can vary a great deal in detail without losing their basic pattern” (67).

refer to as “approximation” which occurs when the images that are synthesized by a population within a geographical community are similar based upon socio-political forces and subsequently converge in a popular narrative.²⁴ Approximation reflects the fact that though the subjective psychological experience may be unique, it is similar to that of others living in a given environment. The collective unconscious thereby allows for individual variation while suggesting an underlying point of unity that binds together the collective and promotes social cohesion.

Waning interest in Jung’s writings within the academic community may also be motivated by his personal life—specifically, his supposed political affiliation with the Nazi party. Jung has been accused by his detractors of being a Nazi sympathiser, due in large part to his interest in European mythology and frequent discussion of the Aryan race; two topics that feature prominently in Nazi propaganda.²⁵ However, these claims are unsubstantiated, as Jung not only denounced Hitler and the Nazi movement, but also foretold their downfall.²⁶ Furthermore, in his professional life, Jung supported the careers of many of his Jewish colleagues, including Erich Neumann (1905-1960) who was a devout Zionist. Neumann (whose work is discussed in Chapters 3 and 4) was one of Jung’s closest intellectual allies and essentially functioned as his protégé, carrying on his work in the field of psychoanalysis. Even though Jung has no proven connections with

²⁴ This notion of “approximation” is predicated on Jung’s work concerning the individual and collective facets of the mind. In *The Undiscovered Self with Symbols and the Interpretation of Dreams* (2011) Jung distinguishes between the subjective and objective psyche which each play a role in composing the individual’s personality. He explains that in addition to the subjective (personal) psyche that is synonymous with consciousness, there also exists an objective psyche which is associated with the unconscious and manifests in the form of “contrary feelings, fantasies, emotions, impulses, and dreams, none of which one makes oneself but which come upon one objectively” (47).

²⁵ These accusations levelled against Jung are explored both in Deidre Bair’s book *Jung: A Biography* (2014) and William Schoenl and Danielle Peck’s article “An Answer to the Question: Was Jung, for a Time, a ‘Nazi Sympathizer’ or Not?” (2012).

²⁶ In 1936, Jung described Hitler as “possessed” and argued that he had “infected a whole nation to such an extent that everything is set in motion and has started rolling on its course towards perdition” (*CW Vol. 10* 185).

anti-Semitism or the Nazi ideology, his work remains suspect by many—including certain scholars in the Humanities.

Likewise, the practice of archetypal criticism has also been marginalized in numerous areas of scholarly discourse due, in large part, to its strict association with pre-literate forms of storytelling. As Jung frequently utilized myths and biblical parables as case studies to demonstrate his theories, the archetype has become widely associated in the popular consciousness with ancient narratives. However, Jung embraced the notion that the archetype could surface in contemporary artistic mediums, as evidenced in his anthology *Man and His Symbols* (1964) in which he analyses a series of popular American films through the lens of the collective unconscious. It is evident from this discussion that many of the criticisms levelled against Jung's theories are unfounded and cannot endure close scrutiny, yet he still remains a maligned figure in certain factions of academia.

Thankfully over the last few decades, there has been renewed interest in the study of the archetype and many of Jung's ideas have been reintroduced into certain sectors of literary and film analysis.²⁷ This new area of discourse was officially dubbed “post-Jungian” in 1986 by political commentator Andrew Samuels and includes scholars such as Luke Hockley and Christopher Hauke (Samuels, Introduction 7). Jung has also received support from social critic Camille Paglia who argued in 2006 that he “belongs in any humanities program that claims to be teaching ‘theory’: his archetypes constitute the universal tropes and basic structures of epic, drama, folklore, and fairy tale” (9). Additionally, the application of archetypal criticism to modern mass media has resulted

²⁷ As Karin Barnaby and Pellegrino D’Acierno point out in *C.G. Jung and the Humanities* (1990), “[Jung’s] methodology appears ... to have anticipated significant aspects of contemporary critical principles and practice” (n.p.).

in many of Jung's most salient ideas being adapted to better suit contemporary values and current manifestations of popular narratives.

For example, in the field of literary analysis, Northrop Frye (1912-1991) appropriated and modified the concept of the archetype for application in the study of narratology. Frye's interpretation of the archetype builds upon Jung's research by adapting it to the written word and approaching it purely from a literary perspective, noting the persistence of certain motifs within textual works. In his essay "Blake's Treatment of the Archetype" (1950), Frye characterized the archetype as "an element in a work of literature ... which can be assimilated to a larger unifying category" (68). He further refined this definition two years later in his paper "The Literary Meaning of 'Archetype'" (1952) when he stated that the archetype is a "unit of a work of literary art," serving to connect "one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate our literary experience" (184). Frye therefore viewed the archetype as a recurrent pattern that appeared in the writings of a particular author or series of works. This understanding of the archetype differed from that of Jung in so far as it operated on a purely aesthetic level, as Frye dismissed the notion of the collective unconscious, arguing that this feature was of little scholarly value to the literary critic ("The Literary Meaning" 188). According to this logic, the archetype had almost no relationship with the human psyche, and Frye offered no alternative explanation for the source of this phenomenon.

Frye's reinvention of the archetype for literary analysis is also similar to the notion of the "invariant" that was proposed by French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009). Throughout his career, one of the central objectives of Lévi-Strauss' research involved investigating the structural foundations of the human mind.

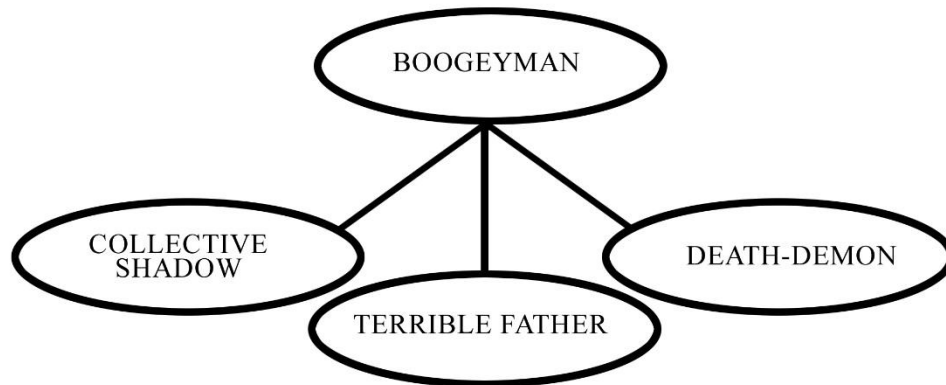


Fig. 1. A breakdown of the archetypal components that contribute to the persona of the Boogeyman in the cultural imaginary. Source: Kevin McGuiness.

Specifically, he claimed that myth is not limited to pre-modern communities but instead is an inherent fixture of social interaction. More specifically, Lévi-Strauss argued that myths of monsters are embedded in the unconscious psyche of all people and are manifestations of the “universal primordial mind” (Kearney 120). He developed the concept of the invariant in *Myth and Meaning: Cracking the Code of Culture* (1978) while documenting the commonalities of stories drawn from various oral traditions.²⁸ The invariant pertains to the consistent themes, patterns, and relationships recurring in mythical stories or, as Lévi-Strauss simply states, the “invariant elements among superficial differences” (8). These persistent themes “seem arbitrary, meaningless, absurd, yet nevertheless ... reappear all over the world” and therefore possess tremendous significance (11-2). In her foreword to the 1995 publication of this text,

²⁸ *Myth and Meaning: Cracking the Code of Culture* was originally delivered as a series of lectures for CBC Radio in 1977.

Wendy Doniger points out that there is “something decidedly archetypal” about the notion of the invariant (xi). Indeed, this concept invokes many of the central characteristics associated with the archetype, as both possess trans-historical properties and are unimpeded by geographical boundaries. The ubiquitous nature of the invariant in many ways epitomizes Jung’s belief in the collective unconscious and an inherent predisposition to an archetypal vocabulary.

For the purposes of this thesis, I amalgamate the definitions of the archetype and the invariant and apply them to both the fairytale and the slasher film in my assessment of the Boogeyman. I therefore acknowledge the role of the collective unconscious in relation to the archetype, as outlined by Jung, while focusing predominantly on its narratological importance, as outlined by Frye and Lévi-Strauss. Applying the archetype to film and folklore, I specifically examine the common physical and psychological traits that are present in depictions of the slasher villain and relate them to the folkloric Boogeyman. Through this analysis, I establish the archetypal foundation of these characters, and how they fit within a broader narratological context. In my assessment of the monstrous Other, I also look to Jung’s successors Erich Neumann and Edgar Herzog, both of whom have discussed the role of the archetype in psychological development.

As outlined earlier, the Boogeyman represents an amalgamation of three archetypes: the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon (Fig. 1). These forms merge in the cultural imaginary to create a mythical monster that personifies collective anxieties, death, and the most nefarious aspects of the paternal figure. Each of these facets of the Boogeyman encapsulates fundamental fears that are elemental to the human condition, thus explaining his presence in seemingly disparate cultures throughout

the world. Though this thesis solely addresses manifestations of the Boogeyman from the Western tradition, the archetypal forms that underpin this figure reach beyond any national, political, or social borders as they are deeply embedded within the human psyche.

One of the most enigmatic archetypal forms to emerge from Jung's writings was that of the Shadow, a psychic projection that represents those facets of the individual that are considered socially unacceptable and are consequently repressed. The Shadow can operate both on the personal level (often referred to as a "complex"), and on the communal level (referred to as "collective"). In both instances, those traits that fail to adhere to the hegemonic ideology are subjugated and funnelled into the Shadow.²⁹ In the case of the personal Shadow, the subject's psyche is essentially bifurcated, and repressed impulses and thoughts are embodied by this archetype. Jung described the personal Shadow as the undesirable portion of the personality: "[the Shadow is] the sum of all those unpleasant qualities we like to hide, together with the insufficiently developed functions and contents of the personal unconscious" (*C.W. Vol. 7* 66, n. 5). Under extreme conditions, when a group is unified through their shared hatred for a common enemy, the collective Shadow will emerge—resulting in the manifestation of dangerous figures that exist in the cultural imaginary and threaten the community. These discarded traits coalesce in the form of an adversary that takes on a supernatural and mythic persona such as that observed in the Boogeyman.

Throughout the course of this thesis, I examine Jung's notion of the collective Shadow in conjunction with research from his intellectual protégé Erich Neumann.

²⁹ When using the term "hegemony" in this thesis, I refer to the definition established by R.W. Connell (1987): "a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organization of private life and cultural processes" (184).

Neumann was a German-born Israeli philosopher and psychologist who wrote extensively on the role of archetypes in art, religion and myth. His most notable works include *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (1949) and *The Great Mother* (1955), both of which address the arduous process that the human psyche undergoes during maturation. In these texts, Neumann makes mention of an archetypal form referred to as the Terrible Father which, as the name indicates, personifies the most malevolent aspects of the paternal figure. According to Neumann, the Terrible Father threatens to disrupt the psychological development of the child and manifests in the cultural imaginary in the form of a villainous male figure. Neumann's work concerning the Terrible Father is limited due to his untimely death in 1960, and in many ways this thesis functions as an extension of his original ideas. Applying Neumann's research concerning the Terrible Father to the Boogeyman, it becomes evident that these two figures share many fundamental properties, such as a propensity for violence, control, and domination, as well as a desire to arrest the development of a progressive ideology.

I assert that during periods of social upheaval, the collective Shadow merges with the Terrible Father, resulting in the monstrous figure of the Boogeyman who serves to violently reinforce communal boundaries. Thus, the Boogeyman's central narrative function is to chastise individuals who defy hegemonic values through transgressive acts of violence in order to reaffirm traditional moral practices. I further assert that the Boogeyman's rise to the cultural forefront is precipitated by historical circumstances, namely a fragmenting of the population along ideological lines. Such a collective split results in anxieties being redirected inwards towards the community itself, culminating in the creation of violent mythical creatures (such as the Boogeyman) that serve to fortify

communal beliefs.³⁰ Consequently, the Boogeyman manifests in the form of a distorted paternal figure that surveys and affirms collective barriers by dispensing harsh punishments such as torture and death against individuals who threaten to breach these borders.

The Boogeyman's role as a harbinger of destruction is also connected to the fact that he is a projection of the Death-Demon, an archetypal form that manifests anxieties associated with mortality. The concept of the Death-Demon is discussed in detail by German psychoanalyst Edgar Herzog in *Psyche and Death* (1966) and results when the subject consciously recognizes the presence of death in the world. In its anthropomorphic guise, the Death-Demon possesses characteristics that are eerily reminiscent of those associated with depictions of the Boogeyman, and there is undoubtedly a connection between these two figures. According to Herzog, the Death-Demon may manifest as an abducting bridegroom with features that reference images of morbidity, including a monstrous appearance and weaponry that he uses to torture and murder his victims. These characteristics are present in both the folkloric and cinematic manifestations of the Boogeyman, and through an in-depth analysis of Bluebeard and the selected slasher villains, I demonstrate the intrinsic role of the Death-Demon in the construction of the monstrous Other.

I propose that the fusion of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon results in the creation of the Boogeyman, a deadly paternal figure who punishes individuals that exhibit disobedient behaviour in conflict with hegemonic

³⁰ This hypothesis was inspired by the writings of Marie Louise von Franz (1995) and Jeffrey Burton Russell (1987) concerning the Christian figure of the Devil. Both von Franz and Russell characterize the Devil as a violent figure who personifies anxieties related to devotees of the Christian faith and therefore a manifestation of the collective desire to curtail "sinful" behaviour through the threat of damnation.

values. Essentially, the Boogeyman serves a cautionary function, using fear and coercion to assuage the public from partaking in activities that are considered inappropriate according to prevailing social beliefs. Ultimately, the power of the Boogeyman is predicated on the threat of torture and death, and his persistence in the Western cultural imaginary is tied to the universality of these anxieties. Through my comparative analysis of Bluebeard and the slasher villains Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger, I demonstrate the trans-historical nature of the fears associated with the Boogeyman and his ubiquity in popular narratives of folklore and the modern horror film.

In Chapter 1, I provide an assessment of the Boogeyman and a cursory examination of his manifestations in Western folklore. Departing from the work of Marina Warner and John Widdowson, I establish a definition for the monstrous Other that forms the foundation for my argument. As mentioned earlier, Warner's book *No Go the Bogeyman* plays a pivotal role in characterizing the Boogeyman in this thesis by outlining the essential traits that contribute to his monstrous persona. The key characteristics that I focus on in my investigation of the Boogeyman are the danger that he presents to the community, his abject appearance, and his proclivity towards violence and sadism. By highlighting the centrality of these attributes to the persona of the Boogeyman, I establish a criterion for identifying his persona to easily pinpoint his presence in later iterations—specifically the slasher villain.

As Warner frequently references the character of Bluebeard as a prototypical example of the monstrous Other in her work, I have selected him as the key case study in establishing the relationship between the folkloric Boogeyman and the selected slasher villains. In my analysis of Bluebeard, I build on the work of Jungian scholar Bettina

Knapp (2003), who applies the notion of the archetype to Bluebeard and offers keen insights into the psychological implications of his abject physical appearance. Through a careful examination of Bluebeard, I extrapolate the characteristics associated with the folkloric Boogeyman and demonstrate the presence of similar qualities and behavioural patterns in Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger. In establishing this link, I draw upon the work of Sue Short (2006), and Anna Biller (2016)—both of whom have noted the relationship between Bluebeard and the slasher villain. Like earlier iterations of the Boogeyman, these villains personify the archetypes of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon, functioning as violent paternal figures that punish social transgressors through torture and murder. By outlining the relationship between the Boogeyman and the archetype, I demonstrate that he is a recurrent figure in the cultural imaginary surfacing in various mediums including the fairytale and the slasher film.

As this thesis includes a comparative analysis of the folkloric Boogeyman and the slasher villain, it is necessary to highlight the triadic relationship between the fairytale, the horror film, and the archetype. In establishing the role of the archetype in the fairytale, I consult the works of Jungian scholar Marie Louise von Franz (1915-1988) and psychoanalyst Mikita Brottman. In *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales* (1996), von Franz explains that the fairytale represents one of the purest sources for examining the archetype, as these stories are unclouded by complex narratives and multi-dimensional characters (1). The interconnectedness of the archetype and fairytale is further supported by Brottman (2005), who notes the simplistic narrative design of these stories: “[t]he fairy tale takes place in a primitive ... universe ruled by spirits and magic” (97). Brottman’s work also bridges the relationship between folklore and modern cinema that I

propose in my thesis by likening the fairytale to the contemporary horror film. She asserts that both cultural artefacts serve a similar psychological function—providing cautionary lessons to their audiences concerning the dangers of “illicit” behaviour (97).³¹ Both von Franz and Brottman articulate the pivotal role that the collective unconscious plays in the creation of popular narratives such as those featured in fairytales and horror films. Departing from the observations of these two writers, I assess the relationship between the archetype and the folkloric Boogeyman and thus explain the prevalent nature of this figure in the Western cultural imaginary.

Another component to my argument involves linking the horror film and the archetype and establishing the pivotal role that the collective unconscious plays in the narrative elements that we see in these movies. In 1964 Jung acknowledged the relationship between depth psychology and the horror film when he proposed that the monsters featured in this genre are “distorted versions of archetypes that will no longer be repressed” (“Approaching” 92). This notion is further developed by William Indick, who specifically discusses the archetypal nature of film narrative and asserts that the slasher villain is an embodiment of the collective Shadow—a key link that I develop in the third chapter of my thesis. Building on Indick’s argument, I demonstrate that the killers in these films, much like Bluebeard, personify not only the archetypal form of the collective Shadow, but also the Terrible Father and the Death-Demon.

Finally, in order to complete the tripartite link between the fairytale, the slasher film, and the archetype, I consult the writings of film theorists Walter Rankin (2008), Mikel Koven (2007), and Sue Short. In *Grimm Pictures*, Rankin adopts an archetypal

³¹ Diem-My T. Bui and Marina Levina discuss the notion of the horror movie as a venue to express communal fears in the introduction to *Monster Culture in the 21st Century* (2013) when they state that this genre “offer a space where society can safely represent and address anxieties of its time” (1).

lens and likens fairytales recorded by the Brothers Grimm with modern films of the horror and thriller genres, highlighting the recurrent characters, patterns, and motifs that appear in both mediums. Similarly, in *Film, Folklore, and Urban Legends*, Koven provides evidence that contemporary horror films trace their roots back to folkloric sources by pinpointing shared themes. Likewise, Short links the heroines of the American slasher film to female protagonists of well-known fairytales and argues that these women achieve psychological maturity through the process of overcoming their male adversaries (a notion I discuss further in Chapter 4). Through my analysis of this research from Rankin, Koven, and Short, I demonstrate that both folklore and cinema share a number of narratological characteristics and assert that the strong connections these scholars establish between the fairytale and the modern horror film are rooted in the archetype.

In Chapter 2, I offer an overview of Carl Jung's notion of the collective Shadow and explain how this archetype is an integral component in the creation of the Boogeyman persona. According to Jung, those traits that fail to adhere to the hegemonic ideology are repressed by the public and contribute to the collective Shadow, which is projected outwards onto other figures. Building on Jung's conclusions, I argue that the collective Shadow is capable of manifesting in the form of monstrous figures that populate the cultural imaginary such as the Boogeyman. As a result, the Boogeyman represents the embodiment of the community's rejected qualities, and he becomes a haunting reminder of their cumulative fears and anxieties. We see this dynamic reflected in Perrault's story, as Bluebeard is despised by the community who find him physically grotesque and morally abhorrent. As such, there is a psychological gulf that develops

between Bluebeard and his neighbours that is largely unbridgeable, resulting from his role as the embodiment of the collective Shadow.

Within the context of the slasher film, we see this theme similarly unfold through the rapport that the killer shares with the individuals who inhabit the community. Through an analysis of the relationship between Freddy Krueger (Robert Englund) and the town of Springwood in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, I demonstrate the presence of the collective Shadow in the slasher film. The villain in this film is killed in an event involving members of the community, and the legacy of this act is subsequently repressed in an attempt to maintain cohesion and to disavow any culpability for this crime. Krueger becomes the dark secret that haunts Springwood, and the anxiety that he elicits immobilizes the town and allows him to terrify his victims. By concealing the memory of this incident, the community not only contributes to the creation of Krueger's monstrous presence in Springwood but also strengthens his homicidal grip on the collective. As a result, Krueger becomes a projection of their fears and rejected qualities that they wish to relegate from their conscious psyches, thus transforming him into their collective Shadow.

The only character that is capable of eluding Krueger's power is the heroine Nancy Thompson (Heather Langenkamp) who, much like Bluebeard's final wife, recognizes the danger posed by the villain and utilizes her strength and fortitude to overcome her adversary. By confronting Krueger (who embodies her personal Shadow), Nancy incorporates her repressed instincts into her conscious mind and matures into adulthood. This psychological exchange assumes the form of open aggression between the heroine and villain and, at the conclusion of the film, Nancy successfully "kills the

killer by killing her part of the collective nightmare” (Clover 38n22). Not only does Nancy stop Krueger’s destructive impact on the community but the confrontation marks a personal rite of passage that signals her successful transition from a young girl into a mature woman. This concept is further explored in Chapter 4 where I discuss the “marriage to Death” theme and the slasher heroine’s role as the community’s saviour who arrests the insidious influence of the cinematic Boogeyman.

In Chapter 3, I establish the connection between the Boogeyman and another Jungian concept—the Terrible Father. Analyzing his relationship with young women and children, I show how the Boogeyman embodies the role of the Terrible Father by representing the destructive facets of the paternal archetype. Functioning as a distorted vision of the father figure, the Boogeyman instils cohesion within the community by assigning brutal punishment to those who transgress the accepted moral boundaries. We see this trait exhibited in Perrault’s tale when Bluebeard ruthlessly punishes his young wife for defying his order of avoiding the forbidden chamber and consequently attempts to murder her. By limiting his wife’s movements within the domestic sphere of the home and reproaching her for disobeying his edict, Bluebeard impedes her psychological development and thereby symbolically embodies the role of the Terrible Father.

Similarly, within the context of the slasher film, individuals who participate in modes of behaviour that fail to adhere to the dominant social mores in America during the 1970s and ’80s are subsequently punished by the killer.³² These types of “illicit” activities often assume the form of premarital sex and/or the consumption of alcohol and drugs. To indulge in such pursuits, characters often relinquish their communal responsibilities, and exhibit the type of “naughty” behaviour synonymous with the

³² For further information concerning the puritanical aspects of the slasher film see Rockoff (2002).

victims of the folkloric Boogeyman. The slasher villain therefore functions as a distorted parental figure, chastising characters that have defied the overarching moral framework of the film. In order to illustrate this dynamic at play, I offer the reader an analysis of *Halloween*, and examine the narrative role of the villainous Michael Myers (Tony Moran) in relation to the citizens of Haddonfield. Throughout the course of this film, Myers surveys and terrorizes a group of sexually active teenagers, many of whom indulge in the consumption of drugs and alcohol. Though no explicit reason is offered for Myers' homicidal behaviour, I argue that his rage is prompted by his victims' open expression of their sexual desires. By torturing and murdering these characters, he fulfills the role of the Terrible Father and reinforces the conservative hegemonic values of the community that includes sexual repression.

In Chapter 4, I examine the Boogeyman's predilection for sadistic acts of violence and establish his role as a personification of the Death-Demon. This archetypal form is a projection of the neurosis born out of the recognition of mortality and the inevitability of dying. Herzog wrote extensively about this phenomenon in his book *Psyche and Death*, and many of the physical and psychological characteristics he associated with the Death-Demon are present in cultural manifestations of the Boogeyman. As mentioned previously, Bluebeard perpetrates acts of brutality to reproach individuals who have disregarded his commands, using death as a tool to elicit obedience and conformity. Comparing the folkloric Boogeyman with the slasher villain, we see similar homicidal acts exercised by the characters of Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger against their victims as punishment for defiant or disobedient behaviour. I argue that these antagonists function as personifications of the Death-Demon, and I begin this analysis by assessing the

monstrous Other's narratological role in relation to both the other onscreen characters as well as to the audience.

In his discussion of the Death-Demon, Herzog also describes it as a figure reminiscent of a corpse, with grotesque physical attributes—characteristics that are reflected in depictions of the Boogeyman. For example, Bluebeard's unsightly appearance is a major component in Perrault's story and distances him from the other characters that populate the narrative. His strange beard unsettles members of the community, marks him as Other, and serves as a physical manifestation of his inner monstrosity (which we later witness when he attempts to murder his wife). Similarly, in the slasher film the villain is often hideously disfigured (Krueger), or his face has been replaced by a frightening mask that obscures his identity and prohibits him from connecting emotionally or psychologically with other characters (Myers and Voorhees). Operating as a blank canvas, the mask allows the audience to project their deepest anxieties onto the slasher villain, transforming him into the living embodiment of the viewer's own personal fears. The rigid and stoic qualities of the mask coincide with Herzog's description of the Death-Demon, and serves as a surrogate face for the killer, compensating for his lack of humanity.

Building on Herzog's work, I discuss the significance of the locations associated with the Boogeyman, and the fact that these sites are frequently adorned with the bodies of his victims and serve as extensions of his role as a harbinger of death. We see this clearly illustrated in the character of Bluebeard, who lives in a secluded mansion that contains a locked chamber concealing the corpses of his murdered wives. These women's remains presumably serve as trophies to commemorate Bluebeard's crimes, and his

motivation for keeping them is to catalogue his career as a serial killer.³³ Similarly, the characters of Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger dwell in remote locations that are decrepit, dark, and rumoured to be haunted where they deposit the bodies and/or belongings of their victims. Like Bluebeard, these villains adorn their homes with mementos stripped from individuals they have killed, transforming these locations into shrines that celebrate their crimes.

In the slasher film, this site that later serves as the villain's lair is often connected with some sort of tragic event from the past that initiated his reign of terror. The cinematic Boogeyman, unlike his fairytale counterpart, often endures a traumatic experience at this location, causing his physical and/or emotional death. Following this calamity, he is subsequently resurrected and transformed into a creature devoid of empathy and humanity. Returning to the scene of this past trauma, the slasher villain begins his rampage, and the ensuing violence that he displays is often indirectly related to his earlier ordeal, thereby serving to mimic and/or avenge it. The folkloric Boogeyman similarly exhibits sadistic behaviour, though his predisposition to carnage is rarely explained within the story and is not tied to any previous trauma. Instead, characters such as Bluebeard are presented as stock figures whose fury is prompted when other characters within the narrative defy his will.

Furthermore, when punishing his victims, the Boogeyman utilizes weapons that are primal in nature and function as extensions of his body, resulting in the prolongation of his victim's suffering prior to death. This feature of the Boogeyman is a characteristic that Herzog associated with the Death-Demon, further demonstrating the monstrous

³³ Zipes argues that Perrault's story is a clear illustration of the "serial killer" motif that reoccurs in fairytales from all over the globe and features a mysterious male villain who entraps and murders a series of young women so as to demonstrate his power (*The Golden Age* 635).

Other's close alignment with this archetypal form. These tools also allow the Boogeyman to extrapolate the greatest level of personal satisfaction from his violent behaviour and transform the act of murder into pure spectacle. We see this motif clearly illustrated in Perrault's fairytale, whereupon Bluebeard attempts to cut off his wife's head with a cutlass after she begs for her life (*The Story* 52). This practice is similarly expressed in the slasher film, as Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger all utilize phallic weapons to stalk and brutally murder their victims. The destructive reign of the Boogeyman, both in the fairytale and slasher film, is finally ended through the intervention of a female protagonist who brings temporary harmony to the community.

The dynamic observed between the heroine and villain in these narratives is highly reflective of the "marriage to Death" theme that Neumann discussed in *Amor and Psyche*. Such tales feature a female protagonist who is either literally or metaphorically wed to Death, embodied by a monstrous male villain, and must confront him to attain psychological maturity. This encounter with Death symbolically expresses the act of sexual intercourse and is necessary for the protagonist to successfully integrate her personal Shadow (embodied by the villain) and thereby cross the threshold into adulthood. This motif can be observed in Perrault's tale between Bluebeard, who functions as a personification of Death, and his final wife, who must utilize her strength and ingenuity to survive her husband's repeated attempts to kill her.³⁴ This theme is similarly observed in the slasher film, which features a female protagonist who temporarily vanquishes the villain through her intelligence and wit. Though the heroine in these films is not literally married to the villain, she shares a sexually charged relationship with her male adversary that is rooted in repression, and, as I demonstrate,

³⁴ See Hermansson (2009).

both characters express their libidinal impulses through the violence they perpetrate against one another. Much like Bluebeard's final wife, the slasher heroine personifies the force of hope and life within the narrative scheme of the film, forming a symbolic unit with the villain, who conversely embodies the opposing forces of death and destruction.

Through this analysis, I reveal the conventions associated with the monstrous Other and his relationship with the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon. Simultaneously, I establish the Boogeyman's dualistic role as a dangerous predator and a disciplinary figure, paradoxically bringing both disharmony and moral balance to the community. The focus of this thesis will be a comparative analysis between the folkloric Boogeyman (Bluebeard), and the slasher film villains (Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger), who I posit as cinematic iterations of the monstrous Other. By documenting the common physical and psychological traits shared by these characters, I illustrate the archetypal foundations of the Boogeyman and the fact that he continues to be a recurrent figure in the Western popular consciousness. This interdisciplinary analysis of the writings of Jung, Neumann, and Herzog ultimately reveals the psychological and philosophical role that the Boogeyman plays in society and the relationship he shares with the cultural imaginary.

Although there has been considerable scholarship published about the history and structure of the slasher subgenre, there are limited sources that address how these films fit within a larger archetypal and narratological context. The goal of this thesis is to highlight the relationship between contemporary film and pre-modern forms of storytelling through a comparative analysis of the slasher villain and folkloric depictions

of the Boogeyman.³⁵ I demonstrate in my research that the antagonists that populate the modern American slasher reiterate many of the salient properties Warner and Widdowson associate with the Boogeyman. Due to the fact that my focus falls predominantly on the narrative facets of these cultural artefacts (such as character development and setting); I will be largely disregarding the aesthetic properties of these works (such as dialogue, camera angles, composition, and editing). This approach represents a marked departure from traditional film analysis which tends to privilege the technical facets of the medium. Instead, my research reveals structural similarities between the fairytale and slasher film, and illuminates the common archetypal qualities of the villains presented in both narrative forms.

Among the notable scholars who I reference from the field of film studies is Vera Dika, whose book *Games of Terror: Halloween, Friday the 13th, and the Films of the Stalker Cycle* (1990) offers an in-depth examination of the structural layout of the slasher film. Dika dissects many of the conventions synonymous with the subgenre and offers shrewd insights concerning their symbolic importance. I also draw from the work of cultural theorist Kendall Phillips, who has written extensively about the evolution of the horror genre. In *Projected Fears: Horror Films and American Culture* (2005), Phillips examines the relationship between the horror film and American audiences, explaining the joy that is elicited from the viewing experience. Finally, I reference the essay “An Introduction to the American Horror Film” by film critic Robin Wood that is featured in the edited anthology *The American Nightmare: Essays on the Horror Film*. According to

³⁵ As feminist film scholar Carol Clover points out, horror movies bear many of the hallmarks of folklore, including “the free exchange of themes and motifs, [as well as] ... archetypal characters and situations” (10-11). Similarly, Short notes that horror films provide a “new format for revisiting established archetypes” from folklore (31).

Wood, the notion of repression is central to the horror film, and the monster embodies the unbridled chaos released when psychological restraint is lifted (10). The destruction of the monster therefore marks the return of repression and a temporary resolution to the anarchy wrought by the creature's liberation into the community. Departing from the work of Dika, Phillips, and Wood, I outline the structural components of the slasher film narrative and the psychological role that the villain plays in relation to the other onscreen characters in these films, as well as to the viewing audience. Furthermore, I draw parallels between the antagonists that populate these films and those of the fairytale (such as Bluebeard) to demonstrate that both types of villain serve a remarkably similar narratological role.

Additionally, I incorporate the scholarship of feminist film theorists Linda Williams and Carol Clover into my discussion concerning the connection between the heroine and villain in the slasher film. Specifically, I examine Williams' 2012 essay "When the Woman Looks" in which she posits women in the slasher film as victims of sadistic male desire. Likewise, I discuss Carol Clover's *Men, Women and Chainsaws* (1992) and her thoughts concerning the unique gendered nature of the Final Girl and its influence on the appeal of the slasher film. As Clover indicates, the heroines of these films serve as masculine androgynes through which male viewers can access the world of the slasher film without experiencing gender confusion. Though I acknowledge the work done by Williams and Clover, it is vital to note that this project is not a feminist analysis of the slasher film. Instead, I look to these texts to help assess the role of the villain in proximity to the slasher heroine-- thereby outlining the mutually constitutive nature of their identity construction. As I demonstrate in Chapters 3 and 4, the heroine and villain

are defined by one another, united by their oppositional roles within the narrative framework.

I would also note that the work of many of the theorists previously discussed in my Introduction utilize Freudian psychoanalysis in their examination of the horror film and pose a potential conflict with the Jungian lens of my thesis. The theories of Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) have dominated the field of horror film studies for multiple generations. Dubbed the “father of psychoanalysis,”³⁶ Freud was a pioneer in the practice of depth psychology and introduced many of the concepts that are still discussed in the discipline today including the Oedipus complex in the psychosexual development of male children (discussed in Chapter 3), as well as the role of the id, ego, and superego in the evolution of the individual psyche. Many of his ideas have subsequently been appropriated and expanded by scholars (particularly feminist theorists) working in the field of film studies. For example, Laura Mulvey’s well known essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (1999) in which she discusses the concept of the “male gaze” was deeply informed by Freud’s notion of scopophilia. Similarly, Elizabeth Cowie’s text *Representing the Woman: Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (1997) explores the relationship between fetishism, voyeurism, and pleasure for both male and female moviegoers. Furthermore, Braccha Ettinger (1995) employed Freud’s work in her construction of the “matrixial gaze” which examines film narratives that posit female characters as subjects as opposed to objects, thereby inverting the traditional phallogocentric structure of typical Hollywood cinema.

Within the field of horror film studies, Freud’s ideas have been particularly popular; a phenomenon that I assert is largely due to his preoccupation with sexual

³⁶ *Sigmund Freud: Father of Psychoanalysis* (1974) was the title of a book by Alan L. Paley.

perversion. As Linda Williams explains, within the Freudian tradition “sexuality is, by definition, perverse” due to the fact that the “‘aims’ and ‘objects’ of sexual desire are often obscure and inherently substitutive” (“Film Bodies” 167). Furthermore, she states that perversion often entails gratuitous sexual excesses that “result when ‘proper’ end goals are deflected onto substitute goals or objects—fetishes instead of genitals, looking instead of touching, and so forth” (“Film Bodies” 165). Sadism, repression, and sublimation are frequent topics in Freud’s work and figure prominently in research by theorists such as Williams, Clover, Wood, and Phillips. Steven Jay Schneider remarks on the relationship between Freud’s writings and the work of many of these scholars:

All of these positions depend on the Freudian notion of repressed mental content—anxieties, fears, even fantasies and wishes that get relegated to the unconscious during childhood either because they are too unpleasurable in and of themselves or because they conflict with more acceptable/ appropriate mental content. (2-3)³⁷

As Schneider demonstrates, Freud has enjoyed a privileged role in horror film studies and greatly contributed to contemporary scholarship within this field. My research therefore offers a unique opportunity to examine the slasher from a Jungian perspective and thereby generate new and innovative ideas concerning the archetypal role of the villains that populate this subgenre.

Despite the ubiquity of Freud’s ideas in the study of the horror film, his writings play a relatively marginal role in my analysis due to the fact that my thesis is based entirely on the Jungian concept of the archetype. The notion of the collective unconscious

³⁷ Schneider makes this statement in reference to the work of Robin Wood, Carol Clover, Linda Williams, Barbara Creed, and Noël Carroll.

which houses the archetypal forms found in popular narratives was a contentious issue in the professional relationship between Freud and Jung. For a period of approximately six years (1906-1912) the two men shared a fruitful professional alliance that resembled a father-son bond. As Robert Steele explains, Freud viewed Jung as the person “to whom he could leave psychoanalysis” (245). However, in 1911 an ideological schism, primarily motivated by their perceptions of the unconscious psyche, began to develop between the two men that would poison their personal and professional union. As Linda Donn explains, Jung did not agree with Freud’s belief that the “sole contents of one’s dream life were early childhood experiences” and instead proposed that dreams were governed by “instinctual patterns of behavior” which he referred to as the collective unconscious (17). Steele states that Jung believed that this realm of the psyche was “characterized by mythopoeic forms of thought, the mental activity found in dreams, fantasies, play, and myths” (240). Furthermore, Jung argued that beneath the personal unconscious which contained “infantile reminiscences taken from the individual past” resided “pronounced traits of an archaic mental kind” (37). As time passed, this controversial issue grew into an insurmountable obstacle in the intellectual discourse between the two men and after 1912 they largely ended all correspondence.

As the archetype is the central driving force behind my research concerning the Boogeyman, much of my thesis focuses primarily on the work of Jung. I have, however, included certain concepts from Freud’s research in my analysis, specifically his notions of sadism, repression, sublimation, the uncanny, as well as his definition for libidinal energy. According to Freud, the term “libido” refers to the exclusively sexual energy that motivates human interactions and was prompted by two basic drives: the hunger drive

and the sexual drive (Donn 118; 140). Furthermore, Freud suggests that the libido is shaped by the child's desire to "possess one parent and do away with the other"—a wish that manifests in the unconscious psyche during adulthood and results in guilt and repression (Donn 118). Additionally, Freud proposed that this sexual energy can be redirected "from human objects to new objects of a non-sexual, socially valuable nature" through a process he termed "sublimation" (Brill 18-9). In Chapter 4, I utilize the notion of sublimation in my discussion of the violent interactions between the heroine and villain of the slasher film and argue that these altercations function as symbolic expressions of their repressed sexual energies which have been redirected into aggression.

In 1912, Jung expanded Freud's definition of the libido to encompass psychic "energy which manifests itself in the life-process" (Donn 148).³⁸ Jung's "adjustment" to Freud's libidinal theory was largely prompted by his research in mythology which led him to believe that the Oedipus complex resulted from the "genetic inheritance" of archetypal forms as opposed to struggles with the parental figure (Donn 140). The distinct nature of Freud's and Jung's perception of the libido and its role in the psychological development of the individual contributed to their ideological split outlined above.³⁹ By merging Freud's notions of repression, sublimation, and libidinal energy with Jung's ideas concerning the collective unconscious, I reveal the similarities between both

³⁸ As Peter Homans explains, Jung divided the development of the libido into three stages: "a presexual stage in which nutrition and growth predominate (birth to age four); a prepubertal stage (age five to puberty); then a stage of maturity, in which the libido is gradually desexualized and adapted to the demands of social reality" (69).

³⁹ In 1912, Freud travelled to see his friend Ludwig Binswanger, a Swiss psychiatrist who lived in the village of Kreulingen (40 miles from Zurich) who was extremely ill and believed to be dying. During his trip, Freud failed to visit Jung who later wrote him a letter in which he stated: "The fact that you have felt no need to see me ... must, I suppose, be attributed to your displeasure at my development of the libido theory" (Donn 143).

men's work. Additionally, this research will help to unveil the psychological subtext of the slasher film and the sexually charged nature of the relationship between the Final Girl and the cinematic Boogeyman.

Furthermore, by connecting this scholarship with research from Carl Jung, Erich Neumann, and Edgar Herzog, I propose new interdisciplinary insights concerning the archetypal nature of the contemporary American slasher film. Though the disciplines of film studies, philosophy, and psychology occasionally overlap, there is a startling shortage of discursive interplay between them. As a result, the content of contemporary horror films is often addressed solely through a single theoretical optic, and the potential richness of the subject matter is diminished. It is in this space between disciplinary boundaries that this thesis makes its contribution, forging connections between similar, though often disconnected, areas of study. Through the employment of an interdisciplinary methodology in my interrogation of the topic of the Boogeyman, I uncover new revelations concerning the role of this mythic figure and his function within the Western cultural imaginary.

Chapter 1:
The Man in the Shadows:
Defining the Boogeyman

I. Defining the Darkness

In this section of the thesis, I establish the central physical and psychological traits that characterize the Boogeyman in the cultural imaginary. Based on the work of Marina Warner and John Widdowson, I extrapolate the key qualities associated with the monstrous Other and how they manifest in villains from the fairytale and the horror film.⁴⁰ Furthermore, I demonstrate that these attributes can be traced to the Boogeyman's archetypal nature and the fact that he is a composite of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon. Through a comparative analysis that examines the link between iterations of the Boogeyman from the fairytale (Bluebeard) and the slasher film (Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, and Freddy Krueger), I highlight the pervasive nature of the monstrous Other in Western popular consciousness. Ultimately, this assessment contributes to the scholarly discourse that surrounds the figure of the Boogeyman and highlights the central properties that compose this figure.

In my analysis of the monstrous Other, I specifically focus on the character of Bluebeard from the 1697 fairytale written by Charles Perrault. By isolating the essential traits that characterize Bluebeard/the folkloric Boogeyman, they can then be applied to the villains Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger from the contemporary American slasher film

⁴⁰ In *Grimm Pictures: Fairy Tale Archetypes in Eight Horror and Suspense Films* (2007), Walter Rankin characterizes a villain under the following categories: cannibal, serial killer, freak-of-nature, vampire, manmade monster, witch, and devil (10). The Boogeyman clearly fits within Rankin's definition of a villain, as all of the figures examined in this thesis are responsible for multiple murders and therefore qualify as serial killers.

to reveal the kinship between these characters. Through this comparative analysis, I provide evidence that these slasher villains are cinematic manifestations of the folkloric Boogeyman and simultaneously illustrate the ubiquity and persistence of the monstrous Other in the Western cultural imaginary.⁴¹

Though these fictitious characters are separated by large spans of time and space, they are united by the archetype and, as a result, share a series of attributes that connect them with the Boogeyman persona. In fact, it is the disparate nature of these cultural figures that provides evidence of the archetypal nature of the Boogeyman and demonstrates the fact that his presence in the public consciousness is both transhistorical and transcultural. To best illustrate the inter-connectedness of the folkloric Boogeyman and the slasher villain, this chapter begins with a close examination of the *Bluebeard* fairy tale. In her work concerning the figure of the folkloric Boogeyman, Warner delineates specific qualities that characterize this figure in the cultural imaginary that include a violent temperament, physical ugliness, and social isolation. Through my analysis, I demonstrate that these “Boogeyman traits” are present both in Bluebeard and villains of the contemporary American slasher film and, by extension, reveal their relationship to the archetypal forms of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon.

II. Folktales and Fairytales

At this juncture in my analysis, it is necessary to define the terms “folktale” and “fairy tale” and explain how these narrative types compare to one another, as I will be

⁴¹ Film theorists Kendall Phillips (2005) and Karra Shimabukuro (2014) also highlight the similarities between the Boogeyman of folklore and the villains of contemporary American slasher films.

using these terms throughout this chapter. The folktale is often characterized by the fact it is orally transmitted, and is therefore prone to mutation and reinvention based on the social and political attitudes of the time.⁴² This type of storytelling became a prevalent form of entertainment during the medieval period in Western Europe—though anthropologist Jamie Tehrani (2016) argues that many of these tales date to an earlier period, some originating in prehistoric times.⁴³ Regardless of the age in which the folktale was invented, it served a vital communal role, explaining natural occurrences and articulating rites of passage (Zipes, *Fairy Tale* 10).⁴⁴ The structure of these stories was generally characterized by a simplistic plot involving a single protagonist who encounters fantastical creatures during his/her adventures.⁴⁵ Moreover, these stories are generally limited to a single location and serve a cautionary function by revealing the manner in which an individual overcomes adversity or succumbs to temptation.⁴⁶

The fairytale, on the other hand, is generally viewed as a subgenre of the folktale that was recorded and transformed into a literary work during the early modern period. Cultural researchers such as Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm (1785-1863; 1786-1859), Charles Perrault (1628-1703), and Giambattista Basile (1566-1632) are amongst the most famous figures that collected and transcribed these stories. Fairytales therefore have an identifiable author and can be attributed to a single personality—although the content of

⁴² For further information on the social implication of fairytales see Beveridge (2014), Zipes (1994), and Shimabukuro (2014).

⁴³ Tehrani specifically argues that the folktale *Jack and the Beanstalk* is approximately 5000 years old, while *Beauty and the Beast* and *Rumpelstiltskin* date back 4000 years (Tehrani). Similarly, Beveridge outlines the origins of fairytales in the oral tradition, explaining that there have been “magical creatures of all kinds and miraculous transformations in stories . . . since ancient times” (3).

⁴⁴ For further information concerning the role of fairy tales in articulating rites of passage see Bettelheim (1977), and Tatar (2016).

⁴⁵ See Beveridge (2014).

⁴⁶ Mircea Eliade explains that in folktales we never find “an accurate memory of a particular stage of culture,” but instead, we discover “the structure of an exemplary behavior” and therefore an indication of the hegemonic codes of conduct (196-7). For further information concerning the cautionary function of fairytales see Tatar (1993), Boudinot (2005), and Bettelheim (1977).

the story may have evolved over a number of centuries, or possibly millennia (Tehrani n.p.). Commonly referred to as *Zaubermärchen*, the fairytale is characterized by the fact that it features more exotic and fantastical elements than conventional folktales (Zipes, *Fairy Tale* 11).⁴⁷ However, the relationship between these two genres is convoluted and messy, as certain fairytales trace their origins to the folktale, while others were original creations based on motifs drawn from the oral tradition.⁴⁸ Beveridge adds that the distinction between these two narrative formats is heavily nuanced and largely predicated on the intended medium of the final product: “folk tales were simple stories closely based on an oral narrative tradition, while fairy tales, sometimes with roots in an oral culture, were imaginative tales with a more intentional literary treatment” (31). Since the fairytale is either inspired by, or directly traces its origins to, the folktale, it shares many structural characteristics with its narrative predecessor. Like folktales, these stories often served to educate the reader/listener by imparting lessons concerning topics such as greed, sexual politics, and modesty. As the fairytale represents a particular branch of the folktale, I will therefore be using the term “folklore” throughout the thesis to refer to both narrative forms.

In my analysis, I focus predominantly on the fairytale, as these stories more frequently feature villains that subscribe to the characteristics of the Boogeyman. Such antagonists perpetrate acts of brutality and carnage that parallel the behaviour of the slasher villains included in this thesis. Indeed, fairytales frequently include grotesque

⁴⁷ Zipes explains that the fairytale is “one type of the folk-tale tradition, namely the *Zaubermärchen* or the magic tale, which has many subgenres. The French writers of the late seventeenth century called these tales *contes de fées* (fairy tales) to distinguish them from other kinds of *contes populaires* (popular tales)” (*Fairy Tale* 11).

⁴⁸ Harries (2001) describes the fairytales as a “world where the supernatural is commonplace, where the rules of our ordinary world do not apply, where wishes come true” (104).

scenes of violence that are intended to enthrall and terrify audience members.⁴⁹ This specific facet of the fairytale has been noted by numerous scholars, such as Sue Short, Anna Biller, Carol Clover, Mikel Koven, and Walter Rankin—all of whom have likened these stories to films of the contemporary horror genre.⁵⁰ As I outline later in this chapter, there are structural and thematic similarities that tie together the fairytale and the horror film, as both feature archetypal characters and serve a cautionary function for the listener/reader/viewer.

The process of transcribing fairytales and transforming them into literary works had a profound impact on the ways that these stories were constructed and perceived. According to Zipes (1994), the commodification of these stories placed them largely in the hands of the elite classes of Western Europe, as these privileged groups were the only sectors of society that were literate (*Fairy Tale* 10-1). Beginning in the 1720s these stories began to be tailored for children and were altered to impart morals that emphasized patriarchy and the refined status of the aristocracy (Zipes, *Fairy Tale* 31; 24). Many of these tales were preoccupied with what Zipes refers to as the “domestication of the imagination” and the prohibition of inappropriate behaviour that could result in delinquency (*Fairy Tale* 15). As we see later in this chapter, this cautionary quality synonymous with the fairytale is reiterated in the modern horror film, particularly the slasher, which imparts lessons to viewers concerning the dangers of “illicit” behaviour—specifically, premarital sex.

⁴⁹ As Rankin explains, many well known fairytales feature “intense images of torture, cannibalism, and dismemberment” (12).

⁵⁰ As Rankin explains “[i]n both fairy tales and horror films, the danger most feared seems to be that we will subject our youths to images that are ‘too real,’ for them to handle,” and thus many horror films have been heavily censored so as to excise scenes of violence that can be mimicked by young audience members (58).

It is important to note that, in the fairytale, the villain often chastises characters that engage in irresponsible or clandestine acts that rival prevailing social mores. As outlined earlier, these stories reinforce hegemonic values by imparting lessons concerning sexual politics, thievery, and curiosity. This notion is clearly demonstrated in Perrault's story, whereupon the character of Bluebeard attempts to murder his wife for disobeying his command and entering the forbidden chamber. Her defiance is an affront to his ego and threatens his social status which subsequently elicits his fury and rage. By punishing his wife's "naughty" behaviour, Bluebeard establishes his supremacy in the narrative and exerts his will through violence and carnage.

Similarly, the characters of Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, and Freddy Krueger continually victimize individuals who transgress hegemonic values and engage in "illicit" acts such as premarital sex, and the consumption of drugs and/or alcohol. Like Bluebeard, these villains serve a disciplinary role in their respective narratives and thereby exhibit the central characteristics of the Terrible Father, an archetypal form that contributes to the persona of the Boogeyman (which I discuss in Chapter 3). By castigating characters that are "naughty," the Boogeyman simultaneously provokes social anarchy through his use of violence and instils moral harmony by reinforcing hegemonic values. This ability to maintain the status quo by using ruthless tactics is a central trait of the Boogeyman and is foundational to his narrative role.

III. What is the Boogeyman?

To effectively analyze cultural manifestations of the Boogeyman, it is first necessary to dissect the historical attributes of this mythical figure. In his article "The

Bogeyman: Some Preliminary Observations on Frightening Figures,” John Widdowson offers insights into the origins of this monstrous character. Specifically, he explains that the term “bogey” designates “a figure with supernatural (and usually horrific) associations, apparently invented to serve a threatening function in society” (106).⁵¹ He goes on to state that the Boogeyman is also invested with “certain powers and characteristics which reflect our fears both public and private” (100).⁵² Furthermore, mythical creatures such as the Boogeyman “seem to be present in every culture” and though they may differ superficially “from one cultural group to another ... they share a remarkable number of characteristics” (Widdowson 102). As Widdowson indicates, the Boogeyman is primarily a figure of fear, and his capacity to incite terror is fundamental to his persona. By eliciting dread, the Boogeyman can scare potential transgressors into adhering to the prevailing social ideology and thereby solicit obedience from the public.⁵³

To evoke terror, the Boogeyman is often depicted imposing horrific punishments upon those individuals who have, or intend to, disobey imposed rules of conduct (such as violating curfew, thievery, premarital sex, and the consumption of drugs and alcohol). Failure to uphold these social standards will elicit the ire of the monstrous Other and provoke him to perpetrate shockingly violent acts such as torture and murder. These punishments that the Boogeyman imposes on his victim(s) are so extreme in nature that

⁵¹ In their discussion of the Boogeyman, Widdowson (1971), Warner (2000), Rathgeb (1991), Phillips (2005), and Rogers (2002) use the spelling “bogeyman” to reference this monstrous male figure. Alternatively, I chose to employ the spelling “Boogeyman” in my discussion of this cultural figure, as it is the variation used in the FlixMix compilation (see Fig 3) that references the slasher villains included in this thesis and associates them with the folkloric figure of the Boogeyman. Both spellings of this term refer to the same figure and represent derivatives of the same core nomenclature.

⁵² Jacqueline Simpson and Steve Roud (2000) similarly describe the Boogeyman as “any figure deliberately used to frighten others, almost always children, to control their behavior” (28).

⁵³ Stephen King (1983) discusses the subversive role of the monster in *Danse Macabre* as embodying the opposing forces of chaos and order: “Monstrosity fascinates us because it appeals to the conservative Republican in a three-piece suit who resides within all of us. We love and need the concept of monstrosity because it is a reaffirmation of the order we crave as human beings” (39).

they are completely incongruent with the original “crime” that elicited his response and are therefore considered inexcusably savage. Through these acts, the Boogeyman embodies Asma’s definition of monstrosity outlined in the Introduction and thereby nullifies any possibility for public sympathy. Ironically, he also personifies the monstrous aspects of social and moral chaos by breaching the same communal laws that he enforces, thereby serving as a living example to others of the dangers that result from excessively violent behaviour.

The punitive facets of the folkloric Boogeyman are discussed by Warner who, like Widdowson, highlights the destructive impact that this figure poses to the fabric of the community. Warner points out that the threat presented by the Boogeyman is often sexual in nature—a trait that she argues is amplified in the fairytale tradition (*No Go* 38).⁵⁴ However, the examples Warner offers demonstrate a libidinal appetite that is sublimated into acts of violence—a practice that we see in the story of Bluebeard. This theme of expressing carnal desire through aggression is similarly manifested in the slasher film, particularly in the interactions between the heroine and villain, whose relationship is fraught with sexual tension.⁵⁵

In addition to her thoughts concerning the disciplinary role of the Boogeyman, Warner also outlines other attributes that characterize the monstrous Other such as his reclusive nature. As Warner explains, Boogeymen are “frequently imagined as single, anomalous outsiders” that reside beyond the boundaries of the communal space (*No Go* 28). This quality is immediately evident in the story of Bluebeard, as the villain lives in a

⁵⁴ Rankin similarly points out that sexuality is a prominent theme in both the fairytale and the contemporary horror film, and the virginal state of the heroine in these narratives is often an important marker that distinguishes her from the supporting characters (47).

⁵⁵ See Dika (1990), Clover (1992), and Hogan (1986).

mansion that is isolated from his neighbours, allowing him to carry out his murderous activities in relative seclusion. Likewise, Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger all reside in remote locations that are decrepit and rumoured to be haunted, granting them the privacy to stalk and kill their victims without interference. Inert and stagnant, these dwellings are visual manifestations of the dangerous power of the Boogeyman and represent his role as a personification of the Death-Demon (a notion explored in Chapter 4).

Finally, Warner discusses the physical attributes that are ascribed to the folkloric Boogeyman and the fact that he is invariably unattractive and visually grotesque. As she explains, Boogeymen are usually crooked, molely or warty, and they may also “limp or suffer from other unusual physical traits” (*No Go* 25). Warner falsely concludes that the Boogeyman can adopt a variety of forms, a claim that is contradicted by her own examples, as the vast majority of the case studies she cites adhere to a specific set of physical markers: the monstrous figures included in her analysis are predominantly male, humanoid in shape, and possess some form of facial disfigurement which is unsettling to other characters in the narrative (as well as the audience). This attribute is evident in the case of Bluebeard, whose name references the alarming and monstrous blue beard that covers his face and results in his alienation from the members of the community featured in Perrault’s tale. A similar dynamic is observed in the slasher film, whereupon the villain’s face is either mutilated (Freddy Krueger), or is concealed by a mask that references the image of a corpse (Michael Myers, and Jason Voorhees). Like Bluebeard, these slasher villains are distanced from their respective communities due to their abject appearance which acts as both a physical and psychological barrier.

IV. Bluebeard

As Kendall Phillips indicates, the Boogeyman has persisted in the public consciousness since antiquity, serving to personify the social ills that pervade a community at a particular moment in time (*Projected Fears* 132). In folklore, we are continually presented with antagonists that exhibit the traits that Warner and Widdowson associate with the Boogeyman and, though these characters may differ superficially from each other, they are essentially variations of the same figure. These villains often terrorize the hero(ine) by testing his/her obedience to the hegemonic ideology and punishing or rewarding him/her accordingly. In this section, I demonstrate the traits of the Boogeyman through an analysis of the villain from Perrault's fairytale *Bluebeard* who murders a series of women for defying his orders.⁵⁶

Within the folkloric tradition there exist several oral and written versions of *Bluebeard* that originate from different sectors of the globe. As folklorist Stith Thompson (1977) explains, the story appears all over Europe, throughout the Americas, in the Middle East and Asia (36). The ubiquity of the story may be explained by the fact that, as Casie Hermansson (2009) indicates, it addresses archetypal themes that are applicable to cultures throughout the world (xi).⁵⁷ The most widely recognized version of *Bluebeard* remains that of French writer Charles Perrault from his 1697 anthology *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*. Perrault's version of *Bluebeard* is the first written recording of the

⁵⁶ In her work, Warner describes Perrault's depiction of Bluebeard as "deeply disturbing" and characterizes the villain as one of the most unsettling figures from fairytale lore ("Bluebeard's Brides" 123).

⁵⁷ The specific archetypal themes that Hermansson argues are present in the fairytale *Bluebeard* include fatal curiosity, the animal groom, and the marriage to death (which is discussed in Chapter 4) (xi). Similarly, Zipes argues that many of the themes present in *Bluebeard* date back to the ancient world, referencing the Biblical story of Adam and Eve and the Greek myth of Pandora, both of which deal with the consequences of female curiosity (*The Golden Age* 636).

tale and, as Zipes points out, no oral variant has been discovered that precedes it (*The Golden Age* 635).⁵⁸ Thompson argues that the story of *Bluebeard* has become known through Perrault's version of the tale and it has largely determined the form of the story in the popular consciousness (35). Thus, I have chosen to focus my analysis on Perrault's rendering of the tale as it has played such an integral role in defining the character of Bluebeard within the cultural imaginary.

Perrault's *Bluebeard* tells the story of a villainous character that marries a young woman from a neighbouring family and then attempts to murder her.⁵⁹ After giving her a key that opens all the doors in his mansion, Bluebeard departs and leaves his wife strict instructions not to enter the "closet at the end of the long gallery" (Perrault, *The Story* 16). Following a party held during Bluebeard's absence, the wife opens the mysterious door and discovers a chamber of unspeakable horrors: the room is filled with the dead bodies of Bluebeard's previous wives. Shocked by this sight, she accidentally allows the key to fall into a pool of blood on the floor, permanently staining it red. Upon Bluebeard's arrival, he asks his wife to return the key, and when he sees that it has been sullied with blood, he immediately realizes that she has defied his orders. Bluebeard is enraged by his wife's deception and, as a consequence for her misdeed, he attempts to cut off her head. However, the young woman shows tremendous tenacity and temporarily escapes Bluebeard by running to her room and sending for help from her brothers. Once

⁵⁸ Zipes goes on to indicate that there were "numerous ballads about serial killers in Great Britain and Europe in the medieval and Renaissance periods that prepared the way for Perrault's writing of 'Bluebeard'" (*The Golden Age* 635). As an example, Zipes specifically references the historical figure of Gilles de Rais, the sadistic murderer from the 15th century who murdered hundreds of children in Satanic rituals (*The Golden Age* 635).

⁵⁹ In later retellings of the story the final wife is given the name Fatima; however, in Perrault's version of *Bluebeard* she remains nameless (Warner, "Bluebeard's Brides" 124).

assistance arrives, Bluebeard is brutally killed, and the young woman is able to inherit his wealth and mansion.

The meaning behind the tale of Bluebeard has been widely contested by theorists working in the field of literary analysis and psychology such as Sheldon Cashdan and Bruno Bettelheim. In *The Uses of Enchantment* (1977), Bettelheim proposes that the story functions as an allegory concerning sexual infidelity, since Bluebeard is in essence testing his wife's "faithfulness to his orders or, in a broader sense, to him" (300). Bettelheim cites the wife's punishment as evidence for this reading of her betrayal, arguing that "in times past, only one form of deception on the female's part was punishable by death inflicted by her husband: sexual infidelity" (300). According to this reading, the staining of the key functions as a metaphor for the wife's adultery during her husband's absence and is evidence of her emotional deception. Bettelheim's analysis of the tale thereby places culpability fully on Bluebeard's wife and absolves the killer of guilt since the attempted murder of this woman is an act of honour as opposed to cruelty. I disagree with Bettelheim's reading of the story, as his misogynistic perspective of female sexuality minimizes the pathology of Bluebeard's actions and excuses his violent behaviour. The indiscretion exercised by Bluebeard's wife, even with the sexual dimension that Bettelheim suggests, does not merit death and dismemberment.

Instead, I propose that Bluebeard's murderous behaviour is motivated by his disturbing desire to dehumanize his wives and to unequivocally possess them—body, mind, and spirit. As Robin Wood points out, possession finds "its logical culmination in death, since only the inanimate can be totally possessed" (26), a perspective that is shared

by Bluebeard, who views these women as trophies that serve to decorate his inner lair.⁶⁰ Sheldon Cashdan further argues that the story “centers on what it means to treat human beings as objects, as things to be collected much as one collects art, jewelry [sic], and other valuables” (191).⁶¹ We witness the reiteration of this practice by the slasher villains included in this thesis, all of whom employ the possessions and/or bodies of their victims to adorn their personal sanctuary. Like Bluebeard, these characters are able to satisfy their sadistic need to control the will of others through the subjugation and brutalization of their victims. As is detailed in subsequent chapters, Bluebeard’s inclination to view his wives as objects devoid of emotional or psychological dimension is an intrinsic component to the folkloric Boogeyman and a defining marker of his villainous persona.

Much like other manifestations of the folkloric Boogeyman, the threat that Bluebeard poses is both ubiquitous and invisible, as he represents the penalty of destruction that awaits any individual who defies his instructions. By imposing horrific punishment upon those who violate his orders, Bluebeard establishes his identity as a powerful tyrant. I propose that his controlling and merciless conduct reflects the salient characteristics associated with the Terrible Father, an archetypal form that is also a central component in the Boogeyman persona. We see this facet of the monstrous Other reflected in Bluebeard’s treatment of his final wife: by restricting her movements within the mansion, Bluebeard symbolically arrests her psychological development, creating an atmosphere of death and stagnation, and thereby epitomizing the Terrible Father. Like the

⁶⁰ Clarissa Pinkola Estés points out in *Women Who Run with the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype* (1992), Bluebeard’s objective is to dismantle a “woman until she is nothing but bones” (58).

⁶¹ The practice of utilizing the bodies of victims to decorate the monster’s lair is a common feature in both folkloric and cinematic depictions of the Boogeyman. Aside from the slasher films featured in this thesis, this motif also appears in many other films of the horror genre such as Victor Salva’s *Jeepers Creepers* (2001) and Tommy Lee Wallace’s *It* (1990).

slasher villain, Bluebeard imposes brutal penalties against those characters that transgress the overarching moral code of the narrative and thereby reinforces the established values of the hegemony.

Bluebeard and his final wife represent the opposing forces of life and death, and their relationship reflects the archetypal “marriage to Death” theme that is commonly found in fairytales.⁶² Such stories feature a female protagonist who is either literally or metaphorically wed to a Death-like male figure and must uncover the truth about her adversary in order to escape his fatal grip. Bluebeard’s specific link with Death is illustrated in Perrault’s tale through his role as a serial killer of women and the fact that he utilizes his victims’ bodies in the adornment of his private sanctuary. To survive her encounter with Death, Bluebeard’s wife must utilize her intellect to outwit and destroy him. This experience will allow her to mature into adulthood and acquire the state of individuation, whereupon the conscious and unconscious sectors of her mind “have learned to live at peace and to complement one another,” transforming her from an innocent passive girl into an active worldly woman (Freeman 14).⁶³ As Jung indicates, this process of individuation entails embracing “our innermost, last and incomparable uniqueness” resulting in a “‘coming of selfhood’ or ‘self-realization’” (*Two Essays* 171). Once she is unshackled from the domineering control of her husband, Bluebeard’s wife is able to ascend into the world of consciousness by recognizing death and coming to terms with the realities of the adult world. A similar interplay is observed in the slasher film between the heroine and the villain who are diametrically opposed to one another in the

⁶² See Hermansson (2009).

⁶³ This statement is made in reference to the work of Marie-Louise von Franz.

narrative scheme and who, like Bluebeard and his wife, embody the forces of life and death (a topic discussed further in Chapter 4).

Bluebeard's pathological behaviour is matched by his external ugliness, which is continually emphasized in the story to symbolically highlight his internal depravity. The blue beard that covers his face is not only the killer's namesake but also largely eclipses his identity, and it has been the focus of many scholars' analysis of the tale.⁶⁴ Perrault describes the beard as "so ugly and terrible, that there was not a woman or girl who did not run away" from Bluebeard (*The Story* 6). In *French Fairy Tales: A Jungian Approach* (2003), Bettina Knapp offers an astute examination of the blue beard, indicating that it constitutes "a sign of eccentricity, perhaps even beastliness, and uncontrollable instinctuality" (94).⁶⁵ Building on Knapp's observations, I argue that the beard creates a wall between Bluebeard and the other characters in the story, serving as a mask that helps to conceal his inner psychic state.⁶⁶ Cut off from the outside world, Bluebeard lacks the capacity to cultivate empathic bonds with his wives, and thus feels no remorse when he murders them.⁶⁷ Representations of the slasher villain similarly feature physical barriers that obscure his face from others—either in the form of the masks worn by Voorhees and Myers or the disfigurement that renders Krueger's face inhuman. Much like Bluebeard's anomalous facial hair, the slasher villain's disguise/disfigurement conceals his face from

⁶⁴ For further information concerning the symbolic implications of Bluebeard's appearance, see Knapp (2003), Bettelheim (1977), Warner (1989), and Hermasson (2009).

⁶⁵ Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant (1994) characterize the colour blue as "the most insubstantial of colours" and "an accumulation of emptiness" (102).

⁶⁶ In visual depictions of Bluebeard, his unsettling facial hair is often emphasized and transformed into the centerpiece of his persona. Artists frequently capitalize on the disturbing psychological implications of the beard, portraying the character as a terrifying Boogeyman with homicidal instincts. For example, in Gustave Doré's 1862 depiction of the villain, he is shown as a frightening figure looming over his petite wife as he hands her the key to the forbidden door.

⁶⁷ As Biller explains, Bluebeard demands to live in the shadows and recoils from any form of emotional intimacy: "[Bluebeard] doesn't want women to know him. He kills to preserve the mystery of who he is. He reserves the right to kill any woman who would seek to know him. He seeks to escape her judgment, her disgust if she would know who he is and what he enjoys" (n.p.).

the other onscreen characters as well as from the audience, limiting his social interactions and thereby emphasizing his psychological remoteness—and ultimately, his monstrosity.

The character of Bluebeard clearly embodies the key traits Warner and Widdowson associate with the folkloric Boogeyman as he is both physically hideous and psychologically violent. As a result, I posit Bluebeard as the template for my comparative analysis to demonstrate the fact that Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger are cinematic manifestations of the folkloric Boogeyman.⁶⁸ Through this comparison, I highlight the unchanging nature of the Boogeyman’s core features which result from his relationship with the archetype and the fact that he is a composite of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon. Overall, Perrault’s story bears certain structural similarities to the selected slasher films included in this thesis, as all of these narratives take place in desolate locations and involve a courageous heroine who is pitted against a mysterious homicidal villain. These common elements are specifically noted by Warner in *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Tales and their Tellers* (1995), who states that *Bluebeard* is one of the “slasher film’s progenitors” (270). Athena Bellas also notes the connection between the slasher film and Perrault’s narrative when she explains that, like *Bluebeard*, both *Halloween* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* feature “adolescent girls attempting to escape the clutches of a murderous man” (108).⁶⁹ Departing from Warner’s and Bellas’ observations, I put forth that the connection they highlight between the slasher film and Perrault’s fairytale are rooted in the archetype.

⁶⁸ For further discussion of the relationship between Bluebeard and the slasher villain see Short (2006), and Biller (2016).

⁶⁹ Filmmaker Miriam Bale explains, in an interview with *Slant Magazine*, that both the slasher film and the fairytale *Bluebeard* are set in a “mysterious house” and include an “innocent Final Girl who tries to solve the mystery and overcome the killer” (Cutler).

Bluebeard's uncontrollable fury, resulting from his wife's defiance, is a centerpiece of Perrault's story and, according to Short, connects him with the villains of the slasher film. In *Misfit Sisters*, Short points out that Bluebeard possesses a homicidal rage that we see reiterated in Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger which compels him to control and murder his (often female) victims (62). Feminist filmmaker Anna Biller echoes Short's sentiments, noting the fact that Perrault's tale and the slasher film feature a villain who is psychologically distanced from the audience/reader: "The killer in these films, as in the Bluebeard fairy tale, remains unknown and unknowable (he is a gloved hand, he wears a mask, he is a silhouette), or else he is a 'maniac,' not a normal man, not you or me" (n.p.). Both Short and Biller make similar points concerning the kinship between Bluebeard and the villains of the slasher subgenre, and I assert that this connection is rooted in the fact that these characters are derivatives of the same core figure—the Boogeyman.

V. Archetypal Criticism

Through my examination of Bluebeard, I have isolated the specific characteristics associated with the folkloric Boogeyman which include: (1) his threatening and punitive behaviour, (2) his physical ugliness, and (3) his social isolation. Throughout the remainder of the thesis, I study the selected villains of the slasher film to determine the presence of these same traits and thereby establish that these characters are filmic iterations of the folkloric Boogeyman. However, prior to undertaking this assessment, it is helpful to discuss the role of the archetype in fairytales and horror films and how the collective unconscious operates in relation to these two types of cultural artefacts. By

establishing the triadic relationship between the fairytale, the slasher subgenre, and the archetype, I demonstrate the effectiveness of Jungian theory as a method for analysing the slasher villain as a cinematic manifestation of the folkloric Boogeyman.

The prevalence of the archetype in the fairytale has been well documented by Jungian scholar Marie Louise von Franz. During her lifetime, von Franz published two texts in which she applied analytical psychology to a number of stories recorded by the Brothers Grimm and other cultural researchers: *The Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales* (1995) and *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales* (1996). According to von Franz, the archetype is present in all cultural artefacts (“Conclusion” 304), but is acutely pronounced in the fairytale:

Fairy tales are the purest and simplest expression of collective unconscious psychic processes. Therefore their value for the scientific investigation of the unconscious exceeds that of all other material. They represent the archetypes in their simplest, barest, and most concise form. In this pure form, the archetypal images afford us the best clues to the understanding of the processes going on in the collective psyche. (*The Interpretation* 1)

As von Franz indicates, the essentialist and generic nature of the characters featured in the fairytale accounts for its close alignment with the archetype. I assert that in these stories, the specific details that would complicate and contextualize the narrative are discarded and the fairytale consequently begins to take on a timeless quality that allows it to transcend cultural parameters. A similar dynamic has been noted in the contemporary

American slasher film which often features vaguely defined characters that are positioned according to the Manichean binary of hero(ine)/villain.

Specifically, the slasher films included in this thesis employ a narrative structure that depends upon a sharply defined contrast between the female protagonist (often referred to as the “Final Girl”) and the villain.⁷⁰ The relationship between these two characters is the centerpiece of the story, and these films often conclude with a violent clash between the heroine and the cinematic Boogeyman. Maria Tatar points out that, much like in folklore, the characters featured in these films are largely one-dimensional and have clearly delineated motivations: “The plots of both folktales and horror films ... are driven by a stock cast of characters, one that often frames the central conflict in terms so emphatically polarized that we appear to be in a clear-cut world of good versus evil” (*Grimms’ Grimmest* 10). The remainder of the cast is usually composed of the Final Girl’s peers, who are killed due to their negligent behaviour that allows them to fall prey to the killer.⁷¹ Through these interactions between the villain and the younger characters, these films function like fairytales by communicating didactic lessons to the audience concerning proprietary boundaries of social conduct—most specifically, the avoidance of “illicit” behaviour such as premarital sex.

Due to the temporal distance that separates the fairytale and the horror film, few scholars have addressed these two narrative forms in relation to one another. However, over the past three decades there has been a movement within film studies that embraces

⁷⁰ The female heroine of the slasher is termed by Clover the “Final Girl” as she is often the only one left alive at the conclusion of the film and is faced with the task of confronting and opposing the killer. For further information concerning the figure of the Final Girl, see Short (2006), Dika (1990), Clover (1992), and Rockoff (2002).

⁷¹ Blandford, Grant, and Hillier (2001) explain that the slasher film typically features psychotic male villains “who set about systematically killing an isolated group of teenagers. Often the killer is motivated by a past sexual trauma activated by the sexual promiscuity of the victims he stalks, a convention that has led critics to see slasher movies as staunchly conservative in their sexual ideology” (216).

the comparative analysis of cinematic works in relation to earlier forms of storytelling using Jungian scholarship. As early as 1974 film historian Basil Wright proposed the possibility that Jung's notion of the collective unconscious and, by extension, the archetype, plays a key role in the construction of film narratives (9). During the succeeding years, a series of writers extended Wright's research and applied the archetype to popular American cinema. These texts include Geoffrey Hill's *Illuminating Shadows: The Mythic Power of Film* (1992), in which the author explores the commonalities between the archetype, ancient myth, and film. According to Hill, the "cinema is a modern manifestation of myth" and the contemporary theatre is the "tribal dream house of modern civilization" (4). He goes on to chart the relationship between the realm of the collective unconscious and the medium of film in the following diagram: Consciousness → Dream → Myth → Religion → Art → Drama → Literature → Cinema (7).⁷² This connection between film and the archetype is similarly discussed in John Izod's *Myth, Mind, and the Screen: Understanding the Heroes of Our Time* (2001), and Luke Hockley's *Cinematic Projections: The Analytic Psychology of C.G. Jung and Film Theory* (2001). All of these works utilize some form of archetypal criticism in their methodological approach to cinematic studies and provide insights concerning the connection between pre-modern forms of storytelling and contemporary film. Indeed, Izod, Hill, and Hockley all recognize that the cinematic medium is particularly successful at expressing archetypal material since the multi-sensory experience of witnessing a film

⁷² Hill highlights the relationship between Biblical parables and contemporary narratives when he states that there is a "common thread running from the primeval religious consciousness down through modern cultural expression" (7).

mimics the sensation of dreaming, and thereby taps into the unconscious realm of the psyche.⁷³

The most notable texts to utilize archetypal criticism in the study of the contemporary American horror film are Walter Rankin's *Grimm Pictures: Fairy Tale Archetypes in Eight Horror and Suspense Films* (2007) and Mikel Koven's *Film, Folklore, and Urban Legends* (2008). Both Rankin and Koven examine the relationship between the horror genre and folkloric narrative practices, and in the process acknowledge the role of the archetype as a cohesive force between these two forms. Specifically, Rankin discusses films such as *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991, Jonathan Demme), *Scream* (1996, Wes Craven), *The Ring* (2002, Gore Verbinski), and *What Lies Beneath* (2000, Robert Zemeckis), and highlights the common narratological elements that they share with fairytales like *Snow White*, *Little Red Cap*, and *Briar Rose*. Similarly, Koven looks for patterns and motifs from folklore and urban legends in horror films that include *Alligator* (1980, Lewis Teague), *Candyman* (1992, Bernard Rose), *Urban Legend* (1998, Jamie Blanks), *I Know What You Did Last Summer* (1997, Jim Gillespie), *Halloween* (1978, John Carpenter), and *Black Christmas* (1974, Bob Clark). This thesis further contributes to this discourse and demonstrates the effectiveness of archetypal criticism as a form of analysis regarding the relationship between cinema and the fairytale by outlining the similarities between Bluebeard and the villains of the contemporary slasher film.⁷⁴

⁷³ Rushing and Frenz argue that the multi-sensory experience of film mimics the state of dreaming by allowing the individual to tap into areas of the unconscious that are otherwise inaccessible through other mediums: “[films are] like dreams in that they are primarily visual, they are experienced in darkened conditions, and their plastic techniques allow them to simulate the surreal qualities of dreams” (47).

⁷⁴ Iaccino (1994) explains that the horror film has provided an ideal venue for the “symbols (or archetypes) that humans have used to depict ... ‘good versus evil’” (4).

Indeed, the close alignment between the archetype and the slasher film makes it a particularly profitable subgenre to examine through a Jungian lens, as this approach reveals particular facets of these cultural artefacts that are otherwise overlooked by socially or politically focused methodologies. In an interview, director Wes Craven (1939-2015) noted the timeless nature of the characters and plot structures featured in the slasher, stating there is “something that’s ageless” about these films, adding that it is “the type of story that’s been part of humanity for millennia” (*Never Sleep Again*). As Craven makes clear in this quote, the slasher film possesses archetypal themes that are foundational to human psychology and possess a universal nature.⁷⁵ This principle is clearly demonstrated in the villainous figures that populate this subgenre who, as outlined earlier, represent a recalibration of the folkloric Boogeyman transmogrified into the cinematic medium.

VI. The Development of the Slasher Film

Prior to assessing the archetypal properties of the slasher villain and how this figure relates to the folkloric Boogeyman, it is productive to outline the development of this subgenre and how it emerged in American cinema during the 1970s and ’80s. Documenting the historical context of the slasher film provides insights into the particular nuances that distinguish villains like Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger from other monstrous creatures of horror cinema. For unlike the celluloid antagonists of previous decades, there is something uniquely disturbing and menacing about these slasher villains

⁷⁵ Mette Hjort points out in the edited anthology *Cinema and Nation* (2000) that “[p]erennial themes bring into focus subject matter that resonates across historical and cultural boundaries ... [and are therefore] universal or quasi-universal in their thrust” (97). I argue that the themes employed in the slasher possess this “universal thrust” that Hjort references and thus accounts for their popularity with audiences.

that reflect the core traits of Bluebeard and other iterations of the folkloric Boogeyman. Though many of the monstrous cinematic villains I will be mentioning from other periods of horror film history possess certain attributes associated with the Boogeyman, none fulfill this criteria as clearly or successfully as the selected slasher villains. It would therefore be productive to view the category of the Boogeyman not as a calcified, impervious state, but instead as an extreme point on a spectrum that includes varying degrees of monstrosity. As I have previously indicated, in order for a monstrous figure to merit the label of “Boogeyman,” he must manifest the archetypes of the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death Demon and therefore exhibit the characteristics synonymous with these forms. It is my goal in this section of the thesis to outline the development of the monster/serial killer in film history and to demonstrate how the slasher villain both adheres to and defies certain facets of this category in American cinema.

Initially, the two most prolific sites of production for the horror film were Germany and the United States, and each nation successfully added its own unique sensibility to the genre.⁷⁶ In Germany, Paul Wegener directed *The Golem: How He Came into the World* (1915), which chronicles the story of a mythical Jewish automaton created from clay (referred to as “the Golem”) that carries out wishes deposited into his mouth in the form of written letters. In 1922, F.W. Murnau released the vampire-themed film *Nosferatu* that features the villainous Count Orlok (Max Schreck), who terrorizes the country and threatens to transform its citizens into an army of the undead.⁷⁷ These films

⁷⁶ For further information concerning the differences between German and American horror films, see Tybjerg (2004).

⁷⁷ *Nosferatu* is loosely based on the novel *Dracula* (2003) by Irish author Bram Stoker (1847-1912) which, in turn, draws very heavily upon Eastern European folklore concerning the figure of the vampire. For

were either directly inspired by, or drew heavily upon, European folklore and merged this content with the Expressionist aesthetic, a stylistic sensibility informed by social alienation and a profound distrust of modernization. Geometric backdrops, atmospheric lighting, and asymmetrical camera angles became staples of this cinematic style and came to characterize the general oeuvre emerging from Germany during this period.

In America, the horror genre was largely inspired by Gothic Victorian fiction, specifically the writings of Mary Shelley (1797-1851) and Bram Stoker (1847-1912). The 1930s saw a rise in the popularity of the horror film brought about by the famous Universal Monster pictures. These films included Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931),⁷⁸ James Whale's *Frankenstein* (1931), Karl Freund's *The Mummy* (1932), and George Waggner's *The Wolf Man* (1942).⁷⁹ These innovative films partially resulted from the mass migration of European artists who were fleeing to America in order to escape from the rising power of the Nazi party. As Yarrow (1989) explains, when the Nazis seized control of Germany in 1933, one of the "greatest intellectual exoduses in history began" that culminated in the arrival of "tens of thousands of scientists, writers, artists and scholars" in the United States (17). The artistic practices associated with German Expressionist cinema (outlined above) were then gradually incorporated into American film and "helped to redefine Hollywood movies" (Weiss n.p.). Capitalizing on new developments in makeup design, the creatures that populated these narratives were visually spectacular and thrilled moviegoers. These films largely operated on the

further information concerning the relationship between Murnau's film and Stoker's novel see Massaccesi (2015), and Giesen (2019).

⁷⁸ In her text *The Art of Darkness: A Poetic of Gothic* (1995), Anne Williams asserts that the literary figure of Dracula is a manifestation of the Terrible Father archetype.

⁷⁹ For further information about these films see Hutchings (2004), Kawin (2012), W.W. Dixon (2010), Tybjerg (2004), Humphries (2002), and Rigby (2007).

principles of suspense and anticipation and focused on themes related to the reanimation of the dead and the exploration of suppressed sexual impulses.⁸⁰ Filmmakers from this period generally adopted a more sympathetic treatment of the monster, soliciting the viewer to pity the creature that is often hunted down and killed at the end of the film.

Throughout the next two decades, the American horror film was dominated by extraterrestrial monsters that threatened to overtake and eradicate the human species.⁸¹ This trend is demonstrated in Irvin Yeaworth's film *The Blob* (1958) that features an alien amoeba that arrives on earth hidden in a meteorite and consumes several members of a small Pennsylvania community before being frozen and transported to the Arctic. Likewise, Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) chronicles the events in California following the arrival of an alien species of pods that can mimic the appearance of individuals and attempts to surreptitiously replace the human race. The creatures featured in these films often originate from outer space and are unintelligent aside from their desire to impart conformity. As such, these films and their monstrous stars successfully articulated the public's fears associated with the Cold War and the burgeoning world of scientific discovery and space travel.⁸²

The 1960s saw the emergence of the male serial killer as a prominent fixture in horror films.⁸³ These storylines were firmly grounded in reality and demonstrated a preoccupation with psychology and the pathological aspects of murder, depicting the "monster within." This vein of horror cinema became internationally popular and was largely catalyzed by the release of Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) and Michael

⁸⁰ For further information concerning the sexual undertones of early American horror films see W.W. Dixon (2010), and Hutchings (2004).

⁸¹ See Jancovich (1996).

⁸² See Hantke (2016), Rhodes (2003), and Derry (2009).

⁸³ See Kerswell (2012), and Hutchings (2004).

Powell's *Peeping Tom* (1960).⁸⁴ Both films include a sexually repressed male villain (Norman Bates in *Psycho*, and Mark Lewis in *Peeping Tom*) who sublimates his libidinal impulses into perpetrating extreme acts of violence against women. Likewise, both Bates and Lewis voyeuristically pursue their female victims before murdering them, transforming them into objects of desire for themselves (and by extension, the film audience). Though neither of these figures possesses the characteristics of the Boogeyman persona, they demonstrate the type of violence that is synonymous with this mythical character.

Peeping Tom is a provocative film that explores the relationships between voyeurism, sadism, and male desire. The film centers on the character of Mark Lewis (Carl Boehm), a photographer and aspiring filmmaker who records women while he murders them in an attempt to capture the essence of their fear. Mark is befriended by Helen Stephens (Anna Massey), a young woman who lives in the apartment below him with her blind mother (Maxine Audley), and the two begin dating. Mark reveals to Helen that he was psychologically abused by his father (Michael Powell) who would film his reaction to terrifying experiments in order to enhance his profile as a renowned psychologist. Soon thereafter, Mark records himself murdering Vivian (Moirá Shearer), a stand-in at the studio where he works, and stuffs her body into a prop trunk. Vivian's corpse is discovered the following day by Diane (Shirley Anne Field), the lead actress in the movie that Mark is assisting to film. A psychiatrist (Martin Miller) is called to the film set to counsel Diane and he begins talking to Mark about his father's work. The

⁸⁴ Vera Dika argues that the villains from *Halloween* and *Friday the 13th* bear a striking similarity to the figures of Norman Bates and his mother from *Psycho*: "In *Halloween* the little boy Michael was in full costume much as Norman was when he was disguised as Mrs. Bates ... In *Friday the 13th* Mrs. Voorhees wore no disguise but, like the presumed Mrs. Bates, was an older woman, her face masklike with age and her expression set with a maniacal grin" (*Games of Terror* 83-4).

psychiatrist later relays the details of their conversation to the police who begin tracking Mark and his activities. Meanwhile, Helen becomes suspicious of Mark's obsession with film and after screening one of his celluloid creations, she begins to understand his dark secret. Mark surprises Helen while she is watching the footage and explains to her that he wishes to capture fear on film through his cinematic experiments. He then attempts to film Helen while murdering her, but is incapable of carrying out the act and, as the police arrive, he kills himself.

The commercial and critical response to *Peeping Tom* at the time of its release was resoundingly negative, and it essentially ended the career of its director, Michael Powell. As Biller points out, the reason that *Peeping Tom* so deeply offended the public was because it implicated the viewer in the killer's violence and thereby reminded "us that we are all bloodthirsty voyeurs to the horrible acts on the screen" (Biller n.p.). Indeed, *Peeping Tom* exploits the glamorous, narcissistic, and destructive facets of the cinematic medium, turning the camera back on the audience and forcing them to acknowledge their giddy pleasure from witnessing violence onscreen. In this film, much like in the slasher, sex and death are conflated and transformed into spectacle by the villain who murders his victims while immortalizing them on film (Halberstram 155). As Halberstam explains, the camera in *Peeping Tom* is transformed into the killer's "weapon/penis/masturbatory object," and in the slasher film will be replaced by "chain saws or blades" (155). Despite the thematic similarities that this film shares with the slasher, there is a concerted effort on the part of director Powell to humanize Lewis and elicit sympathy from the audience concerning his childhood trauma, thereby excusing his fixation on sadistic violence towards women. Much like in Hitchcock's *Psycho*, a rational

explanation is offered to the viewer at the conclusion of the film to account for the villain's brutality.

Released in the same year as Powell's *Peeping Tom*, Hitchcock's *Psycho* was an unprecedented success and established many of the conventions associated with depictions of serial killers in American cinema. The film opens with the character of Marion Crane (Janet Leigh), a secretary at a real estate office in Phoenix, Arizona, stealing \$40,000 from her employer (Vaughn Taylor). She leaves Phoenix to drive to Fairvale, California to meet her boyfriend Sam Loomis (John Gavin) in the hopes that they will runaway together to a private island. On her way to Fairvale, Marion decides to stay overnight at the Bates Motel where she befriends the owner's son, Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins), who asks her to dine with him. During the meal, Marion is convinced to go back to Phoenix and replace the money that she has stolen, and she returns to her room to prepare for her drive home the next morning. While she is taking a shower, Marion is attacked by a "female" figure with a knife, presumably Norman's mother, who stabs her repeatedly and leaves her to die. Norman discovers Marion's dead body and dutifully cleans up the crime that he believes his mother has committed. Depositing Marion's body in the marsh surrounding the Bates Motel, all evidence of the murder is erased. Meanwhile, Marion's sister, Lila Crane (Vera Miles), arrives in Fairvale and informs Sam that Marion is missing and asks for his help in the search to find her. At the same time, a private detective, Milton Arbogast (Martin Balsam), is hired by Marion's employer to track her down and return the money that she stole from the company. After meeting with Lila and Sam, Arbogast agrees to keep them informed about his progress in locating Marion and, after an exhaustive search, he successfully tracks her to the Bates

Motel. After phoning Lila and informing her of his progress, he returns to the motel to interview Mrs. Bates and is killed by her in the process. After Arbogast's disappearance, Lila and Sam go to the Bates Motel posing as a couple and while Sam occupies Norman, Lila enters the Bates' home and discovers the desiccated corpse of Mrs. Bates in the basement fruit cellar. Norman, disguised as his mother, attempts to murder Lila with a large butcher knife but is stopped by Sam before he can kill her. Later at the police station, a psychiatrist explains that years earlier Norman had poisoned his mother and the guilt of matricide forced him to adopt her persona and murder any woman that elicited sexual interest from him.

The monstrous aspects of Norman Bates, and his disturbing obsession with his mother, would serve to establish a new set of tropes concerning cinematic depictions of the villain in the American horror genre. As Blennerhassett explains, *Psycho* “firmly established the conventions of the modern serial killer” due to the fact that Norman Bates came to personify “all the rejected forces massing in the shadow of the unconscious of modern man” (102). Huddleston takes this argument one step further by asserting that Norman's disguise as Mrs. Bates functions as a precursor to the mask that we later see included in the slasher film (219). Indeed, Norman's dress and wig would be replaced with a mask that would not simply supplant the psyche of the killer and act as an alter ego, but conceal the inner workings of his mind altogether. Similarly, Dika observes that the films *Halloween* and *Friday the 13th* drew from *Psycho* in the visual treatment of their respective villains:

In *Halloween* the little boy Michael was in full costume much as Norman was when he was disguised as Mrs. Bates. ... In *Friday the 13th* Mrs.

Voorhees wore no disguise but, like the presumed Mrs. Bates, was an older woman, her face masklike with age and her expression set with a maniacal grin. (83-4)

Like the villains of the slasher subgenre, Norman's external alterity (manifested through his transvestitism) parallels his inner monstrosity which is demonstrated through his homicidal behaviour. As Clover explains, the killer in the American horror film "is often unseen, or barely glimpsed ... and what we do see ... hardly invites immediate or conscious empathy" due to the fact that he is "commonly masked, fat, deformed, or dressed as a woman" (44). Many of the attributes exhibited by Norman Bates would be reiterated in a more extreme fashion by the villains of the slasher film during the following decade.

The figure of Norman Bates from Hitchcock's *Psycho* was loosely based on the real-life case of Ed Gein (1906-1984), a murderer and body snatcher from Plainfield, Wisconsin. In November of 1957, Gein was arrested for the murder of two local women and it was later discovered that he engaged in graverobbing (O'Reilly-Fleming 5). Gein's case gained national attention when it was revealed that he used his victims' remains to fashion furniture, utensils, clothing and other household items (Halberstram 149). He also kept certain body parts for consumption and "enjoyed wearing women's genital parts and breasts to create a costume for macabre night dances" (O'Reilly-Fleming 5). It was later disclosed during psychological examination that Gein was "obsessed with his mother (and with female anatomy in general), and that he actually wore some of his grisly handmade items, in an attempt to understand what it felt like to be a woman" (J. Smith 8). Through Gein's story, James Francis Jr. traces a direct line of descent from Hitchcock's

Psycho to the popular films of the slasher subgenre, inspiring the films *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974, Tobe Hooper), *Halloween*, *Friday the 13th*, and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (121). Drawing upon these horrific events, the directors Tobe Hooper (1943-2017), John Carpenter, Sean Cunningham, and Wes Craven created memorable and horrifying cinematic villains in their respective films.

Presented as a pseudo-documentary chronicling a series of horrific murders that took place in the state of Texas, the film *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was a crowning achievement in cinema vérité.⁸⁵ The product of director Tobe Hooper and screenwriter Kim Henkel, the film was an ambitious undertaking that explored uncharted territory in the horror genre. Christopher Sharrett states that *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* “represents a crucial moment in the history of the horror genre” whereupon a grotesque and nihilistic vision of the world is presented to the viewer (301). It is similarly described by Robin Wood as a “collective nightmare” that “brings to a focus a spirit of negativity, an undifferentiated lust for destruction, that seems to lie not far below the surface of the modern collective consciousness” (Introduction 22). Indeed, the film is a powerful testament to the nihilistic sensibility of modern America, and simultaneously merges this sentiment with traditional archetypal motifs connected with the folkloric Boogeyman.

As outlined earlier, certain aspects of the film, particularly the macabre art design and the villain’s costume were inspired by the historical figure of Ed Gein. Adam Rockoff points out that Hooper used to hear stories about Gein’s murderous escapades as a child from his relatives and subsequently injected elements of them into his film (42). Though the film is not traditionally labelled as a “slasher,”⁸⁶ I would argue that *The Texas*

⁸⁵ Darryl Jones declares *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* “the greatest of all modern horror movies” (43).

⁸⁶ *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is referred to as a “proto-slasher” by Kerswell (188).

Chainsaw Massacre served as a template for the subgenre (Kerswell 66). The narrative includes many of the tropes and conventions that would come to define the slasher film over the following decade including a disturbing locale, a psychotic villain, and a courageous heroine who survives into the final act of the film. What distinguished *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* from many other films of the period was the visceral and unapologetic manner in which it addressed the subjects of cannibalism, torture, and sadism.

The film opens with five young adults engaging in a road trip that is suddenly taken off course when they hear that a local graveyard has been vandalized. The troupe is composed of two young couples, Sally (Marilyn Burns) and Jerry (Allen Danziger), and Kirk (William Vail) and Pam (Teri McMinn), as well as Sally's paraplegic brother, Franklin (Paul A. Partain). Fearing that the grandfather of two of the passengers (Franklin and Sally) may have been a victim of grave robbery, the group stops to inspect the location. Relieved that the grave appears to be intact, they then decide to make a pit stop at the Hardesty home, a ramshackle house owned by the same deceased grandfather whose gravesite they just visited. Looking for a watering hole to cool off, Kirk and Pam stumble upon a large Victorian house owned by the Sawyer family located just beyond the Hardesty property. Attempting to locate the owners of the house, Kirk enters the dwelling and is bludgeoned to death by Leatherface (Gunnar Hansen), a sadistic chainsaw-wielding serial killer who adorns himself with a series of masks created from the dried flesh of his victims. Hearing his muffled cries from outside, Pam also enters the Sawyer house and is skewered on a meat hook by Leatherface and left to die. Out of gas, and with night quickly approaching, Jerry decides to go and find the couple and bring

them back, but an identical fate befalls him, and he is killed by the same masked villain. Finally, Franklin and Sally must traverse the woods in search of their friends, only to be attacked by Leatherface. Franklin is killed, but Sally is able to find sanctuary in the temporary safety of a local gas station owned by Drayton Sawyer (Jim Siedow), a relative of Leatherface. Drayton renders Sally unconscious and drags her back to his family's home where she is tortured until her eventual escape. Borrowing from Gein's story, cannibalism and the dehumanization of the body are prevalent themes throughout the film since the Sawyer family kills the teenagers in order to harvest their corpses for meat that they will presumably sell to tourists. The victims are therefore envisioned not only as targets of sadistic violence, but also as comestible that can be sold and consumed.

The characters that populate *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* are largely one-dimensional and echo the archetypal figures featured in folkloric narratives. Like the slasher films included in this thesis, the narrative structure of the film is aligned according to a heavily delineated binary that juxtaposes the young innocent cast against the older degenerate villain. The connection between Hooper's film and the archetype is highlighted by screenwriter Kim Henkel who explains the simplistic nature of the narrative:

when Tobe and I were working on it, we referred to the teenagers in almost generic terms: before we came up with names we referred to them as Ken and Barbie because they were clearly cardboard cut-outs of kids and they weren't designed to be characters so much as *archetypes*. (my italics; Jaworzyn 45)

Similarly, in her book *Offensive Films* (1997) Mikita Brottman argues that *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* fits within a larger archetypal vocabulary, one which we see reflected in folklore, and goes on to liken the film to a myriad of fairytales, including *Bluebeard* (100). Furthermore, Jim Harper draws a direct connection between the remote farmhouse of the Sawyer family and Bluebeard's forbidden chamber:

Bluebeard's room of corpses has many direct parallels within the world of horror and the slasher movie in particular. The derelict Sawyer house in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is a good example. Strewn with bones, both animal and human, many of them arranged into bizarre sculptures, the house hides the family's dark secret. (53)

This notion is reiterated by James Marriott, who similarly points out that the "film's archetypal structure is borrowed from fairy tales" (183). This practice of populating the horror film with archetypal characters reminiscent of the fairytale is a trend that will be appropriated in the slasher film and specifically reiterated in the works of John Carpenter and Sean Cunningham.

Leatherface, the central villain in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, manifests many of the physical and psychological properties that I associate with the cinematic Boogeyman. This perspective is supported by Kerswell, who characterizes Leatherface as the "first bona fide iconic proto-slasher bogeyman" (66). As Marriot explains, there is something decidedly demonic about Leatherface's appearance which is presented as "unkempt, and possibly even inbred, with dirty clothes and poor dental hygiene" (Marriott 184). Through the macabre act of skinning his victims, Leatherface transforms himself into the living embodiment of death. The flesh mask that he wears references the

degenerative and abject aspects of the body, and closely aligns him with the Death-Demon archetype.⁸⁷ Additionally, Brottman insinuates that Leatherface is a manifestation of the Terrible Father when she states that he is the “devilish shadow” of the Wide Old Man (also known as the Positive Father archetype) (104). Furthermore, Leatherface serves in the regressive role of the Terrible Father by chastising the younger cast for trespassing on the Sawyer family property and invading the domestic space of his home. Defying repeated warnings from local sources to leave the area, the younger cast makes the fatal mistake of breaching the boundaries of Leatherface’s dwelling and this benign act of transgression unleashes a horrible series of events that ends in destruction and death.

Ultimately, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* helped to usher in a more volatile and caustic vision of horror cinema which would result in the development of the slasher. Sparked by the intervention of young filmmakers such as Wes Craven and John Carpenter,⁸⁸ the slasher reinvented many of the tropes associated with the traditional horror film by diminishing the Gothic elements previously ascribed to the genre. This ingenuity was largely due to the heightened role of independent filmmakers in the industry and resulted in a more vital and progressive brand of horror.⁸⁹ Specifically, these narratives tended to be set in the contemporary world, making the events much more relevant to the audience by directly reflecting the viewer’s lived reality.⁹⁰ In these films,

⁸⁷ According to screenwriter Kim Henkel, the premise for the flesh masks originated “out of the horror of skinning somebody alive and employing parts of that individual” (Hansen 78).

⁸⁸ Tobe Hooper is particularly well known for his films *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974), and *Poltergeist* (1982), while John Carpenter’s most famous horror films include *Halloween* (1978) and *The Thing* (1982).

⁸⁹ See Kerswell (2012), and Rockoff (2002).

⁹⁰ Robert A. Davies, James M. Farrell, and Steven S. Matthews highlight the fact that according to Jung “archetypal contents are found not only in fantasy settings ... but also in contemporary or realistic contexts,

we find the Boogeyman persona transcribed into present day America in the guise of a demented serial killer murdering young adults as punishment for violating accepted communal practices.⁹¹

Though these films would draw from earlier cinematic depictions of serial killers, the villains of the slasher were distinctly different from characters such as Norman Bates or Mark Lewis. As Marriott explains, whereas the antagonists in *Psycho* and *Peeping Tom* (1960) were “characterised as sympathetic and understandable in their psychoses,” the slasher films “make no attempt to understand their killers” (216). This point is further emphasized by Robert Cettl, who characterizes the slasher villain as a “conscienceless, mindless, motiveless, unstoppable, killing machine” (Cettl 24). Wood highlights the unique nature of the slasher villain when he states that characters such as Myers, Voorhees and Krueger were radically different from any cinematic monsters that preceded them (“What Lies Beneath?” xiv). As opposed to other horror film creatures of the mid-to-late twentieth century which were generally “progressive,” and “exploratory,” the slasher villain was “reactionary and repressive” (“What Lies Beneath?” xiv). Rockoff reiterates these sentiments when he states that “the emergence of the slasher film wasn’t the result of a gradual evolution, but a big bang. And that big bang was *Halloween*” (49). The uniquely authoritarian role that the slasher villain plays in these films is remarkably similar to the narrative function of the folkloric Boogeyman in the fairytale and, as I demonstrate in the following section, both characters serve as manifestations of the same monstrous figure. Like *Bluebeard*, these films feature scenes of graphic brutality in which the villain violently reproaches characters who transgress moral/social boundaries and

and in stories featuring characters no more capable than we” (331). The archetype can therefore flourish in narratives grounded in naturalistic settings such as those of the slasher film.

⁹¹ See Kerswell (2012), and Rockoff (2002).

engage in immodest behaviour. Indeed, psychotic serial killers such as Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger personify a new vision of the monstrous Other refashioned for the cinematic medium.

VII. The Structure of the Slasher Film

The plot of the slasher film generally follows a strict formula that involves a sadistically violent antagonist systematically murdering the teenage members of a group until there is only a single female left alive. These films often begin with a tragic event featured in the opening prologue that functions to establish the character of the villain and mark his emotional/physical/psychological transformation into the Boogeyman. As Rockoff points out, the antagonist “either witnesses a traumatic event ... or is the victim of a devastating, humiliating or harmful accident, prank or tragedy” (12-3). Years later, the villain returns to the location of this initial occurrence and attempts to either avenge himself for the perceived injustice perpetrated against him or to relive the original violent act by harming members of the community. Following the slaughter of numerous victims (usually sexually adventurous teenagers), the villain encounters a resourceful young woman who is able to temporarily conquer him and bring an end to the chaos he has wrought upon the community. Dika charted the plot structure outlined above in *Games of Terror* and dubbed it the “stalker formula” (which I have included below), arguing that it is an integral aspect of the slasher (see Fig. 2). Marriott similarly documents the essential plot components of the slasher film in his text *Horror Films* (1990) which I have also reproduced for the reader (see Fig. 3). The frameworks outlined by Dika and Marriott

successfully define the subgenre and are evident in the films *Friday the 13th*, *Halloween*, and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*.

PAST EVENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The young community is guilty of a wrongful action. 2. The killer sees an injury, fault or death. 3. The killer experiences a loss. 4. The killer kills the guilty members of the young community.
PRESENT EVENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An event commemorates the past action. 2. The killer's destructive force is reactivated. 3. The killer reidentifies the guilty parties. 4. A member from the old community warns the young community (optional). 5. The young community takes no heed. 6. The killer stalks members of the young community. 7. The killer kills members of the young community. 8. The heroine sees the extent of the murders. 9. The heroine sees the killer. 10. The heroine does battle with the killer. 11. The heroine kills or subdues the killer. 12. The heroine survives. 13. But the heroine is not free.
<p>Fig. 2. Chart that outlines the narrative structure of the "stalker formula" in the slasher film, as outlined by Vera Dika in <i>Games of Terror</i> (1990), pp. 59-60.</p>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A traumatic event in the past creates a psychopathic killer. 2. The killer returns to the site of the event, usually on a specific date in the present that allows the makers to use a calendar motif in the title. 3. The killer stalks and graphically kills a group of obnoxious and stupid teens of both sexes, usually with some kind of blade, often a garden or farm implement. 4. A 'final girl' survives, usually boyish and often virginal, to thwart the killer, although he is never entirely vanquished.
<p>Fig. 3. Chart that outlines the basic plot of the slasher film, as outlined by James Marriott in <i>Horror Films</i> (1990), p. 213.</p>

The first officially recognized slasher film was John Carpenter's 1978 film *Halloween* which went on to radically alter the tone of American horror cinema.

According to many critics, this film defined the subgenre, firmly establishing the tropes that became associated with the slasher (Kerswell 188). As Rockoff points out, many “of the conventions which have become staples of the slasher—the subjective camera, the Final Girl, the significant date setting—were either pioneered or perfected” in *Halloween* (55). Carpenter’s stylish direction distinguished *Halloween* from many of the competing horror films of the era and helped elevate the artistic merit of the slasher. Kim Newman (1990) explains that the concept for *Halloween* was crafted by producer Irwin Yablans who was likely inspired by a number of prior films from the horror and thriller genres.

Yablans was possibly familiar with Peter Collinson’s *Fright* (1971), in which an escaped homicidal maniac (Ian Bannen) nearly murders a babysitter (Susan George). Then again, he could have been thinking of William Castle’s *I Saw What You Did* (1965), in which a homicidal maniac (John Ireland) goes after the babysitter he thinks has seen him murder Joan Crawford. Then there was Fred Walton’s short *The Sitter* (1977), later expanded as *When a Stranger Calls* (1979), in which an escaped homicidal maniac (Tony Beckley) nearly murders a babysitter (Carol Kane), and Brian Clemens’s TV series *Thriller* which, in the early 1970s, used the plot every other week. (143)

Film scholar Pat Gill adds that *Halloween* “created a new, effective type of film thriller” by combining “inventive violence and a clever, eerily evocative suburban mise-en-scène with engaging, believable, contemporary teen protagonists and a superhuman killer” (16). Yet, despite its celebrated status, *Halloween* revolves around a relatively simple storyline

involving the escapades of a murderous psychopath returning to wreak havoc on the citizens of his hometown after a lengthy absence.

Halloween opens with the graphic murder of Judith Myers (Sandy Johnson) on October 31st, 1963 by her six-year old brother, Michael, who is subsequently incarcerated for fifteen years at the Smith's Grove Sanatorium located in Illinois. Just before Halloween in 1978, while being transferred to another facility, Michael escapes and returns to Haddonfield, where he begins stalking a young woman named Laurie Strode (Jamie Lee Curtis). Wearing a white mask, Myers tracks Laurie to her babysitting job that evening and begins to savagely slaughter her friends with a butcher knife before finally attacking Laurie herself. During repeated assaults, Myers continually traps and tortures Laurie as she desperately attempts to defend herself with a series of domestic tools which include a knitting needle and a wire coat hanger. During the film's harrowing climax, Michael attempts to strangle Laurie when his psychiatrist, Dr. Loomis (Donald Pleasence), arrives and shoots him multiple times. Myers falls from a balcony onto the ground below and is presumed dead until it is later discovered that he has simply vanished, only to return in subsequent sequels to cause further devastation.

The mythic killer Michael Myers, who seems to possess superhuman qualities, is sharply contrasted by the dutiful and steadfast female protagonist Laurie Strode, and the two characters reflect the Manichean division of good and evil that is similarly presented in the fairytale. The polarity between the heroine and antagonist in Carpenter's movie particularly mimics the dualistic binary present in the tale of *Bluebeard*, and the archetypal nature of the villainous Michael Myers particularly echoes the traits synonymous with the folkloric Boogeyman. This connection between *Halloween* and pre-

modern storytelling is noted by Newman, who states that the film seems to be “set in a conventional, realistic small town, but actually it takes place in a poetic fantasy world somewhere between the ‘B’ picture and the fairytale” (145).⁹² Indeed, the bucolic town of Haddonfield epitomizes the contemporary American dream, with its beautifully landscaped lawns and attractive pristine bungalows that represent an idealized reality.

It is perhaps the simplistic moral scheme which underpins *Halloween* that caused it to resonate so strongly with American audiences and resulted in the film becoming a huge box office hit. As Rockoff explains, *Halloween* was produced “for a paltry \$300,000” and went on to gross “over \$50 million—well over 150 times its production cost” (50). This impressive performance at the box office not only highlights the expertise of the creative team behind this film, but also the cultural desires and cinematic tastes of the American public during this period. It is evident from the astounding popularity of *Halloween* that the themes of the film and its villain, Michael Myers, tapped into communal concerns that were present in the American zeitgeist. Specifically, the increased prevalence of premarital sex among unmarried men and women during the 1970s resulted in a culture clash that we see dramatized in *Halloween*. The punitive figure of Myers reprimands characters engaging in intercourse outside of wedlock and thereby demonstrates the horrific fictional consequences of “illicit” behaviour. As I outline in Chapter 3, the violence perpetrated against members of the younger cast reflects public anxieties related to the shifting hegemonic values in America concerning sexual politics and thereby fulfilled a deep-seated psychological need for audience members.

⁹² Hogan similarly comments on the fantastical aspects of *Halloween* when he argues that Myers’ disappearance at the conclusion of the film “takes the film into the quasimythic realm of the *fairy tale*” (my italics; 252).

The unprecedented success of *Halloween* firmly established the financial viability of the slasher film and consequently resulted in a number of filmmakers attempting to capitalize on the popularity of Carpenter's work by producing similar cinematic efforts.⁹³ This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as a film cycle and occurs when a successful "originary film" (in this case, *Halloween*) is "financially or critically successful" and lays out certain conventions that other filmmakers attempt to mimic (Klein 4). Amanda Ann Klein explains that film cycles are rarely studied due to the fact that they are "so transparently associated with commercialism and artlessness" and are simply "cultural ephemera" that is "cranked out to capitalize on current events, trends, fads, and the success of other films" (6). Indeed, there has been considerable debate concerning the artistic worth of the slasher and its place within the horror canon. However, Klein's definition of the film cycle fails to account for the overwhelming popularity of the slasher: though these films may be products that operate in the realm of commerce, they also clearly fulfill a psychological desire of audiences that, I argue, is rooted in both archetypal and sociological forces.⁹⁴

Over the following decade, the Boogeyman would move further into the cinematic spotlight in the guise of a demented serial killer murdering young adults as punishment for violating hegemonic values. As Rockoff explains, the slasher film occupied a liminal position in American mainstream culture, "taunting critics who found them indicative of the decline of Western civilization while entralling millions of dedicated fans who flocked to every new release" (1). The conventions that were

⁹³ For further information concerning the economic aspects of the slasher film subgenre see Conrich (2010, "The *Friday the 13th* Films").

⁹⁴ As Klein's definition for the "film cycle" possesses pejorative connotations, I will strictly be using the term "subgenre" to characterize the slasher films throughout this thesis.

established in the *Halloween* films (1978-2018) became staples of the slasher and were popularized in other films produced during the era such as *The House on Sorority Row* (1983, Mark Rosman), *Terror Train* (1980, Roger Spottiswoode), and *Prom Night* (1980, Paul Lynch), thereby ushering in a more volatile and caustic vision of horror (Kerswell 188). Film franchises such as *Friday the 13th* (1980-2009) and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984-2010) owe a debt of gratitude to Carpenter for not only establishing the foundations of the slasher film, but also priming American audiences for the revolution to take place in the horror industry.⁹⁵ In the films featured in this thesis we find the folkloric Boogeyman transported into present day America and embodying contemporary fears for audiences that were both frightened and delighted by these celluloid creations. Collectively these films successfully tapped into the anxieties of the period and gave voice to archetypal notions that were stewing in the popular consciousness. During the early 1980s, the slasher subgenre continued to grow and in the years that followed the tropes and conventions that were pioneered in *Halloween* were appropriated and developed in similar films.

The next main turning point in the evolution of the slasher came in 1980 with Sean Cunningham's *Friday the 13th*. Francis points out that this film fits nicely into the genealogy of horror and represents an extension of many of the prominent themes introduced by Carpenter: "With its masked killer, recognizable theme music, and final-girl syndrome, the film [*Friday the 13th*] represents the offspring of *Halloween*" (48). Cunningham also noted this similarity, stating that his movie shared a similar "blueprint" with many of the preceding films of the slasher subgenre (8). Indeed, *Friday the 13th* reflected many of the structural characteristics pioneered by Carpenter and combined

⁹⁵ See Rockoff (2002).

them with a uniquely minimalist approach, distilling the stalker formula down to its most basic components by altogether dispensing with character development. Cunningham described his approach to the material as “stripped-down” (Rockoff 79), making the characters more “archetypal” and thereby more accessible to audiences (Cunningham 9). Indeed, the cast featured in *Friday the 13th* is largely one-dimensional and echoes the archetypal figures featured in the fairytale—specifically a virtuous heroine on the precipice of adulthood and a malevolent villain with homicidal inclinations. Like the other slasher films included in this thesis, the narrative structure of *Friday the 13th* is aligned according to a heavily delineated binary between good and evil which highlights the monstrosity and otherness of the antagonist.

The *Friday the 13th* films revolve around the Voorhees family and their relationship with the campgrounds surrounding Crystal Lake. Over the course of ten films psychotic serial killer Jason Voorhees repeatedly returns from the grave to avenge his mother’s death by murdering new generations of counsellors who inhabit the location of his supposed drowning.⁹⁶ One of the shocking aspects of the first film in the series is that it is not Jason, but rather his mother (Betsy Palmer), who is the villain, killing members of the Camp Crystal Lake staff as retribution for her son’s death. As Mrs. Voorhees explains in the film, Jason was the victim of an accidental drowning that occurred in 1957 which resulted from the negligent behaviour of the camp counsellors. On the reopening of the site in 1979, Mrs. Voorhees begins killing the staff members,

⁹⁶ The *Friday the 13th* series include the following films: *Friday the 13th* (Sean Cunningham, 1980), *Friday the 13th Part 2* (Steve Miner, 1981), *Friday the 13th Part 3* (Steve Miner, 1982), *Friday the 13th Part 4: The Final Chapter* (Joseph Zito, 1984), *Friday the 13th Part 5: A New Beginning* (Danny Steinmann, 1985), *Friday the 13th Part 6: Jason Lives* (Tom McLoughlin, 1986), *Friday the 13th Part 7: The New Blood* (John Carl Buechler, 1988), *Friday the 13th Part 8: Jason Takes Manhattan* (Rob Hedden, 1989), *Jason Goes to Hell: The Final Friday* (Adam Marcus, 1993), and *Jason X* (James Isaac, 2002).

who serve as substitutes for the individuals responsible for her son's death. At the end of this film, Mrs. Voorhees is beheaded during a violent clash with Alice (Adrienne King), the last surviving member of the counsellors.

With her demise, Jason (Warrington Gillette) is resurrected from the grave and assumes the role of villain, this time murdering out of revenge for his mother's death. No explanation is offered in the narrative concerning Jason's arrival in the sequels; however, Francis proposes two possible scenarios: (1) that Jason never drowned, and his mother was caring for him until her death, or (2) his mother's death brought Jason back to life to carry out the killing of future victims (49-50). Since Jason usurps the role as the central antagonist in the subsequent instalments in the series, the entire first film is treated as an extended prologue that explains Jason's homicidal behaviour. This "rewriting" of *Friday the 13th* largely marginalizes the role of Mrs. Voorhees as the initiator of the series, and closely aligns the sequels with Dika's stalker formula that I outlined earlier.

Released in 1980, *Friday the 13th* elicited an immediate and polarizing response, as it was relished by audiences and reviled by critics. Indeed, the reaction to *Friday the 13th* from the media was instantaneous, visceral, and resoundingly negative.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, Cunningham defended the film by claiming that "popular moviemaking [does not] create values" but instead reflects those "values that are already part of a culture" (Bracke 47). Much like fairytales that mirror social concerns, filmmakers of this period were simply capitalizing on anxieties that were present within the American

⁹⁷ Celebrated film critic Gene Siskel characterized the film as "truly awful" and even went so far as to publish distributor Paramount Picture's address in the *Chicago Tribune* in the hopes members of the public would complain (*Siskel*).

zeitgeist and reflecting these fears through the cinematic medium.⁹⁸ The commercial success of the film can therefore be attributed to the sensibility of the American public, which was poised for a grittier and gorier vision of horror.⁹⁹ However, the popularity of Jason Voorhees would soon be rivalled by another cinematic iteration of the Boogeyman who came in the form of a ghostly child predator that stalked his prey in their dreams. Written and directed by horror auteur Wes Craven, *A Nightmare on Elm Street* marked a transitional moment in the American slasher subgenre, as it explored the darker facets of dreams and the role of the subconscious.¹⁰⁰ Combining the conventions of the traditional slasher with a surrealist aesthetic, Craven's film brought together religious and psychological imagery in a terrifying story about revenge.¹⁰¹ Similar to the other slasher films included in this thesis, the characters featured in Craven's film reflect the archetypal nature of the fairytale, including a villain who employs intensely violent tactics to exert control over others and impart discipline.

The film takes place in the bucolic town of Springwood, Ohio, where high school students begin dying mysteriously in their sleep. The first teenager to perish is Tina (Amanda Wyss), a young woman who suffers from haunting dreams that feature a strange man named Freddy Krueger who torments her with his bladed glove. While her mother is out of town, Tina spends the night with her boyfriend, Rod (Nick Corri), and is brutally attacked and murdered in her sleep by Krueger. At this point in the film the focus shifts to Tina's close friend, Nancy, who, in turn, also begins to have dreams about

⁹⁸ Cunningham indicated in an interview that he believed *Friday the 13th* possessed an "innate understanding of the collective fears of its audience" (8).

⁹⁹ Conrich points out that the importance of *Friday the 13th* lay in its "commerciality" and the fact it showed the success of the slasher was repeatable ("The *Friday the 13th* Films" 173).

¹⁰⁰ For further information concerning the psychological aspects of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* see Bulkeley (1999).

¹⁰¹ See Rathgeb (1991).

Krueger. As these nightmares intensify, Nancy discovers that the parents of Springwood burned Krueger alive after he was acquitted of murdering children in the community, and he has now returned from the grave to seek revenge on their progeny. In order to defeat Krueger, Nancy decides to entrap him by dragging him out of her dreams and into the physical world. During their battle, Nancy sets Krueger on fire, blows him up, and pushes him down a flight of stairs all in an attempt to stop his murderous rampage. However, she is only able to conquer him once she rids herself of her own anxiety: in a speech delivered during the climax of the film, Nancy proclaims that she has relinquished her fear of Krueger. This announcement appears to destroy Krueger, stripping him of his power and causing him to dissolve into the ether—only to return in sequels.

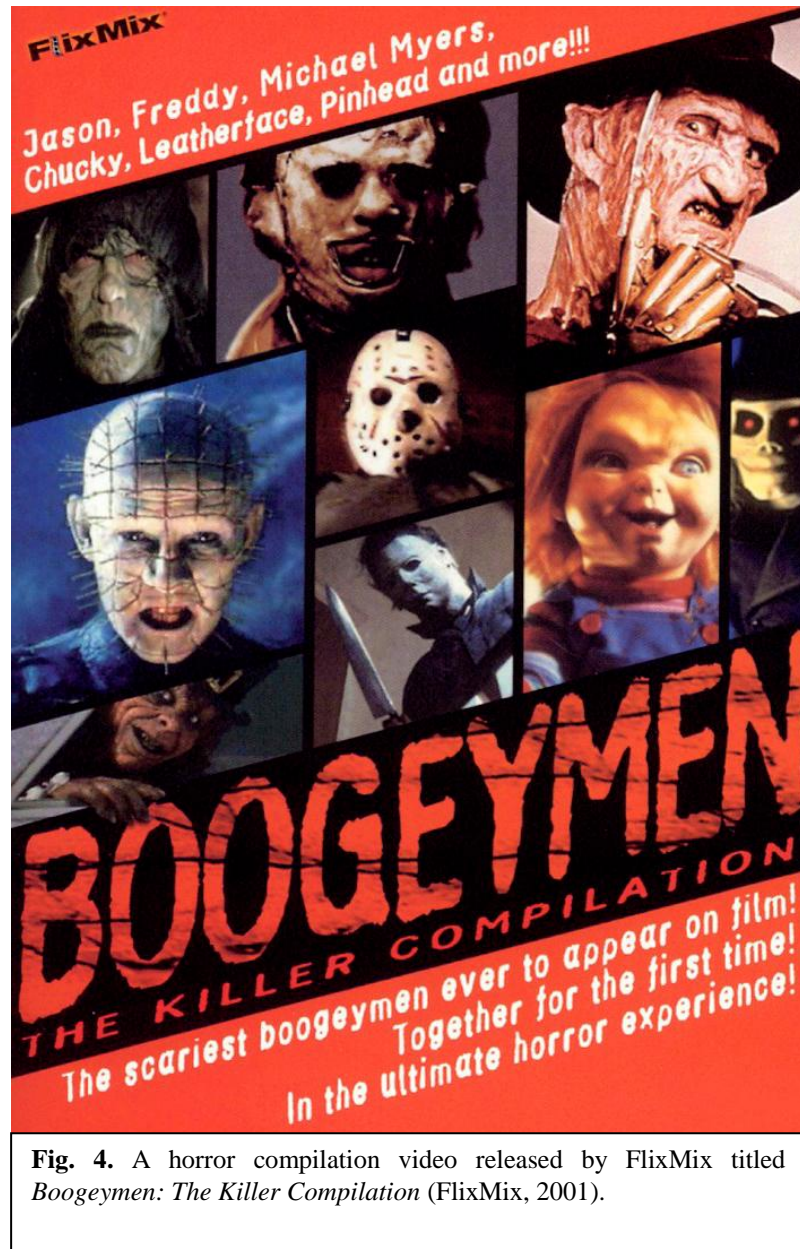
In many ways Craven's film represents the partial degeneration of many of the tropes associated with the slasher film. The blurred delineation of good and evil, the disintegration of the community, and the inclusion of a villain who is not only unmasked, but also cracks macabre jokes at the expense of his victims, were all clear deviations from previous films of the subgenre. As the series progressed, Krueger's humorous personality became an increasingly central fixture in the films, and his morbid comic relief removed the mystique that had once been associated with the slasher villain.¹⁰² As Kerswell explains, even as Freddy continued to "assail the box office, he increasingly lost his power to scare, becoming more of a wise-cracking horror buffoon than a genuine bogeyman" (160). Though the *Nightmare on Elm Street* series continued to produce profitable sequels throughout the remainder of the decade, an artistic void began to develop within the industry. As the 1990s began, the slasher subgenre fell out of favour with American audiences and the waning box office returns for these films resulted in

¹⁰² See Kerswell (2012).

lower production budgets and poorer quality pictures. As such, *A Nightmare on Elm Street* marked the final turning point in the subgenre and was one of the last successful slasher franchises. As Phillips explains, by the mid-1980s, the formula for the slasher film had “become remarkably rigid” and often involved a “masked killer impaling naughty teens with primitive weapons while tracking down an awkward and often alienated female target” (*Dark Direction* 77). Consequently, the cultural arc of the slasher film is a relatively brief one, and its popularity lasted only a little over a decade before receding into temporary obscurity.¹⁰³

The slasher was temporarily resurrected in the mid-1990s through the release of films such as *New Nightmare* (1994, Wes Craven), *Scream* (1996, Wes Craven), and *Urban Legends* (1998, Jamie Blank). This next iteration of the subgenre was deeply informed by postmodernist sensibilities, and included a pronounced sense of self-awareness, and subversion. Laura Wyrick (1998) explains that these films employ “conventions of self-referentiality and consciousness of genre” to attract audiences (123). The appeal of such films rests on the viewer’s familiarity with the “rules” of the subgenre which are rarely challenged. This added dimension of meta-cognition results in a diminished emotional response, replacing organic creativity with ironic pastiche. Though these films still contain the violence and gore traditionally associated with the slasher, they are far more esoteric and cerebral than the original works they mimic. Walking a fine line between parody and homage, these films reiterate the tropes associated with Dika’s stalker formula, ruminating in the conventions of the slasher while adding little to the subgenre itself.

¹⁰³ See Rockoff (2002), and Kerswell (2012).



VIII. The Cinematic Boogeyman

In 2001, the company FlixMix released a horror compilation titled *Boogeymen: The Killer Compilation* that features an overview of the villains of the contemporary

horror genre, including Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger amongst others (Fig. 4).¹⁰⁴ This film characterizes these villains as “the most inhuman, grotesque, demonic, psychotic monsters ever to appear on film” (*Boogeymen*) and features a montage of particularly gory and frightening scenes from the slasher subgenre.¹⁰⁵ Though this film is clearly produced for horror fans, allowing them to revel in the murderous escapades of their favourite characters, it also reveals something much more profound about the public’s understanding of these cultural figures. Namely, it exposes the viewer’s inherent recognition that these villains reflect the characteristics synonymous with the folkloric Boogeyman, and thereby engages in an archetypal vocabulary that predates the cinematic medium.

This link between the slasher villain and the folkloric Boogeyman has been similarly noted by film scholars such as Kendall Phillips (2005), Karra Shimabukuro (2014), and Douglas L. Rathgeb (1991). In the following section, I outline the research of these writers and their thoughts concerning the role of the slasher villain as a cinematic manifestation of the Boogeyman. Specifically, Shimabukuro argues that the contemporary slasher film operates as a manifestation of folklore, noting the fact that Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger possess attributes associated with “folk characters,” and are therefore easily recognizable “across cultures and classes” (49).¹⁰⁶ She goes on to point out that folkloric figures such as the Boogeyman “do not completely change through time; they simply become reimagined ... [and] serve the purpose of presenting

¹⁰⁴ In his work, Marriott similarly characterizes the slasher villain as “the bogeyman, the figure from our nightmares” (216).

¹⁰⁵ The compilation concludes with a ranking of the “Scariest Boogeymen on Film” and includes a body count for each character that reflects the number of victims they have each killed.

¹⁰⁶ Though Shimabukuro argues that slasher villains bear a striking similarity to the folkloric Boogeyman, she ultimately believes that they represent a conscious appropriation of these tropes and are therefore not the result of the collective unconscious.

the fears of a time and place” (45).¹⁰⁷ Outlining the similarities between the oral tradition of storytelling and contemporary mass media, Shimabakuro highlights the connections between the cultural role of the folkloric Boogeyman and the contemporary slasher villain. Like Warner and Widdowson, she understands the importance of fear as a fundamental principle that underpins the persona of the Boogeyman, and his function as a manifestation of collective anxieties.

This notion is further explored in Douglas Rathgeb’s article “Boogeyman from the Id” in which he argues that Krueger and Myers are contemporary iterations of the monstrous Other rendered in the cinematic medium. However, in his assessment of these characters, Rathgeb claims they have either neglected, or altogether abandoned, the traditional role of the folkloric Boogeyman which entails punishing individuals for transgressing communal values (36). Instead, Rathgeb claims that Myers and Krueger indiscriminately perpetrate violence against their victims for harmless indiscretions (such as premarital sex), and thus they blur the delineation between good and evil within the framework of the film’s narrative. I disagree with Rathgeb’s reading of these villains, and his characterization of the folkloric Boogeyman, as he fundamentally misunderstands the role of the monstrous Other. I assert that in the world of the slasher film, premarital sex functions as a metaphor for neglecting communal responsibilities and is thus treated as a transgression against the hegemonic ideology. Furthermore, the excessive violence exercised by the Boogeyman is the *very source* of his monstrosity and works to cement his role as a terrifying figure in the cultural imaginary. Thus, I argue that the

¹⁰⁷ The notion that folktales serve to illustrate the fears of society and are re-imagined with each successive generation is also discussed in Cohen (1996), Zipes (1994), and Warner (1995).

characteristics Rathgeb suggests distinguishes the slasher villain from the folkloric Boogeyman are, in fact, the points of correlation that demonstrate their kinship.

The relationship between Myers and the folkloric Boogeyman is again discussed in *Projected Fears* by Kendall Phillips, who argues that his punitive role in the town of Haddonfield links him to the monstrous Other. Phillips specifically notes the fact that one of the fundamental qualities of the folkloric Boogeyman is his “relationship to cultural boundaries” because he exists at the nexus point that distinguishes “right and wrong” (*Projected Fears* 132). He goes on to state that Myers possesses this quintessential trait and thus punishes the teenage cast of *Halloween* for their so-called “crimes” such as pre-marital sex and consumption of alcohol (*Projected Fears* 138). However, Phillips draws a distinction between the folkloric Boogeyman, who he claims brings “moral and cultural chaos” to the community, and Myers, who he argues functions to “punish the wicked” (*Projected Fears* 134-5). I argue that this distinction Phillips offers between Myers and the folkloric Boogeyman fails to recognize the dualistic role of the monstrous Other: the Boogeyman’s primary function is that of a violent disciplinarian, and he therefore serves a paradoxical role in the community, at once reinforcing communal practices through acts of brutality that ironically breach standards of civil behaviour.¹⁰⁸ Through the comparative analysis of Bluebeard and Myers that I offer in Chapter 3, I demonstrate that both figures bring social chaos and moral harmony to the community by punishing anyone who defies dominant hegemonic values, and thereby embody the central function of the Boogeyman.

Furthermore, Phillips goes on to claim that the connection the Boogeyman shares with moral and social boundaries may explain the ascension of the slasher villain in

¹⁰⁸ See Warner (2000).

contemporary American culture. According to Phillips, the morally permissive social and political landscape of the 1970s in the United States provided an ideal venue for a cultural figure that would reinforce communal laws (*Projected Fears* 142). This idea is echoed by Harlan Kennedy, who claims that the slasher phenomenon did not simply occur because “maestros with papier-mache [sic] and soluble rubber are suddenly at large on Sunset Boulevard, it’s because the age has suddenly invoked and demanded these ogres” (37). Indeed, I agree with this assertion that the cinematic Boogeyman serves to reinforce regressive values both within the film narrative and, by extension, within the American public. As I explain in Chapter 3, the monstrous Other is a manifestation of the Terrible Father, and one of his central functions is to demonstrate the dangerous consequences of breaching communal law.

Embodying the role of the folkloric Boogeyman, the slasher villain can be interpreted as serving a disciplinary function within contemporary American culture and reinforcing hegemonic values through the implementation of brutal violence. As outlined in the Introduction, the Boogeyman functions effectively as a symbol of social unease and tends to rise to the cultural forefront at times of extreme civil strife. As popular culture critic Ian Conrich (2010) points out, the modern horror film has “often been read as a reflection of a crisis in society” (Introduction 3). Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that the popularity of these films peak “at times of war, and during periods of economic, political, and moral exigency” (Conrich, Introduction 3). Based on Conrich’s observations, I assert that the slasher film provides a venue for social anxieties to be addressed and exorcised by the audience. Furthermore, the antagonists that populate these

films can be read as symptomatic of a nation in a state of fluctuation, and in desperate need of a punitive figure that will enforce regressive beliefs and values.

The slasher film reaches the height of its popularity during the late 1970s and early 1980s, and various social and political forces have been cited by film scholars to account for rise of this subgenre. For example, Dika proposes that one of the central motivating factors for the popularity of the slasher during this period was related to the “swing from the liberalism of the late sixties back to a fifties-style conservatism” during the 1970s (*Games of Terror* 132).¹⁰⁹ I further argue that the “conservatism” of the period was prompted by anxieties related to radical changes in sexual politics between American men and women as a result of new contraceptive practices. More specifically, the availability of birth control during the 1960s and the legalization of abortion, which occurred primarily in 1973, allowed the female population of the United States greater sexual freedom and, by extension, resulted in the increase of premarital sex (May 1-2). As I outline in Chapter 3, the growth in reproductive rights for women, and the impact this had on female sexual practices, was a particularly prevalent social and political issue during the 1970s and '80s. The slasher film specifically capitalized on anxieties concerning this phenomenon, as many of the secondary characters slaughtered in these narratives engage in intercourse outside of wedlock prior to their demise. The villains in these films therefore serve a similar disciplinarian function as the folkloric Boogeyman by reprimanding characters that engage in “naughty” behaviour, which includes casual sex, by subjecting them to horrific and often fatal treatment.

¹⁰⁹ In her discussion of the relationship between the slasher and the American socio-political landscape, Dika specifically references the failing American economy, as well as the country’s “ineffectual” foreign policy. Likewise, she also mentions “post-Vietnam War anxiety, America’s deteriorating world position, inflation, and unemployment” as possible catalysts for the subgenre (*Games of Terror* 131-2).

The connection between the folkloric Boogeyman and the slasher villain is therefore a vital facet of the subgenre, as it reveals key information about the subtext of these films. By examining these cultural artefacts under a Jungian lens, one can attempt to uncover hidden dimensions of these works that would otherwise be disregarded. While these movies are essentially products that operate within the field of commerce, they are also the contemporary articulations of archetypal ideas that we see manifested in pre-modern narratives. As Rushing and Frenzt explain, although most films are “primarily produced for profit, they do much more than that” by allowing the viewer access into “our cultural unconscious to meet our shadows, those disowned aspects of ourselves that we loathe” (6).¹¹⁰ I assert that the slasher represents a particularly acute example of this phenomenon, as it employs one-dimensional characters that are arranged according to a stringent binary of good/evil. These figures therefore lend themselves more readily to archetypal forms and possess qualities that we see reflected in fairytales. The slasher subgenre (like all genres of film) is predicated on the repetition of narrative conventions which gradually become “structurally rigid” and easily recognizable (Wooley 83). The tropes that are present in the slasher are highly reflective of both archetypal and sociological forces, simultaneously presenting narrative patterns that date back to the fairytale (such as those in *Bluebeard*), while also addressing social pressures that are unique to America in the 1970s and ’80s (specifically, the growth in premarital sex, as discussed in Chapter 3). The objective of this thesis therefore is to examine the archetypal

¹¹⁰ Joseph L. Henderson proposed the notion of the “cultural unconscious” which refers to a realm of the unconscious psyche that operates in conversation with the conscious mind and creates forms that are unique to a particular geographic locale and/or demographic (102). Izod comments on this concept, arguing that it offers a nuanced perception of the archetype, as it “builds a new sphere into the unconscious based on the recognition ... that social and cultural pressures conjoin their considerable influence with many other factors in forming all but the deepest psychic images” (50).

patterns in the slasher by focusing my analysis almost exclusively on the narratological facets of these cultural artefacts, especially on the representation of the villains featured within them.

IX. The Slasher Film and the Fairytale

As outlined in the Introduction, Bluebeard and other folkloric manifestations of the Boogeyman reaffirm hegemonic values that are pertinent to a group through the threat of torture and murder. Stories such as Perrault's *Bluebeard* impart lessons to the reader concerning appropriate modes of behaviour and serve a cautionary function by illustrating the fictional consequences that await individuals who contravene established beliefs. Zipes (1994) discusses this facet of the fairytale, arguing that these stories serve to impart lessons concerning social mores and thereby moderate the behaviour of the reader. Similarly, Warner (1995) comments on the edifying aspects of fairytales, explaining that these stories "act to caution listeners, as well as light their path to the future" (15). As Warner indicates, the central role of fairytales involves instilling a uniform code of conduct by punishing characters that breach, or intend to breach, the overarching moral framework of the narrative. These lessons are often communicated to the reader/listener through the actions of a villainous antagonist such as the folkloric Boogeyman who imposes horrific punishment upon characters that exhibit "naughty" behaviour.

Within the context of the slasher film, the folkloric Boogeyman is transformed into a cinematic killer who punishes teenagers for perpetrating acts that are widely perceived as socially unacceptable. These clandestine undertakings often break with

accepted customs and assume the form of premarital sex and/or the consumption of alcohol and narcotics. As such conduct is self-indulgent and carnal in nature, it is often viewed as contradictory to the hegemonic ideology and, within the slasher, is deemed punishable by the villain. Brottman highlights this facet of horror films, claiming that they serve a similar sociological function as fairytales by imparting lessons regarding the dangers of impropriety:

Most traditional horror films share the functions of the fairy tale in that they serve to teach their (mainly adolescent) audience of the dangerous consequences of inappropriate sexual (and other) behavior, thereby working as a ritual process of acculturation for the modern adolescent, just as the fairy tale helps the child come to terms with many of the psychological problems of growing up. (97)

As Brottman stipulates, the horror film showcases the potentially destructive ramifications of breaking social taboos and thereby imparts a regressive ideology.¹¹¹ Short adopts a similar stance, arguing that slasher films like *Halloween* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* are “best understood as updated fairy tales, sharing a mutual interest in both imaginatively exploring, and often subverting, what is deemed to be culturally permissible” (6). By disciplining individuals who violate communal laws through acts of savage violence, the slasher villain (much like the folkloric Boogeyman) demonstrates the dangers that await individual who indulge in excessive behaviour. Indeed, the characters that perish in these films are often victimized due to their reckless conduct, which places them in dangerous situations and makes them easy prey for the killer.

¹¹¹ Koven explains that in the contemporary horror film “when one wanders off—from the campsite, of the university campus, from home, or from school—that one is at risk of psychotic killers” (127).

For example, premarital sex requires privacy and discretion, and in these films it often occurs in deserted and abandoned locations that are frequented by the villain. Within the context of the slasher film, the open expression of libidinal desire outside the confines of wedlock is viewed as illicit and is therefore punished through torture and murder by the killer. Such acts of carnality focused on satisfying sexual impulses solicit the attention of the killer, who responds in turn with violence and carnage. His terrifying persona serves to frighten and thrill audiences who are able to witness the fictional ramifications of hedonistic activities and vicariously experience the wrath of the Boogeyman through the onscreen characters. The slasher villain therefore serves to enforce a regressive ideology by punishing those characters who engage in activities that extend or break the boundaries of a predetermined social order.

One of the most obvious qualities that distinguish the slasher villain from the folkloric Boogeyman is the fact that the target of his murderous rage is not children, but rather teenagers.¹¹² Whereas the folkloric Boogeyman largely pursues and punishes pre-pubescent children, the victims in slasher films are verging on adulthood. I assert that this shift in the age of the Boogeyman's victims is related to the fact that horror films are intended for an older demographic. Filmmakers therefore replaced the young protagonists of fairytales with an older cast in order to allow audience members to more readily identify with the characters.¹¹³ This innovation impacts the relationship that the villain

¹¹² Goldman specifies that monstrous creatures of myth “generally act to instil fear in an audience, and most frequently exercise licensed aggression especially against children” (181).

¹¹³ In certain slasher films, the traditional role of the folkloric Boogeyman as a figure that terrorizes young children is invoked within the narrative. For instance, in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* it is insinuated that Nancy and her friends function as substitutes for the young children Freddy Krueger murdered while he was still alive. Similarly, in *Halloween* it is never made obvious whether Michael Myers intends to terrorize or kill the children (Tommy and Lindsay) who Laurie protects. Were it not for Laurie's willingness to place her life in peril in order to ensure their survival, these children would undoubtedly fall prey to Myers.

shares with his victims, as his narratological role entails castigating individuals who participate in acts that conflict with prevailing hegemonic values. Therefore, the behaviour patterns that provoke the ire of the Boogeyman in fairytales (such as missing curfew and venturing beyond the physical boundaries of the communal space) are replaced by more “mature” forms of delinquency (such as excessive drinking, smoking pot, and, most conspicuously, premarital sex). These types of activities reflect a failure to uphold hegemonic values due to a decadent and morally passive attitude that must be “corrected” by the cinematic Boogeyman.¹¹⁴ As Darryl Jones points out, the killer in these films “metes out a bloody punishment for sexual transgression, pre-marital sex, or loss of (female) virginity” and exhibits a sexual morality that is “conventional ... and even conservative” (116). These films essentially serve a cautionary function, highlighting the “naughty” acts of the teenage victims who inadvertently contribute to their own demise through the neglect and/or disregard of their communal responsibilities.

This brings to light the primary narratological function of the Boogeyman: to reinforce dominant moral boundaries through the threat of violence. Warner explains that creatures such as the Boogeyman are “invoked to scare, cajole or bully children into obedience” (*No Go* 31). Like the Boogeyman of folklore, the slasher villain fortifies prevailing social practices by personifying the horrendous repercussions that result from breaching dominant communal values. The filmmakers of the slasher subgenre employed the figure of the folkloric Boogeyman and placed him within a contemporary context, resulting in a figure that is simultaneously ancient and modern. Indeed, the Boogeyman is

¹¹⁴ Likewise, certain fairytales have been interpreted as warnings against “illicit” sex and the dangers that can result from unrestrained carnality. A good example of this trend is the wall of thorns featured in *Sleeping Beauty* which curtail the prince from reaching Briar Rose and, according to Bettelheim, serve as “a warning to child and parents that sexual arousal before mind and body are ready for it is very destructive” (233).

perpetually being rewritten to personify the fears prevalent to his particular audience. As we shall see in the next chapter, this ability to embody communal anxieties is an integral facet of the Boogeyman and contributes to his enduring resonance within the cultural imaginary.

Chapter 2:

The Dweller in Darkness:

The Boogeyman as the Archetypal Shadow

I. The Ghosts of the Mind

In Perrault's fairytale, the character Bluebeard shares an acrimonious relationship with his immediate community, resulting in his social ostracization. As the author explains, the locals feared and hated Bluebeard and were "so terrified" by his appearance that they did not dare to enter his mansion while he was present (Perrault, *The Story* 20). Though it is evident that the villain's blue beard is the source of the community's fears, no explicit reason is offered in the narrative to account for this response. I therefore propose that their reaction is motivated by the fact that this colour of hair does not occur in the natural world and is a sign of monstrosity. Warner adds that the blueness of the antagonist's beard "intensifies the frightfulness of his appearance" and signifies that he is "a man against nature" ("Bluebeard's Brides" 124).¹¹⁵ Indeed, it is implied within Perrault's story that Bluebeard's physical anomalies signify his inner corruption and violent nature, as is demonstrated in the latter half of the story. As a result, the revulsion that the community harbours for Bluebeard posits him as an outsider, an individual who operates beyond the collective space and who is isolated both physically and psychologically.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ In this same essay Warner goes on to discuss other connotations associated with the colour blue, explaining that it is connected with "the shadow side, the tint of the marvelous and the inexplicable" ("Bluebeard's Brides" 124-5).

¹¹⁶ In certain versions of the tale, Bluebeard is replaced by another popular mythic figure of the cultural imaginary—the Devil. Graham Anderson points out in *Fairytales in the Ancient World* that particular retellings of the Bluebeard story "have the devil as the bridegroom and hell as the forbidden chamber" (98). The close relationship between these two figures is based on their ability to inspire fear through violence

I further argue that the community's fear and subsequent rejection of Bluebeard is in fact a repudiation of not only him as an individual but also of the anarchic values and characteristics that he represents. As the reader discovers, Bluebeard is a serial killer and his sadistic tendencies are a manifestation of his desire to maintain absolute control over his victims. Warner characterizes him as a "Jack the Ripper, who perpetrates his evil on young women," and his violent impulses are triggered by any act that defies his tyrannical rule ("Bluebeard's Brides" 123). Bluebeard's behaviour represents an obvious transgression of Western social boundaries and illustrates his dangerous nature. Through these abusive acts, he simultaneously satisfies his insatiable hunger for violence and asserts his dominance over his wife. His propensity for cruelty is manifested through his bizarre appearance, which is a signifier of the physical and moral danger he poses to other individuals. The members of the community intuitively understand the threat that Bluebeard represents to their shared values and, thus, they consequently avoid him.

The relationship observed between Bluebeard and his neighbours further illustrates a common dynamic present in narratives depicting the folkloric Boogeyman. As the monstrous Other embodies those values and behavioural patterns that conflict with the collective, he is relegated from the communal space and operates on both the literal and symbolic fringe of society. In essence, the folkloric Boogeyman personifies those psychological characteristics that the other members of the community have evacuated from their conscious psyches and wish to disavow. He therefore comes to represent the collective Shadow of the other characters within the text, and his presence threatens to

and terror. Shimabukuro also adds that the "line between bogeymen and devils is blurred ... with the two often appearing interchangeable"—possibly due to the fact that both figures trick and torture their victims (48). Rathgeb reiterates this notion when he argues that the Boogeyman is "a perfect surrogate for the devil" due to the fact that both occupy "a spirit world of shadow and chaos" where they are motivated "to terrify, to unravel, [and] to destroy" (37).

bring them into contact with those aspects of themselves that they do not wish to acknowledge or recognize.

This dynamic is reiterated in depictions of the cinematic Boogeyman, who similarly functions as a manifestation of those psychological qualities that are rejected by the younger cast. Serving in a similar narratological role as Bluebeard, the slasher villain terrifies the members of the community by personifying those traits that they have repressed. Utilizing the character of Freddy Krueger from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* as a case study, I illustrate the role of the collective Shadow in portrayals of the cinematic Boogeyman. In this film, Krueger's death results from the actions of the citizens of Springwood, and he is consequently transformed into the living incarnation of the community's guilt. Furthermore, his propensity towards sadism and sexual violence cast him in the role of the collective Shadow, embodying those pernicious qualities that the citizens of Springwood find perverse, disturbing, and threatening.

Krueger specifically serves as the personal Shadow of Nancy Thompson, the heroine of the film, manifesting those qualities that she must acknowledge and integrate into her conscious mind before she will be able to reach the state of individuation. It is only by absorbing those repressed facets of her psyche that Nancy will acquire the skills necessary to conquer Krueger and rescue the community from the threat that he poses. During their climactic fight Nancy demonstrates a degree of physical aggression and mental agility that illustrates her transition from a naïve girl into a self-reliant woman. Thus, the clash between heroine and villain at the conclusion of this film marks a pivotal moment of psychological development that empowers Nancy with the tools necessary to operate in the realm of adulthood.

II. The Collective Unconscious

As outlined in Chapter 1, the Boogeyman is a character that is unrestrained by temporal or geographical boundaries, and his persistence in the Western cultural imaginary illustrates a psychological trend that is unabated by sociological change or development (Phillips, *Projected Fears* 132). The pervasive nature of the monstrous Other is best explained by Swiss psychologist Carl Jung's notion of the collective unconscious that contains a series of instinctual forms referred to as archetypes. These concepts serve as the foundation for recurrent patterns, themes, and characters in the popular consciousness and, as Jung indicates, are manifested in cultural products such as myths and fairytales: "[t]he collective unconscious ... appears to consist of mythological motifs or primordial images, for which reason the myths of all nations are its real exponents. In fact, the whole of mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective unconscious" (*Vol. 8* 152).¹¹⁷ As a result, the structure of the collective unconscious functions to organize the experiences of the individual around innate forms to foster images that manifest themselves in the zeitgeist. The universal nature of the collective unconscious helps to explain the repetition of certain stories within Western popular consciousness and the persistent themes and characters that recur in them.

Ultimately, the Boogeyman is a monstrous figure that appears in disparate cultures, and therefore, the archetypal forms that contribute to his persona *must* operate within the collective unconscious, as it is the only realm of the psyche that is possessed

¹¹⁷ Iaccino explains that archetypes were "primordial (or "archaic") types of images that persisted since our earliest human history. Jung ascribed an almost mystical quality to these collective archetypes and believed that all mythologies possessed an archetypal base. Jung further considered archetypes so important that he believed that they influenced, as well as mobilized, philosophical and religious beliefs down through the ages" (*Psychological Reflections* 4).

by all individuals. The elemental nature of the collective unconscious means that it houses the most primordial and basic aspects of human experience and is consequently embedded within cultures regardless of historical or geographic parameters. The archetypal constituents that I argue compose the Boogeyman—the Terrible Father, the Death-Demon, and the collective Shadow—are rooted in universal psychological experience and reference foundational aspects of human life. The rudimentary nature of these archetypal forms account for the transhistorical quality of the Boogeyman and explains his appearance in popular narratives all over the world.

The notion of the archetype was an integral aspect of Jung's research, and I argue that it is his greatest contribution to the field of depth psychology. This concept was a recurrent theme in his writings and developed gradually over decades of research and clinical observation. In his Introduction to the text *Cambridge Companion to Jung* (2008), Andrew Samuels outlines the evolution of the archetype in Jung's study:

Jung's theory of the archetypes developed in three stages. In 1912 he wrote of primordial images which he recognized in the unconscious life of his patients ... These images were similar to cultural motifs represented everywhere and throughout history. Their main features were their power, depth, and autonomy ... By 1917, he was writing of dominants, nodal points in the psyche which attract energy and hence influence a person's functioning. It was in 1919 that he first made use of the term "archetype."

(9)

Though archetypes may be influenced by sociological forces in their visual expression, they are essentially unchanging in so far as they relate to experiences central to human

experience. As Luigi Aurigemma explains, the central function of the archetype is to “organize and render ‘meaningful’” the “complicated field of impulses” that compose the psyche (44). By structuring the components of the unconscious, archetypes help synthesise the images that emerge in individual dreams and eventually surface in popular narratives.

The scientific foundation of the archetype has also been studied by psychiatrist and Jungian analyst Dr. Anthony Stevens, who argues that the foundation for these forms is biological. Stevens claims that archetypes have been “ingrained within human DNA through billions of years of relatively cyclical modes of behaviour” and are therefore instinctive impulses that are inherited from our ancestors (18). Much like Jung, Stevens is careful to point out that biological instinct and environmental elements are constantly engaged in a process of interplay. He describes human behaviour as “variable ... but not infinitely so” and goes on to state that “though cultural differences are great, certain commonalities can be discerned” (56). Based on Stevens’ evidence, it is apparent that the archetype serves a foundational role within the human psyche that guides the mind in structured patterns. Despite cultural variations, the archetypal form remains consistent and manifests universal notions connected to the human condition.¹¹⁸ Archetypes are, in essence, pictorial forms of instincts that allow the unconscious psyche to reveal itself to the conscious mind, and their role in the production of popular narratives accounts for the recurrent patterns and motifs in world narratives.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Mackey-Kallis expresses similar sentiments when she argues that myths serve to interpret “the ‘truth’ of human experience” and give life “shape, substance, and meaning” (15).

¹¹⁹ Joseph Campbell states that “dream is the personalized myth, myth [is] the depersonalized dream; both ... are symbolic ... of the dynamics of the psyche” (18-9). He goes on to claim that myths are “the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestations” (3).

Jung highlighted a number of archetypal forms in the collective unconscious that embodied universally recognized roles within society such as the Mother, the Child, and the Father (also referred to as the Wise Old Man). Although these figures are not clearly defined, they serve as anchor points that allow ideas and personal experiences to cluster around them. Utilizing mythological and religious stories largely derived from the Judeo-Christian traditions as case studies, Jung documented the role of the archetype in shaping communal beliefs and cultural practices all over the world. Based on Jung's observations, I assert that as the archetype surfaces in the conscious mind, it manifests in the form of a fully developed image that is projected into the cultural sphere. Individuals living in the same geographic and temporal conditions may then express archetypal images that are similar in nature, resulting in communal stories that help to forge a collective identity.

III. The Archetypal Shadow

One of the most compelling archetypes to emerge from Jung's work was the Shadow, a section of the psyche that serves as a reservoir for those attributes the individual's conscious mind wishes to disavow. Iaccino states that the Shadow houses the dangerous and anarchic aspects of the subject's psyche:

[m]any people tend to cover up their shadow with the persona, but if they look under the social guise, they will find a brutal primitive waiting to be unleashed upon the world. The shadow rarely operates in a civilized manner; instead, it uses a "pre-logical" type of thinking, governed by strong desires and animalistic needs. (*Jungian Reflections* xiv)

The Shadow manifests itself in two separate forms: the personal (those qualities the individual refuses to acknowledge), and the collective (the communal projection of the Shadow onto an external agent).¹²⁰ According to John Van Eenwyk, the Shadow serves a compensatory function for the subject by perpetually creating an antithetical perspective to their conscious psyche in order to preserve balance within the mind: “whenever we think we know what the shadow is, its opposite automatically begins to emerge from the unconscious ... Thus, the shadow is ever-shifting, counterbalancing consciousness with its ineffability” (93). By evacuating undesirable qualities from the conscious psyche and projecting them outwards onto the Other, the individual is able to maintain a positive self-image. The Shadow therefore ensures that the subject can maintain a harmonious mental state by repressing those instincts that are potentially destructive or damaging to the community.

Though Jung discussed the Shadow throughout his professional life, he offered little insight into its origins in relation to the individual’s psychological development. It is surprising that Jung neglected to address this matter, as the Shadow plays such an integral role in the organization of the conscious psyche. As a result, certain theorists operating in the Jungian tradition have written about this phenomenon and attempted to account for the birth of the Shadow. Specifically, philosopher Erich Neumann suggests that the Superego plays a significant role in the existence of the Shadow by repressing those qualities that are deemed undesirable by the collective (*Origins* 403). According to Jung, the Superego evaluates the moral nature of an action and inhibits the individual from pursuing a destructive course of action (*The C.W. of C.J. Jung: Complete Digital* 438). By stifling potentially negative characteristics, the subject will be able to align

¹²⁰ See Van Eenwyck (1997).

themselves with the hegemonic ideology and successfully operate within society. Similarly, psychoanalyst Anthony Stevens also attributes the birth of the personal Shadow to the Superego, which he argues induces obedience by producing the fear of social alienation.¹²¹ He goes on to claim that the Superego is established as a “defence against the catastrophe of abandonment” and is designed “to monitor our behaviour so as to ensure relative conformity to the values of the culture into which we happen to have been born” (246-7). According to this logic, the Shadow evolved out of a need to adhere to communal principles and operate within civil boundaries by repressing and disowning those facets of our identity that are disturbing and objectionable.

Conversely, those individuals who fail to develop a healthy Superego and repress those instincts that do not adhere to the overarching social ideology will often be ostracized by the collective. The inability to assess the ethical implications of one’s actions resulting from the absence or impairment of the Superego will undoubtedly result in behaviour that is destructive and narcissistic. The Boogeyman represents an extreme example of this phenomenon, as he is entirely ruled by his violent impulses and thereby embodies the archetypal Shadow. Consequently, he is inevitably expelled from the community because he represents a threat to the overarching beliefs that underpin the fabric of the collective. Conformity is therefore a necessary component to operating within the boundaries of society, forcing the individual to repress those desires and impulses that fail to align with prevailing hegemonic values.

Restraint is a key contributor to the strength of the Shadow, as the vigour of this archetype is dependent upon how stringently the conscious values of an individual are

¹²¹ Stevens defines the Superego as an “inner parental figure and moral judge [that] perpetually strives to censor and ‘jail’ any aspects of the Self which it has learned through experience may prove unacceptable to significant others and result in the subject being rejected” (232).

defined. Jung revealed that “everyone carries a shadow, the less it is embodied in the individual’s conscious life, the blacker and denser it is” (*C.W. Vol. 11* 12).¹²² In essence, Jung is referring to the fact that the less successful the individual is at incorporating the personal Shadow into their conscious mind, the more segmented the subject’s identity will become. Consequently, the personal Shadow will begin to manifest unintentionally through the individual’s conduct in violent and sometimes perverse ways. According to Jeffrey Burton Russell, if “the repression mechanisms [of the conscious psyche] are too strong,” the Shadow will “become monstrous and eventually burst out and overwhelm” the subject (*The Devil* 31).¹²³ The potency of the Shadow is therefore gauged by the degree to which the individual represses certain psychic qualities, causing a schism between the conscious and unconscious sectors of the mind. These disavowed qualities create a negative identity, a mirror image of the subject based on those facets of their psyche that are not in accordance with the prevailing social ideology. As outlined earlier, we see this dynamic unfold in the figure of Bluebeard, who largely functions as an inverse image of the other characters featured in Perrault’s narrative. His sadistic and brutal tendencies in relation to his wife are demonstrative of the fact that he embodies principles that conflict with the overarching moral scheme of the community.

Because the personal Shadow operates within the unconscious psyche, it is often manifested in dreams in an attempt to attain integration into the conscious mind.¹²⁴ The exact physical form that the personal Shadow assumes is ambiguous, and Jung is reticent

¹²² Iaccino claims that the Shadow is “potentially the most powerful and dangerous” archetypal image, as it possesses a “demonic strength that knows no bounds or restraints” (*Psychological Reflections* 7).

¹²³ Liliane Frey-Rohn supports this view in “Evil from the Psychological Point of View” when she states: “the more stable [the subject’s] sense of values, the more clearly will the shadow personality take shape in the unconscious” (171).

¹²⁴ Neumann explains that archetypes are images of instincts that allow the unconscious psyche to reveal itself to the conscious mind, and “initiate the process of conscious reaction and assimilation” (*Origins* xv).

to divulge the details of its appearance. However, other theorists following Jung offer some insight into the possible manner in which the Shadow may materialize. Specifically, Stevens suggests that the personal Shadow appears in dreams “as a ‘shady’ character of dubious integrity ... displaying characteristics customarily regarded as disreputable and ‘inferior’” (251).¹²⁵ Similarly, Dani Cavallaro states that the Shadow is capable of expressing itself “through terrifying and monstrous forms” (24). Jeffrey Burton Russell offers further elaboration on the personification of the Shadow when he states that it may take on “negative projections” such as “demons, monsters, or subhumans” (*The Prince* 234).¹²⁶ As these writers make clear, there is a vast array of guises the personal Shadow may assume as it surfaces, often with fantastical features. Many of the qualities ascribed to the personal Shadow by Stevens, Cavallaro, and Russell such as monstrosity and physical ugliness are evident in depictions of the Boogeyman.

Once the personal Shadow is encountered by the subject in a dream and integrated into the conscious mind, it is diffused and loses its power over the individual. This process of assimilating the personal Shadow is a potentially perilous undertaking because, as Hockley explains, it involves reconciling the “repressed and dangerous aspects of the human psyche” with the conscious mind and allowing the ego to temporarily lose control (42). However, if this process is interrupted, the personal Shadow will remain segregated from the conscious mind and result in a bifurcation within the psyche. Furthermore, during periods of extreme social and political strife, the Shadow is projected outwards onto the external world, often resulting in images of

¹²⁵ Stevens specifically claims that the shadow may adopt the physical attributes of “the burglar, pimp or con man [sic], prostitute, harpy or slut” (251).

¹²⁶ Iaccino similarly characterizes the Shadow as “the absolute evil that must coexist with the absolute good of nature” (*Jungian Reflections* xiv).

monstrosity orbiting in the cultural imaginary—a phenomenon referred to as the collective Shadow.

The collective Shadow occurs when a group of individuals experience acute anxiety and transmit their repressed qualities onto an enemy who is subsequently demonized within the shared popular consciousness.¹²⁷ This phenomenon occurs when the community is galvanized by their shared disdain for a particular figure or group, and through the projection of their personal Shadows onto the Other, they transform him/her/it into the embodiment of their own rejected qualities. As such, the personal and collective Shadows often overlap to a large extent, and there is a common dialogue between the two, as most individuals share the values (and fears) of a larger community. This fact is highlighted by analyst Liliane Frey-Rohn, who points out that “[f]or the majority of people, whose identity is linked with that of the herd to which they belong, individual moral commitments conform to those of their encompassing social group” and adds that “the personal and collective shadows tend to coincide with what the group judges to be ‘evil’” (170). Since the collective Shadow is the cumulative projection of repressed and rejected communal traits, manifestations of this archetype often possess subhuman attributes. This is evident in the figure of Bluebeard and the selected slasher villains who stand in stark contrast to the community, embodying those qualities that threaten to destroy the collective.

James Aho references this aspect of the collective Shadow in his research on the relationship between rivalling political groups. Merging a sociological and psychoanalytic methodology, Aho examines the tactics utilized throughout history to

¹²⁷ Stevens claims that Shadow projections allow individuals to transform their “opponents into ‘devils’” and their enemies into “monsters unworthy of all humane consideration” (271).

portray political enemies as alien and subhuman. He argues that the individual will unconsciously transfer “his own carnality, filth, [and] animality” onto the adversary during periods of warfare (114).¹²⁸ This psychological exchange illustrates the communal projection of fears and anxieties onto another individual/group that occurs when the collective Shadow is formed. Aho goes on to state that this process is activated whenever an opponent is indicted with what he refers to as “archetypal” crimes which include the “murder of ... children; sexual abominations ... or the ingestion of tabooed food such as human flesh” (114). As we see in the next chapter, many of these crimes are associated with the Boogeyman persona and play a pivotal role in the construction of his monstrous identity.¹²⁹ Aho’s observations concerning the role of the political enemy can be easily extended to the figure of the monstrous Other. The only difference between these two scenarios is that one involves the transformation of a political adversary *into* a monster, while the other concerns the *construction* of a monstrous enemy that exists solely in the cultural imaginary.

As the collective Shadow gains momentum and support within a group, it will begin to surface in the popular consciousness. When Jung discussed the collective

¹²⁸ Similar ideas are expressed by the political theorist Carl Schmitt (1888-1985) who wrote extensively about the role of the enemy in gauging the political activities of the state both in regard to domestic and international affairs. Schmitt argued that the enemy is “existentially other and foreign, the most extreme escalation of the otherness, which in the case of conflict leads to the denial of its own type of political existence” (395). His conceptualization of the enemy echoes that expressed by Aho and invokes the notion of the collective Shadow.

¹²⁹ American philosopher Sam Keen connects Jung’s notion of the collective Shadow with artistic depictions of political enemies from various sectors of the globe. Chronicling the long lineage of political scapegoating and demonization that often accompanies warfare, Keen outlines the role of the Shadow in alienating the enemy. He claims that the most abject attributes of the community will be used as fodder to create the identity of the opponent: “Whatever a society considers bad, wrong, taboo, profane, dirty, desecrated, inhumane, impure, will make up the epithets assigned to the enemy. The enemy will be accused of whatever is forbidden—from sadism to cannibalism” (28). Keen goes on to add that depth psychology, such as that practiced by Jung, has “presented us with the undeniable wisdom that the enemy is constructed from denied aspects of the self” (11). Examining visual renderings of “the enemy” from the last two hundred years, Keen concludes that similar psychological tactics are universally employed to dehumanize the opponent.

Shadow, he posited this archetype as an entity that operated outside the nation state, manifesting in the form of an adversarial figure (either real or imagined) for which the community feels tremendous fear and/or disdain. In this context, the collective Shadow is traditionally projected onto the leader of an opposing group who is subsequently demonized by the public (Bartlett 94). However, von Franz suggests that the collective Shadow may also find expression in monstrous mythical figures such as “the devil or evil demons” that operate in the cultural imaginary (*Shadow and Evil* 8).¹³⁰ I assert that the Boogeyman is a clear illustration of the relationship outlined by von Franz between the collective Shadow and the horrific creatures that appear in popular narratives.

IV. Projection

The nightmarish beings that are born out of the collective Shadow often possess physical qualities that are considered undesirable and reference the abject aspects of the natural world. As outlined in the Introduction, the characteristics that constitute monstrosity include the malformation/degeneration of the human body or the unnatural amalgamation of animal and human anatomy. Monstrous creatures are considered abhorrent and conflict with prevailing ideals connected with beauty. Their corporeal traits often reference or mimic taboo images from nature, such as excrement, filth, and waste.

¹³⁰ Support for von Franz’s argument connecting the Devil with the collective Shadow is found in the work of Jeffrey Burton Russell who explains that the concept of this figure grew out of a need within the Jewish faith to explain the malevolent aspects of Yahweh. As a means of reconciling the dualistic nature of their god, the Hebrews subtracted from Yahweh his destructive aspects and “ascribed [them] to a different spiritual power, the Devil” (*The Devil* 183). This resulted in what Russell refers to as “a twinning” of the divine nature, splitting Yahweh into two separate beings—the positive aspects became the Lord, while the negative ones resulted in “the shadow, the dark side of the God” (*The Devil* 183; 200). The Devil therefore came to represent the chaotic forces present in the material world and the dangers of excess, functioning both as the negative image of Yahweh, as well as the repudiated attributes of his followers (J.B. Russell, *Mephistopheles* 187). Indeed, the Devil is the personification of the most villainous and violent aspects of the collective Shadow projected onto the spiritual plane.

These creatures represent the living incarnation of all the base aspects of human existence that we wish to deny and disconnect from ourselves because they disgust and/or scare us.

In addition to their repugnant physical characteristics, monsters also possess undesirable psychological traits that necessitate their ostracization from the collective. Monsters generally tend to express similar behavioural patterns and serve the same social function: their objective is to induce fear within the public through the threat of violence and physical harm.¹³¹ Asma specifically explains that monstrosity results from a predisposition towards sadism which causes harm to others in the form of torture, murder, or sexually transgressive acts (*On Monsters* 10). This anxiety induces conformity within the members of the community and thereby strengthens adherence to the prevailing ideology. These monstrous projections guarantee the repression of unacceptable behaviour and ensure that no member of the collective will defy the status quo.

Though these qualities are present in all monsters, they are particularly pronounced in the case of the Boogeyman. His role as a surveyor of moral boundaries is elemental to his character and composes the foundation for his disciplinary function in the cultural imaginary. This brings to light the Boogeyman's unique nature, and begs the question: what specific characteristics distinguish him from other monsters born out of the collective Shadow? As discussed in the next two chapters, the Boogeyman represents a particular species of the monstrous genus, one which only occurs when the collective Shadow is merged with the Terrible Father and the Death-Demon. The fusion of these

¹³¹ J.B. Russell points out that the universality of the collective Shadow is evidenced by the fact that there are remarkable similarities among "worldwide representations of evil," which he suggests indicates an "inherent psychological response to common perceptions" of this concept (*The Prince* 12).

archetypal forms results in a distorted vision of the paternal figure that is driven to commit acts of torture and murder in order to maintain social and moral conformity.

The role of the Boogeyman is complicated by the fact that he is both an autonomous entity, as well as a mythic creature projected into the cultural imaginary by the community. Because he is a manifestation of the collective Shadow, and therefore the culmination of the community's disavowed qualities, he retains a psychic link with the public that cannot be broken. As Aho explains, the "enemy harbours a dual nature – living both 'out there' and also deeply inside ourselves"—a statement that is particularly relevant in the case of the Boogeyman (11). This connection has bearings on the manner in which the monstrous Other is depicted and is demonstrated through the use of the Boogeyman as a weapon to induce personal and collective adherence to the hegemonic ideology. Evidence of this bizarre kinship between the community and the monstrous Other can be found in the employment of the Boogeyman as a disciplinary tool by caregivers to control unruly children.

As such, the monstrous Other serves as a threatening presence that will perpetrate horrific punishments against disobedient children that the parent/caregiver would likely never commit.¹³² According to Phillips, the Boogeyman stands in for the parent/caregiver as a supplementary punitive figure by "providing a more severe disciplining threat to naughty children" (*Projected Fears* 134). As Phillips indicates, the Boogeyman comes to represent the parental figure's dark alter-ego and embodies the harm he/she dreams about imposing against their child during moments of insubordination. As Warner states, the Boogeyman "make[s] present what we dread, and these fantasies include what we know we are capable of perpetrating ourselves"—namely, acts of unrestrained carnage (*No Go*

¹³² See Warner (2000).

386). The Boogeyman is the fulfillment of these violent fantasies that the parent/caregiver does not carry out for fear of transforming into a monster. By projecting these desires onto the monstrous Other, the parent/caregiver can purge him/herself of their desire to exercise cruelty against their ward. The strange allure the Boogeyman holds for the public is therefore tied to the fact that he fulfills a repressed desire to exercise unlicensed violence.

However, this characterization of the monstrous Other as a manifestation of the collective Shadow is insufficient to explain the horrific traits associated with him, as he is not simply a projection of the general public's rejected qualities but also an *exaggeration* of them. I propose that these attributes result from the fact that once the collective Shadow has manifested in the form of the Boogeyman, the public begins to embellish his monstrous nature and develop a mythology around him, ultimately associating him with violent and sadistic activities. This dynamic is essentially an inversion of what Jung referred to as "psychic inflation," a process whereby an individual or group mentally imbues themselves with qualities they do not possess (Bartlett 94). Through psychic inflation, the individual experiences a heightened sense of self-importance which compensates for personal deficiencies. Iaccino explains that psychic inflation can occur in relation to the personal Shadow, causing it to "become so blown up that it simply grows too big for the human ... to control" and eventually results in the dissolution of one's own consciousness (*Psychological Reflections* 8). Adopting Iaccino's framework, I assert that a similar process unfolds in relation to the collective Shadow, which I shall henceforth refer to as "mythic inflation," resulting in the monstrous figures that populate the cultural imaginary.

Mythic inflation involves the distortion and amplification of the community's repressed attributes that are projected onto an external figure to create an inverted image of the collective. In the case of the Boogeyman, this process allows the public to distance themselves from the monstrous Other by endowing him with extraordinary traits that make him both superhuman and subhuman.¹³³ Thus, the Boogeyman is an exaggerated reflection of the community's rejected qualities transformed into a malevolent figure without humanity or sympathy. By manifesting the ills of the collective, the monstrous Other makes it possible for the group to rid itself of dejected qualities through his imposed exile and/or demise.

In many ways mythic inflation mimics the process of scapegoating, whereupon a specific individual carries the burden of guilt for the collective and thereby absolves the group of any wrongdoing by purging the collective of sin. Sylvia Brinton Perera notes that the role of the scapegoat in Jungian thought is to return "evil to its archetypal source through sacrifice, carrying back to the gods a burden too great for the human collective to bear" (98). Similar to the scapegoat, the Boogeyman and other abhorrent figures become tools to exorcise a community's weaknesses and flaws by serving as reservoirs for the collective's disavowed and repressed qualities (Warner, *No Go* 382). However, there is a profound distinction between these two categories—whereas the scapegoat is often chosen arbitrarily from among the community members and bears no relation to the original crime for which he/she is punished, the monstrous Other is a violent agent of destruction and his brutal actions *require* social marginalization. Thus, at the conclusion of the literary and filmic narratives featured in this thesis, the Boogeyman is invariably

¹³³ Kearney points out that by projecting our unconscious fears onto others "we contrive to transmute ... [them] into a monster, or into a fetish-god" (5).

exiled, incapacitated, or destroyed, and his expulsion from the community functions as a means of re-establishing social harmony.

Within the context of *Bluebeard*, the villain embodies the collective Shadow and manifests those negative properties that have been disavowed by the other characters in the narrative. This fact is evidenced by the fear the community harbours for Bluebeard, which I assert is prompted not only by his ghastly appearance, but also the fact that he fails to adhere to the values that they revere (such as diplomacy and humility). Instead, Bluebeard uses violence as his sole method of communication and perpetrates horrible abuses against his spouses, torturing and/or murdering them. This type of conduct not only demonstrates Bluebeard's monstrous nature, but also manifests practices that are deemed objectionable by the community, thus transforming him into the embodiment of the collective Shadow. Through his death at the end of Perrault's story, harmony is once more restored to the community and the anarchic forces that Bluebeard personifies are subdued.

Similarly, the carnage exhibited by the slasher villain against his victims demonstrates his role as a projection of the collective Shadow. Such acts of unlicensed brutality are deemed universally unacceptable, and the fact that the cinematic Boogeyman frequently perpetrates them highlights his monstrous alterity within the community. Indick comments on this facet of the slasher villain, arguing that he is a literal depiction of Jung's shadow archetype and embodies the "propensity toward madness and violence in all human beings" (117).¹³⁴ Indeed, the sadistic violence perpetrated by these characters place them outside the parameters of tolerable social practice and casts them in

¹³⁴ Indick makes this statement strictly in reference to Michael Myers and Jason Voorhees, though it could easily be applied to Freddy Krueger as well.

the role of the collective Shadow. Furthermore, the homicidal actions of Krueger, Myers, and Voorhees echo Bluebeard's conduct and other manifestations of the folkloric Boogeyman, all of whom similarly exhibit monstrous behaviour that defies the dominant accepted moral standard.

V. The Collective Shadow in the Slasher Film

The monstrous apparitions featured in horror films frighten and excite the audience, allowing the viewer to project their darkest fantasies onto the cinema screen.¹³⁵

In *The Shadow Self in Film*, Gershon Reiter argues that the villains of these films function as projections of the public's disavowed qualities, embodying the most abject aspects of the spectator.¹³⁶ Without directly referencing Jung, Reiter invokes the concept of the collective Shadow and reveals the disturbing psychological relationship that exists between the antagonist and the public. He goes on to explain that the Shadow is an ever present element in the human psyche: “[c]all it what we will, double, shadow, Doppelgänger, Other, all are outer personification of an inner split; all mean the denied part of ourselves that appears in our dreams as a shadowy and menacing figure; all refer to the unconscious personality we all too often project on others” (1). In his analysis, Reiter references numerous films including *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943, Alfred Hitchcock), *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931, Rouben Mamoulian) as well as *Cape Fear* (1962, J. Lee

¹³⁵ Much like the Boogeyman, the protagonists of ancient Greek tragedy transgress the laws of nature and embody the hubris born out of overindulgence. Arlene W. Saxonhouse discusses the role of the tyrant as one that entails breaching laws of the cosmos (1263). Through these indiscretions, the tyrant elicits the fury of the gods and must bear the punishment for his criminal act. Saxonhouse specifically addresses the story of Oedipus, whose excess comes from his misconception that his role as king derives solely from his own intellect and wit, whereas the audience realizes that it is due to his role as the child of Jocasta and Laius (and he has therefore inadvertently broken universal laws concerning incest and patricide by murdering Laius and marrying Jocasta) (1264-5).

¹³⁶ According to Iaccino, the central message of the horror film is that the Shadow “cannot and perhaps should not be repressed!” (*Psychological Reflections* 7).

Thompson), claiming that a particular facet of the viewer is projected onto the screen and externalized in the figure of the antagonist. Following Reiter, I argue that a similar dynamic occurs between the viewer and the slasher villain in the films discussed in this thesis.

The relationship that Reiter outlines between the viewer and the horror villain is particularly relevant regarding depictions of the cinematic Boogeyman. In the slasher film, the audience witnesses the personification of their collective Shadow in the guise of a psychotic serial killer who punishes those characters that violate, or are perceived to violate, accepted communal laws. Victims in these narratives often engage in transgressive acts that invoke the ire of the monstrous Other and therefore unintentionally contribute to their own demise. By chastising individuals who have breached hegemonic values, the villain may be understood as carrying out those violent impulses that the viewer has repressed and thereby enacting the secret desires of the audience. Thus, the killer's homicidal behaviour serves to fulfill an ideology that is condoned within the narrative of the film—namely, the punishment of those characters that have exhibited “illicit” behaviour.

The psychological connection between the public and the onscreen killer is expressed cinematically in the form of the point-of-view shot which displays the villain's perspective during scenes of torture and/or murder. The use of such images was one of the most widely criticized conventions of the slasher subgenre because, as Rockoff points out, it created “an uneasy and uncomfortable relationship between the audience” and the antagonist (15). This identification with the slasher villain results in two interrelated effects: (1) it keeps the killer's identity hidden from the viewer, and (2) it offers the

audience escape from the threat of violence by allowing them to vicariously participate in the slaughter of onscreen characters. I further assert that by perpetrating such violence against “naughty” characters, the cinematic Boogeyman fulfills the repressed violent impulses of the viewer, and he is therefore the incarnation of the audience’s desire to ensure the preservation of shared moral principles.

This dynamic is further complicated by the fact that the viewer is often solicited to identify with the victim at other junctures in the film, resulting in a “splitting” of the audience’s sympathy between the perpetrator and recipient of violence. As Clover explains, both the villain and heroine are manifestations of the self, and the use of point of view shots allows the viewer to adopt each role simultaneously: “just as attacker and attacked are expressions of the same self in nightmares, so they are expressions of the same viewer in horror film. We are both Red Riding Hood *and* the Wolf” (12). This convoluted juxtaposition is a direct result of the fact that the villain is a manifestation of the audience’s rejected qualities and therefore an embodiment of their collective Shadow. The cinematic Boogeyman therefore shares a strained relationship with the public that is rooted in the fact he enacts those violent impulses that people are unwilling to acknowledge in themselves.

I assert that the slasher subgenre offers a particularly profitable venue for exacerbating fears, permitting audiences to purge themselves of their neurosis by confronting their repressed fears in the guise of the villain.¹³⁷ By transmitting their

¹³⁷ This sensation of purging oneself of excess fears and anxieties is remarkably similar to the notion of catharsis that was initially discussed by Greek poet and philosopher Aristotle in his treatise *Poetics*. Aristotle characterizes catharsis as a purifying effect of tragedy, allowing the audience to cleanse themselves of certain emotions “through pity and fear” (1449b). Michael Tierno (2002) discusses the role of catharsis in film and states that it “leaves the audience with a renewed sense of mental clarity and better able to function in life” (97).

repressed qualities into the cinematic Boogeyman, the viewer is able to literally witness the symbolic destruction of their anxieties, albeit temporarily, through the demise or incapacitation of the killer. As such, these films allow viewers to acquire a state of catharsis by heightening, and exacerbating anxieties within the present social climate and simultaneously purging those concerns. The ability of the villain to successfully embody the most abject aspects of society is therefore crucial to allowing viewers to psychologically invest themselves in the narrative. This dynamic is most clearly expressed in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, in which the ghostly spirit of Freddy Krueger serves as the personification of the repressed anxieties of the other onscreen characters as well as the viewing audience.

A number of horrifying social ills coalesce in the figure of Krueger (such as infanticide, pedophilia, and mob violence), and he successfully functions as a symbolic representation of the gritty underbelly of American society during the 1980s. Psychologist James Iaccino states that Craven's film offers the viewer an unflinching snapshot of the unsavoury attributes of modern Western life: "[Krueger] symbolizes all the abiding shadow horrors of our contemporary society, including child molestation, teenage suicide, and the ever-increasing AIDS epidemic" (*Psychological Reflections* 176).¹³⁸ Iaccino further emphasizes that Krueger embodies many facets of Western society that are considered abhorrent by the general public, and therefore represents the most savage and ungoverned aspects of the human psyche. As Nelson (2010) explains, the horror film monster "is a vengeful representation of whatever the dominant ideology deems a subversive threat to American society ... and it is thus trying to 'repress' in order

¹³⁸ Gary Heba claims that Krueger "is an example of America's political unconscious violently unleashed upon itself, manifesting everything that is unspeakable and repressed in the master narrative" such as perversion, child abuse, murder, vigilantism, the breakdown of rationality, order, and the family (7).

to maintain control and stability” (115). Consequently, these aspects of Krueger’s character contribute to his terrifying onscreen persona, as he is a haunting reminder of the latent chaos that lies hidden beneath the surface of contemporary society.

A Nightmare on Elm Street also indirectly addresses the declining state of the nuclear family in American society—the town of Springwood is populated by a broad spectrum of families that are unwed, divorced, and estranged. Nancy herself is the product of divorced parents, and their perpetual fighting becomes a major stumbling block in supporting their daughter. Likewise, Tina’s father abandoned the family ten years earlier, and her mother (Donna Woodrum) is in Las Vegas when she is murdered. Due to Tina’s lack of parental supervision, she engages in transgressive behaviour such as premarital sex and increasingly looks to her friends to provide her with emotional and psychological support. Krueger is symptomatic of the steady disintegration of the cohesion within Springwood, and the teenagers he victimizes are frequently the offspring of single-parent households. In many ways, the collapse of the community accounts for why the adult characters are unable to stop Krueger, as they are bound up in a downward spiral of fear and self-loathing that simply strengthens Krueger’s grip on the collective.

Within the diegetic space of the film, Krueger similarly serves to personify the repressed facets of the other onscreen characters and represents the nefarious aspects of the collective. The town of Springwood is beautiful, sanitized, and pristine, and the characters that inhabit this space are attractive and congenial. This is the face that the community has constructed for the external world; however, beneath this mask lurks the Shadow side that is embodied by Krueger. Phillips touches on this dynamic when he argues that the “pristine” houses of Springwood conceal “a dangerously rotten core”

(*Dark Direction* 83). This notion is similarly expressed by Jim Harper, who explains that the “gleaming white picket fences of Elm Street ... belong in a fairy tale universe” and beneath the “polished exterior” of this suburban town “lurks the memory of cruel acts and unfortunate events” (52-4). He goes on to explain that films such as *A Nightmare on Elm Street* present an idealized image of contemporary American life which denies that “killers live amongst us, preferring to push them beyond the boundaries of society, where the monsters [such as Krueger] live” (52). As a manifestation of the collective Shadow, Krueger serves as the community’s alter ego, manifesting the inferiorities and unacceptable desires that the citizens of Springwood wish to disown (Blennerhassett 101). The fear that Krueger represents is therefore not simply bodily harm, but also the horror of being faced with the most hideous and repugnant aspects of one’s own unconscious psyche.

Additionally, Krueger’s frightening role as the community’s collective Shadow is manifested in physical terms through his abject appearance. Dika notes that there is a clear delineation between the slasher villain and the other characters of the film: whereas the younger characters are vibrant, athletic, and attractive, the killer is older, socially isolated, and often physically distorted (*Games of Terror* 83). She goes on to state that the “opposition that separates the interaction between the young community from the killer ... is best described as *life/death*” (not my italics; *Games of Terror* 83). Through this dynamic, the villain comes to embody the literal inverted image of the community, and his monstrous alterity is communicated through his physical ugliness. This dynamic is particularly acute in the case of Krueger, who has been scarred by fire and consequently no longer appears human. His mutilated face and body sharply contrast the

physical appearance of Nancy and her friends who exude health, beauty and virility. The visual presentation of the villain therefore serves a vital role by highlighting his moral and psychological difference from the collective and, by extension, the danger he potentially presents to the community.

This distinction between Krueger and the townspeople begins to collapse as dark secrets from Springwood's past are unveiled that link both parties together. After Nancy's nightmares about Krueger intensify to the point that her life is in danger, her mother (Ronee Blakley) decides to reveal the truth about the community's role in the creation of their Boogeyman. As Nancy's mother explains to her daughter, the parents of Springwood burned Krueger alive after he was acquitted of murder charges due to a legal technicality:

“Somebody forgot to sign the search warrant in the right place and Krueger was free, just like that ... a bunch of us parents tracked him down after they let him out, we found him in an old abandoned boiler room where he used to take his kids ... We took gasoline, poured it all around the place, then made a trail of it out the door, then lit the whole thing up, and watched it burn.” (*A Nightmare on Elm Street*)

Through this act of vigilante justice, Krueger is transformed into a shared secret that must be protected at all cost, and it is only after Tina and Rod's death that the truth about him is finally revealed. Krueger's demise at the hands of the parents of Springwood and the subsequent guilt that they feel for this act fuels Krueger's resurrection, and results in him becoming the literal personification of their collective guilt. As a result, the inhabitants of the town share a role in the creation of this Boogeyman and are inextricably bound to

him. In the end, Krueger functions as both a threat to, and a manifestation of, the anarchy that exists beneath the surface of the community, and the refusal of the townspeople to acknowledge their role in his death allows him to persist in the their subconscious.

Krueger's narratological role as a personification of the archetypal Shadow is particularly pronounced in his relationship with the heroine, Nancy Thompson. The two characters are diametrically opposed to one another both physically and psychologically, and Krueger fundamentally functions as an inverse portrait of Nancy: whereas she is generous, compassionate, and selfless, he is narcissistic, self-aggrandizing, and sadistic.¹³⁹ Nancy is the moral center of the community, and she represents the hope for prosperity against Krueger's nihilistic presence. Their acrimonious relationship is the centerpiece of the film, and the violent exchanges they share signify the struggle between the forces of life and death. Krueger therefore epitomizes those facets of Nancy's psyche that she needs to reconcile and integrate into her conscious mind in order to reach psychological maturity.

As Nancy's personal Shadow, Krueger adopts the form of the opposing sex and thereby embodies those gender impulses that she has repressed.¹⁴⁰ This dynamic can be

¹³⁹ Barry K. Grant (2004) describes a similar dynamic between the protagonists and villains of a subgenre he dubs "yuppy horror." This group of films is defined by a central character that identifies with the "yuppy" lifestyle descending into a seedy underworld on a physical and/or psychological journey. Included in this category are titles such as *After Hours* (Martin Scorsese, 1985), *Fatal Attraction* (Adrian Lyne, 1987), *The Hand That Rocked the Cradle* (Curtis Hanson, 1992), and *Single White Female* (Barbet Schroeder, 1992). Grant asserts that the villains of these films give voice to the repressed facets of the hero(ine): "the evil characters in yuppie horror movies function as the Other, as an external, disavowed projection of something repressed or denied within the individual psyche or collective culture. These films tend to depict the monstrous Other as the protagonist's doppelganger or double" (158).

¹⁴⁰ Samuels (1989) explains that the sexual identity of the Anima/Animus operates to symbolically articulate the contrasexual qualities of the subject:

Animus and anima images are not of men and women because animus and anima qualities are masculine and feminine. Rather, for the individual woman or man, anatomy is a metaphor for the richness and potential for the 'other'. A man will imagine what is other to him in the symbolic form of a woman—a being with another anatomy. A woman will symbolise what is foreign to her in terms of the kind of body she does not herself

explained by the dichotomous nature of the feminine and masculine principles in the collective unconscious which are represented by the archetypal forms of the Anima and Animus.¹⁴¹ Jung argued that these two archetypes reside within the unconscious of the opposing gender—therefore, the Animus is present in the psyche of the female subject and the Anima is present within the male. Hockley argues that within the personal Shadow of each individual there is “a strong contrasexual element” embodied by the Anima/Animus that needs to be integrated into the subject’s “consciousness, behaviours and attitudes” in order to acquire individuation (42-3). Nancy’s Animus is encapsulated within her personal Shadow and embodied by Krueger who epitomizes those personality traits that she has failed to acknowledge. As Indick explains, the slasher heroine “develops her character” by encountering her negative Animus and successfully integrates his power by “destroying him in a typically gruesome manner” (125-6). Thus, the violent confrontation between Nancy and Krueger at the climax of the film marks a pivotal moment in the heroine’s psychological development.

During this encounter with Krueger, Nancy absorbs those masculine qualities that she previously repressed and adopts a persona that incorporates the most positive attributes associated with both gendered principles. This development in her character is

have. The so-called contrasexuality is more something ‘contrapsychological’: anatomy is a metaphor for that. (103-4)

¹⁴¹ Stevens discusses the contrasexual nature of the Anima and the Animus in his work and the role of these principles in the relationship between sex and gender. According to Stevens,

It is not [Western] culture alone that has traditionally regarded assertiveness, creativity, physical aggression and destructiveness as male attributes, and gestation, nurturance and life-enhancement as female. ... These are universally apparent distinctions, and their very universality betrays their archetypal origins. This is not to say that men cannot be passive or yielding or women dynamic and assertive ... The complementary principle is nevertheless still present and functional in both sexes, and it was to these contrasexual propensities that Jung gave the names Animus ... and Anima ... knowing them to be vitally important factors in the psychic economy of us all. (209)

To support his argument Stevens cites the research of Corrine Hutt (1972) who has written extensively about the nature of behavioural differences between male and female pre-school children and the potential biological implications of these distinctions.

demonstrated by the combination of physical aggression and thoughtful contemplation that she displays during her final encounter with Krueger. As outlined earlier, Nancy actively combats Krueger throughout this battle by setting him ablaze, blowing him up, and shoving him down a flight of stairs. However, it is the wisdom she showcases when she renounces her fear of Krueger that ultimately destroys the nightmarish projection of her negative Animus.¹⁴² Through this process of confronting and integrating her repressed masculine principle, Nancy represents an alternative to the traditional binary of defying/subscribing to hegemonic sexual values represented by her peers. Instead, she is able to circumvent socially imposed gender roles by expressing her libidinal energy through intelligence and physical aggression (a notion that I discuss further in the Conclusion).

The gender identity of Nancy and the other heroines of the slasher subgenre has been a topic of discussion among a number of film studies scholars including Clover (1992), Gill (2002), and Rieser (2001). Clover specifically refers to the Final Girl as “boyish” and lacking in the feminine qualities exhibited by her female friends (40). She goes on to argue that the masculine nature of the Final Girl serves as “a front” through which male viewers are able to more easily identify with the female protagonist (18). This perspective is contradicted by Rieser, who claims that the fluidity assigned to the Final Girl is not rooted in her gender but instead in her liminal status “between girlhood and full-fledged motherhood” (379).¹⁴³ Gill similarly disagrees with Clover, arguing instead that the slasher heroine’s unique role in the narrative is predicated on her “mature

¹⁴² This psychological transformation is manifested physically through the streak of grey hair (a symbol of acquired wisdom) that Nancy develops as a result of her second encounter with Freddy when she is brought to a sleep clinic by her mother.

¹⁴³ In regards to the gender identity of the Final Girl, Marriott states that she “alternates between masculine and feminine roles, equally adept at fleeing in terror and standing her ground” (214).

self-possession” (23). I further propose that this process of transitioning into adulthood (designated as “motherhood” by Rieser) entails a reinvention of one’s gender identity, whereupon repressed contrasexual qualities must be integrated and absorbed into the conscious mind. Thus, I argue that Nancy’s final encounter with Kruger marks a pivotal rite of passage that designates her evolution into a state of psychological maturity and independence.

Emma Jung (1882-1955), Carl Jung’s wife, wrote the canonical treatise on the concept of contrasexual principles which she aptly titled *Animus and Anima* (1974). In this text she outlines the role that the Anima and Animus play in the psychological development of the feminine and masculine subject. According to E. Jung, the negative Animus will manifest in dreams in the form of a “violent and ruthless tyrant,” and she cites Bluebeard as an example of this phenomenon (29). She goes on to state that women who have successfully integrated this projection into their conscious minds are “active, energetic, brave, and forceful”—characteristics that are clearly displayed in the behaviour of Nancy and the other slasher heroines (E. Jung 4). In his discussion of gender principles in Jungian scholarship, Hockley similarly argues that Bluebeard functions as a manifestation of the negative Animus. Furthermore, he states that such projections appear at times of “initiation or personal crises, and at rites of passage” to “guide the psyche” to a higher level of consciousness (a notion I discuss further in Chapter 4 in relation to the “marriage to Death” theme) (34).¹⁴⁴ Similar to the slasher villain, Bluebeard threatens to arrest the psychological development of the female protagonist and, as a result, the heroine must confront and overcome him in order to acquire the state of individuation.

¹⁴⁴ Von Franz goes on to state that negative images of the Animus, such as Bluebeard, personify “those semiconscious, cold, destructive reflections that invade” a woman’s mind (“The process of individuation” 191).

Much like Bluebeard, Krueger and the other two slasher villains included in this thesis personify the archetypal Shadow for both the audience and the other characters within the narrative. The cinematic Boogeyman is thus the living incarnation of those aspects of the collective that are repressed and represents those dangerous forces that threaten the foundations of civilization. As a result, the slasher villain is relegated to the literal and symbolic margins of the community in an attempt to remove him from the conscious psyches of the other characters in these films. From his position at the outskirts of society, the Boogeyman can survey the borders and punish transgressors who threaten to violate communal law, a function that brings to light another facet of his persona—namely, that of a disciplinarian. In addition to embodying the collective Shadow, the Boogeyman also personifies the cruel aspects of the Father archetype since he mimics and parodies the role of the paternal figure by castigating individuals who violate social limits through sadistic punishments. The cinematic Boogeyman therefore represents the fusion of the collective Shadow with those attributes associated with the Terrible Father—a term coined by Jungian philosopher Erich Neumann that is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 3:

The Punishing Avenger:

The Boogeyman as the Terrible Father

I. The Threatening Nature of the Boogeyman

As outlined in the previous chapter, the Boogeyman's propensity for violence and his predatory relationship with young women and children are key traits that define his persona. His homicidal temper is triggered when individuals defy his will and fail to act in accordance with his decree by openly flouting communal values which he is determined to uphold. This notion is illustrated by the fact that he often murders those characters who trespass on his dwelling or deface his memory/legacy. In many ways he functions as a mythic expression of the violent and sadistic aspects of the literal paternal figure in Western society—who is often ascribed the role of disciplinarian in the family unit. By penalizing individuals who have breached social/moral boundaries, the Boogeyman is able to satisfy his narcissistic impulses in the most depraved manner and thereby fulfill his role as a monstrous tyrant. The threat of the Boogeyman is therefore both ubiquitous and invisible, as he represents the penalty of destruction that awaits any individual who violates hegemonic values.

The Boogeyman's role as a threatening disciplinary figure is clearly illustrated in the story of Bluebeard through the violent actions of the villain. In this narrative the female protagonist is faced with a test that assesses her obedience to her husband's authority: specifically, Bluebeard's wife is told to avoid the forbidden chamber in the mansion during her husband's absence under threat of extreme punishment (Perrault, *The*

Story 16-7). However, as Perrault explains, the temptation to learn the secrets concealed within the chamber is too strong and she succumbs to her curiosity, opening the door and uncovering the truth about her husband. The gravity of defying Bluebeard is evidenced by the fact that the wife hesitates before entering the forbidden chamber, contemplating the consequences of this deed: “she paused for a moment, bethinking herself of her husband’s prohibition, and that some misfortune might befall her for her *disobedience*” (my italics; Perrault, *The Story* 26-7). Within this fairytale, Bluebeard is the purveyor of the overarching social code and his wife’s refusal to adhere to his request represents a breach of communal law. Through this act of matrimonial defiance, she discovers the truth about Bluebeard (that he is a serial killer) and simultaneously invokes his murderous rage. Her failure to adhere to his rules of conduct places her in peril and she thereby plays a role in her own entrapment by the villain.

Utilizing the story of Bluebeard as a guide, I discuss the folkloric Boogeyman’s role as a manifestation of the Terrible Father, a Jungian concept introduced by philosopher Erich Neumann. This archetypal form encapsulates the destructive and chaotic aspects of the paternal figure that often manifest in acts of violent repudiation carried out against individuals who have transgressed established boundaries. By perpetrating these deeds, the Terrible Father is able to arrest the individual’s psychological development and impede social progress, resulting in an emotional state of stagnation and death. This facet of the folkloric Boogeyman accounts for his narrative function as enforcer/punisher which entails harming and/or killing those characters that neglect their expected communal responsibilities.

This theme similarly manifests in the slasher film through the murder of those characters who engage in hedonistic acts such as premarital sex and the consumption of alcohol and/or narcotics. Like Bluebeard, the villains of these films punish characters that partake in “illicit” activities and thereby violate fixed customs. By enforcing a regressive social ideology and prohibiting transgressive acts that will extend moral boundaries, the killer embodies the role of the Terrible Father. This facet of the cinematic Boogeyman is evident in the selected slasher villains included in this thesis, though it is particularly pronounced in the case of Michael Myers in *Halloween*. Myers brutally slaughters a series of teenagers in this film who disregard their communal responsibilities in order to pursue sexual liaisons that, in turn, place them in dangerous situations.

Finally, I discuss the importance of the Final Girl in the slasher film and uncover how this figure serves as the ideal foil and psychological adversary for the cinematic Boogeyman. As outlined in the previous chapter, the heroine symbolizes the “moral heart” within the narrative scheme of these films and functions in a parental capacity, protecting her peers from the killer. Utilizing her strength and ingenuity, she is usually the one who temporarily exiles and/or vanquishes the villain at the end of the film, and therefore offers the hope of salvation for the community. Unlike her peers who neglect their duties and fall prey to the killer, the Final Girl is able to perceive the impending danger that the cinematic Boogeyman represents and take precautionary actions to stop him (much like the final wife in *Bluebeard*). By examining the characters of Laurie Strode from *Halloween* and Nancy Thompson of *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, I demonstrate how both of these women serve a benevolent and maternal role within their

respective films by protecting the community and combating the insidious impact of the villain.

II. Erich Neumann and Carl Jung

As previously indicated, the Boogeyman is a monstrous manifestation of the collective Shadow, and he serves to reinforce the community's moral boundaries by penalizing individuals who disregard them. Thus, one of the Boogeyman's central roles is as a surveyor and enforcer of literal and symbolic borders by personifying the destruction and devastation that lies beyond them. He is a threatening figure that tames illicit behaviour through horrific punishments, and thereby suppresses anyone who challenges the prevailing ideology. In the ruthless pursuit of these objectives, he perpetrates deadly punishments against those individuals who transgress social laws and functions as a perverted image of the disciplinary parental figure—thus embodying the role of the Terrible Father.¹⁴⁵

In order to effectively discuss the notion of the Terrible Father archetype, it is necessary first to establish a clear understanding of the characteristics synonymous with the positive male parental figure.¹⁴⁶ I characterize the Good Father as any individual who has successfully integrated the feminine archetype (the Anima) into his psyche to create a healthy personality, allowing him to guide with strength, wisdom, compassion and

¹⁴⁵ The Boogeyman's role as an enforcer of boundaries may be explained by the fact that this duty is frequently ascribed to the father figure within Western society. Certainly in America during the 1970s a more severe paternal figure was endorsed within the popular culture with the publication of such texts as James Dobson's *Dare to Discipline* (1977). The Boogeyman therefore carries within him a number of sociological and archetypal connotations that are associated with the literal father.

¹⁴⁶ Jacoby explains that the desire for a positive father figure (a "positive father complex") may manifest as a yearning for a "reliable father figure, and/or for a set of values which promises guidance." Such a phenomenon occurs when a child has not had the "opportunity to experience having a strong, and at the same time understanding, father; one whom he [or she] could love and admire" (102).

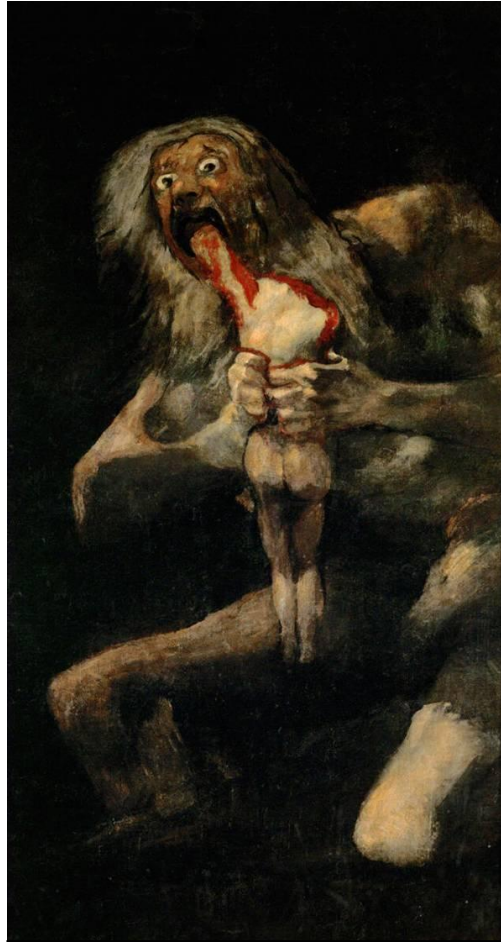


Fig. 5. Francisco Goya. *Saturn Devouring His Son*. 1819-23. Oil Paint. Museo Nacional Del Prado. Source: Public domain.

empathy. He is neither threatened nor disgusted by manifestations of femininity and seeks leadership and goals as a means of benefiting the community, as opposed to solely propagating his own status and control. Conversely, the figure of the Terrible Father utilizes fear and intimidation as tools to preserve his dominance, thereby arresting the natural development of both his progeny and the greater collective.

The notion of the Terrible Father was first proposed by the philosopher Erich Neumann and refers to the villainous aspects of the paternal figure in world mythologies.

In popular narratives, the Terrible Father is often characterized by a pathological desire to maintain authority over his wife and children and assert his status as the head of the family unit.¹⁴⁷ Much like the Boogeyman, this wish to retain influence may manifest itself nefariously in the form of violent acts such as torture, murder and, in extreme cases, cannibalistic impulses, whereupon he will literally swallow his own children. Also, the Terrible Father is traditionally associated with stagnation and death, as his ultimate desire is to arrest the development of life by extending his rule indefinitely. As Neumann explains, the Terrible Father halts the “continued development of the ego and upholds the old system of consciousness” (*Origins* 186). Warren Colman refers to this dynamic as the “Chronos complex,” whereupon the child must struggle against the omnipotent father and kill him so as to overthrow the old order (525). This title is derived from the Greco-Roman story of Chronos (also known as Saturn) who swallows the children that his wife Rhea bears in order to maintain his role as the ruler of the universe (Fig. 5). To end this behaviour, Rhea (under the guidance of her mother, Gaea) substitutes her last child, Zeus, for a stone which Chronos/Saturn swallows. Once Zeus has grown into an adult, he forces his father to regurgitate his children and, as a result, Zeus becomes the new ruler of the universe. As Warner explains, Chronos’ actions are motivated by blind hubris, devouring his children “in order to put an end to their independence and to their maternally derived difference” (*No Go* 59). Robert Bly, whose work I will be examining later in this chapter, similarly posits Chronos/Saturn as an example of the negative father figure in world mythologies.

¹⁴⁷ Warren Colman discusses this theme in the Greek myth of Uranus, the sky god, who is castrated by his son Chronos when he is unwilling to allow his wife Gaea to bear their children out of fear that one of his progeny will overtake his role as leader of the cosmos (524). Likewise, Colman suggests a similar dynamic is present in the fairytale *Jack and the Beanstalk*, in which the ogre functions as a symbolic father who attempts to devour his threatening son (524).

Neumann's description of the Terrible Father also reflects certain aspects of Freud's work concerning negative projections of the castrating father figure. According to Freud, the child undergoes three psycho-sexual stages of development that include the oral, anal, and genital phase (Fear 12-3).¹⁴⁸ In his 1910 paper titled "A special type of choice of object made by men," Freud stated that the growing male child "begins to desire his mother ... and to hate his father ... for standing in his way; he comes, as we say, under the sway of the Oedipus complex" (*Sexuality* 45). As Rhona M. Fear explains, the boy's growing desire for his mother involves "incurring the wrath of his mother's existing sexual partner—his father" manifested in the form of castration (18). This fear results in anxiety and potentially adopts the form of negative projections of the threatening father figure. The consequences of the male child fulfilling his wish to copulate with his mother proves too great, and he resolves the Oedipal conflict by surrendering his desire for the maternal figure and internalising the role of the father which entails adopting a masculine identity (Fear 18). According to Freud, through this process the heterosexual male child is able to successfully transition into adulthood and pursue sexual relations with women.

The threatening nature of the castrating father is indicated in an essay Freud wrote concerning the Uncanny in which he discussed the character of the Sand Man from E.T.A. Hoffmann's anthology *Die Nachstücke (The Night Pieces; 1816)*. In Hoffmann's tale the central character Nathaniel is haunted in his adult years by the memory of a mythical character named the Sand Man he was told about in his infancy by both his mother and nurse. As a child, Nathaniel is warned about a "bad man [who] ... comes to

¹⁴⁸ During the oral phase the child is focused on breast-feeding, while the anal phase involves mastering toilet training and evacuating bodily matter, and the genital phase revolves around mastering sexual impulses including masturbation (Fear 12-3).

children when they won't go to bed and throws handfuls of sand in their eyes until, streaming with blood, they pop out of their heads" (Hoffmann 36). Nathaniel comes to believe that the Sand Man actually exists and pays nightly visits to his father who works as a scientist. In order to confirm his beliefs and catch sight of the Sand Man, Nathaniel hides in his father's study to witness the arrival of this monstrous figure. In fact, Nathaniel's father is visited by an obnoxious lawyer named Coppelius who undertakes alchemical experiments in the presence of Nathaniel's father and, upon discovering the young boy hiding in the study, throws him on the fire and attempts to place burning embers in his eyes. It is only due to the pleading of Nathaniel's father that Coppelius allows the child to survive, torturing him until he passes out from the pain.¹⁴⁹ According to Jean-Michel Quinodoz, the image of the Sand Man presented in Hoffman's tale "represents the dreaded father at whose hands castration is expected" (167). Furthermore, Quinodoz connects the punishment of the Sand Man's wrath with the Oedipus complex, stating that the tale reflects a terrifying infantile image "linked to castration anxiety" (167). Interestingly, Warner associates Hoffman's Sand Man with the folkloric Boogeyman in her work, characterizing him as a figure with "sinister intensity" (*No Go* 33). Therefore, figures such as the Sand Man are negative projections of the paternal

¹⁴⁹ A year later, an experiment conducted at Nathaniel's home results in an explosion that kills his father; Coppelius, who was present during the blast, vanishes without a trace. Shortly thereafter, a barometer-salesman named Giuseppe Coppola arrives in town and Nathaniel is convinced that it is Coppelius in disguise. Nathaniel becomes obsessed with proving that Coppelius and Coppola are the same man, and simultaneously begins to fall in love with Olimpia, the daughter of a new physics professor (and friend of Coppola) named Spallenzini. Spallenzini throws a grand party at which Nathaniel dances with Olimpia and he decides to propose to her shortly thereafter. However, when Nathaniel visits Olimpia's home, he discovers Spallenzini and Coppola (who is revealed to be Coppelius) arguing over Olimpia who is revealed to be a mechanical automaton. Coppola/Coppelius snatches away the lifeless body of Olimpia and vanishes once more. This ordeal drives Nathaniel mad, causing him to be committed to an asylum. After he recovers from this experience, Nathaniel reconciles with an earlier love interest, Clara, and move to his hometown. During their voyage, the two visit a town and climb a high steeple, whereupon Nathaniel once more sees Coppola/Coppelius below and suffers another bout of insanity, causing him to cast himself off the steeple and kill himself (Hoffmann 34-73).

archetype projected into the cultural imaginary, serving to simultaneously terrify and elicit obedience from the public.

Though Neumann's concept of the Terrible Father is not a widely circulated idea in academic literature, the notion has been invoked under alternate titles by theorists operating in the study of myth and world literature. Specifically, Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* discusses the role of the "tyrant-monster," a creature that exhibits many of the characteristics synonymous with the Terrible Father:

The figure of the tyrant-monster is known to the mythologies, folk traditions, legends, and even nightmares, of the world; and his characteristics are everywhere essentially the same. He is the hoarder of the general benefit. He is the monster avid for the greedy rights of "my and mine." The havoc wrought by him is described in myth and fairy tale as being universal throughout his domain ... The inflated ego of the tyrant is a curse to himself and his world. (15)

Due to his nefarious attributes, Campbell argues that the tyrant-monster must be overthrown and vanquished by the hero(ine) who is subjugated by his abuse of power. Campbell attributes to this figure many of the negative qualities that Neumann discusses in relation to the Terrible Father, and I therefore propose that the two terms essentially reference the same figure.

The concept of the Terrible Father builds upon the scholarship of Carl Jung, with whom Neumann was well acquainted and carried on a friendship that lasted over twenty years.¹⁵⁰ So impressed was Jung with his protégé's work in the field of psychoanalysis

¹⁵⁰ Heather McCartney points out that the first correspondence between Jung and Neumann took place on 11 September 1933, though the two had met during the summer of that year while Jung was in Berlin (xi).

that he agreed to write both the preface and introduction to Neumann's 1949 text *The Origins and History of Consciousness*. In the preface, Jung indicated that this text functioned as a direct extension of many of the theories that he had put forward during his lifetime: "[this book] begins just where I, ... if I were granted a second lease on life, would start to gather up the *disjecta membra* of my own writings, to sift out all those 'beginnings without continuations' and knead them into a whole" (Preface xiii).¹⁵¹ In this text, Neumann went on to explain the process of individuation for the masculine psyche through the mythological story of Perseus and his quest to retrieve the head of Medusa. Utilizing this heroic tale as an allegory, Neumann documented the process of the ego emerging from a state of unconsciousness and eventually attaining an autonomous identity.¹⁵² Specifically, the figure of Perseus operates as a symbol of the masculine subject who must overcome both the Terrible Mother and Terrible Father, manifested by Medusa and her lover Poseidon, in order to successfully attain psychological maturity and reach adulthood. Traditionally the Terrible Father is a figure strictly included in narratives associated with the male hero; however, I assert that the fairytale heroine/Final Girl adopts certain facets of the masculine principle through her trials and consequently develops a unique gender identity which is reflected by her path to individuation (as outlined in Chapter 2). Due to her exceptional status, her journey mimics many of the salient characteristics of the masculine psyche and thus she must confront the Terrible Father like her male hero counterpart.

¹⁵¹ McCartney explains that Jung effectively declared Neumann "to be his successor" (xliv).

¹⁵² Neumann's reason for using the myth of Perseus as the template on which to base his theories concerning the development of the masculine psyche was rooted in his belief that the hero is "the archetypal forerunner of [hu]mankind in general. His fate is the pattern in accordance with which the masses of humanity must live, and always have lived, however haltingly and distantly; and however short of the ideal man they have fallen" (*Origins* 131).

In Neumann's later book *The Great Mother*, he develops these ideas even further, discussing the process of individuation in relation to artistic representations of the mother figure.¹⁵³ Neumann increasingly relates the production of cultural artefacts to the process of psychological development, resulting in the projection of archetypal forms into the popular consciousness. Had he not passed away in 1960, he undoubtedly would have continued to examine the role of depth psychology in the world of art.¹⁵⁴ This chapter therefore serves to supplement Neumann's research and expand on certain ideas he proposed concerning the Terrible Father by adapting them for use in the study of narratology in folklore and film. Though the cultural artefacts I examine do not subscribe to the framework proposed by Neumann concerning the heroic quest, they do include the figure of the Terrible Father manifested as the Boogeyman and thus elucidate many of his theories regarding the role of the parental archetypes in popular narratives.

In the dualistic world of Jungian analysis, the Mother and Father archetypes are associated with conflicting aspects of the human psyche. Specifically, the maternal form (which relates to the realm of the unconscious) is synonymous with darkness, mystery, and danger. Conversely, the paternal form (which is connected with consciousness) is affiliated with light, reason, and logic—this accounts for the fact that the father archetype and the masculine principle are portrayed as exclusively altruistic and beneficial in Jung's writings.¹⁵⁵ As Avi Baumann points out, Jung saw the father and patriarchal

¹⁵³ Neumann's text *The Great Mother* began in 1947 as an introduction to the first publication of the *Eranos Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism* that was solicited by Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn and Carl Jung. The images from the volume were drawn from the 1938 Eranos conference exhibition focused on "Gestalt und Kult der Grossen Mutter" ("The Nature and Cult of the Great Mother") (McCartney xxxvii-xxxviii).

¹⁵⁴ A number of Neumann's other works such as *The Child: The Structure and Dynamics of the Nascent Personality* (1990) were published posthumously.

¹⁵⁵ Iaccino states that the wise old man "represents the heightened cognitive powers of intuition, wisdom, and cleverness, as well as particularly prized moral qualities, such as kindness, decency, and a willingness

consciousness in a very positive light and was “less aware of the shadow of the archetypal father ... in both the personal and collective realms” (1606). The unblemished manner in which Jung depicted the father figure, as well as his stringent delineation of archetypes related to gender, have been contentious issues in contemporary theoretical discourse and have been discussed by scholars in the fields of feminism and queer studies alike.¹⁵⁶ Christopher Hauke adds that Jung’s perspective on “the feminine, and on the psychological attributes of, and differences between, men and women strikes many as old-fashioned, irrelevant and often offensive” (114). Through my discussion of the Terrible Father, I highlight some of the aspects of Jungian analysis that are incongruent with contemporary Western thought and adjust them to more clearly reflect current values.

Neumann presents the figure of the Terrible Father as a destructive agent that curtails creativity and the development of the personal ego, representing a blemish on the otherwise desirable state of consciousness. He also argues that the Terrible Father may manifest in two forms: (1) the Earth Terrible Father and (2) the Spirit Terrible Father. Though both iterations are derivatives of the same figure, the former “belongs psychologically to the realm of the Great Mother” and functions as her “satellite,” threatening to return the individual to a state of unconsciousness (Neumann, *Origins* 186). According to Neumann, the Terrible Father is often pictured as a character with “overwhelming aggressiveness” and manifests as “a destructive monster” (*Origins*

to help one’s neighbor” (*Psychological Reflections* 10). Similarly, Mario Jacoby points out that the masculine archetype is associated with logos, conquest, and the spirit of adventure, and therefore his images are “easily idealized”—a bias reflective of the tendency to privilege the androcentric hierarchy of power and privilege in Western society (98).

¹⁵⁶ For further information see Walker (1976), and Kaufman (2010).

186).¹⁵⁷ This figure also obstructs development by binding the individual to old traditions, halting psychological progress and resulting in the stagnation of life (Neumann, *Origins* 186-7).¹⁵⁸ This final facet of the Terrible Father is central to my analysis of the Boogeyman, as one of the fundamental functions of the monstrous Other is the propagation of conformity to a static moral order through violent disciplinary acts.

Within the Jungian framework, the role of the Father archetype comes into play in a child's psychic development much later than that of the Mother. According to Neumann, during the early stages of infancy the mind is an undifferentiated mixture of psychic qualities that is referred to as the Uroboros. This state is characterized by the "union of masculine and feminine opposites, the World Parents joined in perpetual cohabitation" (*Origins* 13). During this period, the Mother archetype plays a pivotal role in the development of the unconscious mind of the child. When the Father archetype intervenes, it results in the birth of consciousness and the introduction of dualism and differentiation. According to Jung, the process of activating the Father archetype occurs approximately at age five, though there has been considerable debate around this point (Stevens 130).¹⁵⁹ Once the Father archetype comes into play in the psychic development of the child, the perception of the paternal figure is largely shaped by the individual's interactions with the literal father. In the mind of the child, the physical and archetypal

¹⁵⁷ Neumann uses the example of Poseidon and the sea monsters he sends to kill Andromeda in the story of Perseus' adventure to illustrate the physical manifestation of the Terrible Father.

¹⁵⁸ D. Vasailthavathy points out in her thesis "A Psychological Study of the Plays of Terence Rattigan" (1997) that the Terrible Father embodies "the structures of culture and dogmas that repress and stunt the ego by chaining it to a bed of conformity and do not allow any new development" (112). Similarly, Bhikku Sujato expands upon the role of the Terrible Father, explaining that he "imprisons the son's consciousness" by binding the individual to "a conventional, limited role and will not let him discover his own truth" (368).

¹⁵⁹ This point is potentially impacted by the biological and physiological nature of the subject, as evidenced by Laura Griessel and Martina Kotzé (2009), who argue that when forming their identities, women "need not separate from their personal mothers in the same oppositional way as men" due to their bodily nature (191).

fathers merge and, as a result, the actions of the personal father are amplified and enhanced (Jung, *Freud and Psychoanalysis* 322).¹⁶⁰ Through this process, the paternal archetype functions as a mythic version of the child's father and is informed by their experiences together. The accumulated sentiments that the child accrues through these experiences will result in a positive or negative complex that will influence his/her perception of the archetypal Father. As a result, the Father archetype fragments into three identities that reflect differing facets of the paternal figure: (1) The Good Father, representing the positive aspects of the Father; (2) the Terrible Father, embodying the negative aspects of the Father; and (3) the Great Father, a combination of the previous two figures.¹⁶¹

A negative father complex may develop during infancy when the relationship between a male parental figure and a child becomes strained by emotional tension. Mario Jacoby describes such a situation in *Jungian Psychotherapy and Contemporary Infant Research*: "Let us assume that the father ... cannot bear his offspring's self-assertion ... The child reacts with powerless narcissistic rage, which in the long run will become consolidated into real hatred of the father ... [and] the child is often left to 'fight' his battles with his father in the form of fantasies" (101). This scenario is developed further by Colman, who argues that the infant will defend itself "against his [or her] smallness

¹⁶⁰ In his 1909 paper "The Father in the Destiny of the Individual," Jung states that the personal father "inevitably embodies the archetype, which is what endows this figure with its fascinating power. The archetype acts as an amplifier, enhancing beyond measure the effects that proceed from the father, so far as these conform to the inherited pattern" (*Freud and Psychoanalysis* 322).

¹⁶¹ The three variations of the father archetype (the Good Father, the Great Father, and the Terrible Father) discussed by Erich Neumann are highly reminiscent of the theory of "splitting" in which the father is divided into two separate entities representative of the positive and negative facets of the parental figure. Melanie Klein (1882-1960) discussed this phenomenon in relation to child psychology in her essay "Notes on Some Schizoid Mechanisms," and it has been utilized quite extensively in the psychological analyses of fairytales by Bruno Bettelheim and Sheldon Cashdan. Bettelheim specifically discusses this phenomenon in relation to the fairytale *Little Red Cap* and explains that the "male is ... split into two opposite forms: the seducer who, if given in to, turns into the destroyer ... and the hunter, the responsible strong, and rescuing father figure" (172).

and weakness by fantasizing that he [or she] is the powerful father” (535). Such adverse sentiments directed at the father will accumulate in the child’s imagination and manifest in monstrous paternal figures like the Boogeyman.¹⁶² These creatures will eventually appear in stories which resonate in the cultural imaginary and are privileged depending on prevailing sociological conditions.¹⁶³ Below is a chart (Fig. 6) that lays out some of the most elemental features of the various manifestations of the Father archetype in the cultural imaginary.

NAME	CHARACTERISTICS
Good Father	Altruistic, benevolent, and guides through wisdom and support
Great Father	Complex interplay of positive and negative characteristics (combination of the Good Father and Terrible Father)
Terrible Father	Halts personal development of the individual by slowing the process of individuation and binding the child to a regressive ideology

Fig. 6. List of characteristics associated with manifestations of the archetypal Father. Source: Kevin McGuinness (Inspired by Erich Neumann’s Research on the Father Archetype from *The Origins and History of Consciousness*).

The Boogeyman therefore develops as a result of the Terrible Father merging with the collective Shadow and the Death-Demon archetypes, resulting in a distorted paternal figure that is not only domineering, but also sadistic, homicidal, and physically grotesque. By fusing with the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father is transformed into a living incarnation of the community’s fears related to both physical and psychological violation. These anxieties are manifested through the predatory behaviour of the Boogeyman (specifically in the form of torture, and murder), thus aligning him with the Death-Demon

¹⁶² Warner touches on this connection between the Boogeyman and the cultural father, explaining that the figure of the monstrous Other reflects “intergenerational fears ... between parents and children” (*No Go* 47).

¹⁶³ This notion is reiterated by Indick, who points out that Jung “believed that the internalized parental figure is revealed in dreams and myth in archetypal form” and therefore “carries with it the cultural associations related to the parental figures” (121).

archetype (discussed in the next chapter). This transgressive behaviour exhibited by the Boogeyman places him outside the borders of the community and ensures his continued ostracization from the collective.

In the guise of Bluebeard, the folkloric Boogeyman exhibits his relationship with the Terrible Father archetype through his excessively brutal treatment of his spouse. After learning that his wife has violated his edict to avoid the secret chamber in his mansion, Bluebeard responds to her insubordination by attempting to cut off her head (Perrault, *The Story* 52). I assert that Bluebeard views his wife's defiance as an affront to his ego, and her intrusion on his private domain elicits his fury. His self-image is predicated on his domination over the women in his life, whom he considers inferior, and his inability to control their behaviour enrages him to the point of physical aggression. Demonstrating the qualities of the Terrible Father, Bluebeard utilizes the threat of violence to instil obedience and enforce a regressive moral code, thereby establishing his role as a punishing avenger. The extreme nature of his response to his spouse's duplicity demonstrates a degree of brutality that is unwarranted and out of accord with her "crime." Through this interaction, Bluebeard embodies the characteristics central to the Terrible Father and thereby reinforces his role as a manifestation of the monstrous Other.

As outlined in the Introduction, the folkloric Boogeyman is characterized by an overinflated ego that compels him to perpetrate acts of brutality against individuals who are physically weaker. Indeed, the most prevalent threat presented by the monstrous Other is that he will invade the domestic realm of the home and spirit away unruly children to do them bodily harm.¹⁶⁴ The fact that the folkloric Boogeyman's victims are

¹⁶⁴ Shimabukuro points out that in Germanic folktales, the Boogeyman is closely tied to "the disappearance of children, or child abuse or punishment" (48).

almost universally children and young women speaks to his ruthless abuse of power, as these individuals are often unable to defend themselves against their attacker and are therefore vulnerable to his onslaught. By subjugating the lives of others, the folkloric Boogeyman is able to fulfill his narcissistic sense of self-aggrandizement and assume a God-like persona. Hence, the Boogeyman's tendency to prey upon others is motivated by narcissism and the desire to occupy a role of superiority.

III. Toxic Masculinity

In many ways, the conceptual figure of the Terrible Father embodies many of the characteristics commonly associated with the contemporary notion of “toxic masculinity.” A frequent topic of discussion within sociological studies, toxic masculinity has risen to the cultural forefront over the past three decades as a means of addressing the tendency of men to perpetrate acts of violence either within the domestic or public sphere.¹⁶⁵ The term was originally coined in the 1990s by Shepherd Bliss and was intended to describe “that part of the male psyche that is abusive” (Gross 14). Much like the Terrible Father, toxic masculinity is characterized by a hubristic attitude, resulting in hostile behaviour directed towards those within society who are physically and/or emotionally vulnerable. Violence and intimidation are used in place of communication to achieve the individual's objectives, giving birth to a brutal social order rooted in primal instinct. These volatile inclinations are underpinned by the need to establish dominance and control and to maintain status within the social hierarchy.

¹⁶⁵ For further information concerning the suggested relationship between unmitigated violence perpetrated by men and the notion of toxic masculinity see Sedoric (2016), and Hamblin (2016).

One of the scholars to address the idea of toxic masculinity is Terry A. Kupers (2005), a psychiatrist and teacher who has worked extensively in the American prison system. In his article “Toxic Masculinity as a Barrier to Mental Health Treatment in Prison,” Kupers examines the negative facets of masculinity in relation to male inmates (as denoted in the title), arguing that toxic masculinity involves “the constellation of socially regressive male traits that serve to foster domination, the devaluation of women, homophobia, and wanton violence” (714). He goes on to speculate that toxic masculinity is largely born out of a desire for respect that, when stifled, becomes volatile and explosive. The rage born out of this denial of status results in destructive behaviour often directed at individuals who are physically and/or psychologically weaker than the perpetrator. Through these acts of unprovoked violence, the aggressor is able to exert his will over others, thus establishing the control and power he so greatly desires. We see many of the qualities connected with this phenomenon manifested in cultural representations of the folkloric Boogeyman. Bluebeard certainly embodies the traits that Kupers associates with toxic masculinity, as his explosive rage over his wife’s “disobedience” is demonstrative of his preoccupation with control and supremacy. When these aspects of his identity are challenged, Bluebeard’s temper becomes uncontrollable and his intuitive response is violence and carnage.

Toxic masculinity is not a recent phenomenon purely born out of sociological circumstances; it has always existed, manifested in the stories that populate the cultural imaginary. I propose that figures such as the folkloric Boogeyman are mythical articulations of the most volatile and anarchic aspects of masculinity filtered through the public consciousness and transmogrified into the artistic sphere. This theory is indirectly

reflected in Robert Bly's groundbreaking book *Iron John: A Book About Men* (1990) which examines the sociological role of the father within the context of world mythology.¹⁶⁶ In this text, Bly reveals some unsettling trends in cultural depictions of the paternal figure that reflect the characteristics Neumann associates with the Terrible Father. According to Bly, mythology is full of stories of "the bad father, the son-swallower ... [and] the possessive ... giant" (120). Bly speculates that these characters depict "the father's devouring hunger, his fear of death, [and] his insistence that everyone live in disorder" (117). Based on the observations of Campbell and Bly, I suggest that such negative mythological depictions of the paternal figure are manifestations of the Terrible Father and serve to illustrate Neumann's insights concerning this archetypal form. I further argue that the Boogeyman represents a particularly monstrous incarnation of the Terrible Father, one that results from its fusion with the collective Shadow and the Death-Demon.

IV. The Boogeyman as the Terrible Father

The Terrible Father is an integral facet of the Boogeyman's identity and contributes to his role as a punitive figure in the cultural imaginary. The Boogeyman is rarely the literal father of his victims, but instead serves as a symbolic patriarch for the community and punishes those who do not adhere to the dominant moral code through cruelty and violence.¹⁶⁷ In the end, the Boogeyman simultaneously brings both discipline

¹⁶⁶ Kenneth MacKinnon (2003) explains that Robert Bly viewed manhood as "an essence" that is unaffected "by history, and is shared by or at least buried within, all males, regardless of their different cultures" (19).

¹⁶⁷ The king in the French fairytale *Donkeyskin*, written by Charles Perrault, is one of the few examples of the Terrible Father figure who is a biological father to the protagonist. In this story, the queen dies, and her husband swears never to marry again unless he can find a woman as beautiful as his deceased wife. The king determines that the only woman who can fulfill this criterion is their daughter, who flees the castle in

and disorder to the collective and embodies the dual (and paradoxical) roles of the stern authoritarian and the reckless libertine. He is a dangerous spectre to be called upon to reinforce social barriers in the community that are in danger of collapsing. This point is demonstrated by the fact that the Boogeyman does not simply carry out acts of random destruction, but instead operates with a particular agenda—to harm those who have placed themselves along the moral periphery of the collective. As such, stories of the Boogeyman function as cautionary tales and are intended to test the integrity of his potential victims, resulting in the destruction of those who failed to possess a strong sense of propriety. Thus, the Boogeyman is a perverted disciplinary figure that maintains the borders of civility and serves as an arbiter of both chaos and harmony for the community.

Furthermore, the Boogeyman serves a horrific though necessary role as a ruthless mentor, educating the masses on the monstrous consequences that result from abdicating self-regulation. The punitive function of the Boogeyman is a fundamental aspect of his persona and a persistent element in his narratological role in the fairytale and slasher film. As the social fabric shifts over time, the rules of communal conduct adapt to accommodate new codes of behaviour. Despite these extrinsic changes, the Boogeyman's role as a preserver of barriers related to the hegemonic ideology remains consistent.¹⁶⁸ He punishes individuals engaged in behaviours that conflict with prevailing communal norms while simultaneously indulging in these activities himself. The Boogeyman is, in fact, an exaggerated portrait of the individuals that he penalizes, as he is synonymous

order to avoid marrying her father. She then adopts the guise of a beggar by wearing the skin of a donkey and takes on the role of a cook at a neighbouring castle—where a prince falls in love with her and later marries her (*The Complete Fairy Tales* 108-16).

¹⁶⁸ As Sergio Fernando Juárez states in “*Jeepers Creepers: Monstrous Gay Male Sexuality*,” Boogeymen are “creatures which lurk between the boundaries of right and wrong ... [and] live on the threshold of cultural boundaries that when crossed elicit castigating responses” (1).

with modes of behaviour that are considered taboo (such as torture and murder). Looming at the edges of society, the Boogeyman is a constant menace that threatens to disrupt the order of typical life. The monstrous Other is thereby transformed into an abstract threat that can be avoided only through self-awareness and vigilance. As such, the Boogeyman breeds paranoia within the community, representing a danger that is simultaneously everywhere and nowhere.

The Boogeyman is therefore the perpetual outsider, and the danger that he poses to the collective ensures his continued social marginalization. He is often envisioned as a foreign presence, one which threatens to disrupt the harmony of the community. His role as a stranger is caused by the fact that, as outlined in the previous chapter, he is a projection of the collective Shadow manifested as a seemingly external agent who attacks the community which created him—thus, causing him to *appear* as an outsider. Warner points out in *No Go the Bogeyman* that the fear of being overpowered by a predatory figure such as the Boogeyman is invariably tied to some form of xenophobia:

[the] intruder comes in the shape of a stranger, any stranger who does not belong to the known and immediate community and family ... When a parent ... threatens a fractious child, and places centre stage the horrible possibility of being taken away, ... devoured, or otherwise destroyed, the characters invoked are frequently drawn as enemy Others. (161)

Umberto Eco reinforces this argument in *On Ugliness* when he states that “since ancient times, the enemy was always the Other, the foreigner” (185). In cultural depictions of the Boogeyman, he is clearly invested with negative and often supernatural qualities which render him alien and dangerous to other individuals that inhabit the communal space. The

Boogeyman's pathological nature, therefore, distinguishes him from the collective and results in his segregation from society.

V. The Slasher Villain as the Terrible Father/Boogeyman

Much like the folkloric Boogeyman, the slasher villain serves as a perverted image of the paternal figure, punishing individuals who exhibit delinquent behaviour which conflicts with the overarching moral scheme of the film's narrative. Within these movies, a character's virtue is largely determined based on their willingness to uphold collective standards and preserve the stability of the community.¹⁶⁹ Self-indulgent acts such as premarital sex and the excessive consumption of alcohol and/or narcotics are presented as morally indecent in these films and highlight an individual's foolhardy and rash nature. Characters who partake in such activities are usually killed because their behaviour places them at the margins of the narrative's moral framework. Like the folkloric Boogeyman who punishes children for disobeying rules of conduct dictated by an authority figure, the slasher villain imposes horrific consequences upon teenagers who breach dominant hegemonic values of the community.

In these narratives the act of premarital sex is framed as a particularly nefarious "crime" and is quickly followed by the death of both lovers at the hands of the villain. Short notes this facet of the subgenre when she states that the "slasher film's punitive response to sex is so familiar it has assumed the status of cliché," adding that the role of female characters in such acts "tends to be viewed as the principal concern of such narratives" (45). Indeed, the literal expression of libidinal energy is a trigger for violence

¹⁶⁹ Shimabukuro adds that the slasher villain "falls into the morality play trope of punishing teens for immoral behavior" such as drinking, smoking pot, and, most conspicuously, having sex (50).

in the slasher film and signifies the character's loss of self-control and succumbing to temptation. As Short indicates, this notion is particularly relevant to the female characters of these films as the act of intercourse not only represents an absence of restraint but also entails the practical dangers of pregnancy, childbirth and, by extension, the possibility of death (a theme I discuss further in my examination of the "marriage to Death" theme in Chapter 4).

The negative portrayal of uninhibited sexuality in these films may be attributed to both sociological and archetypal factors. During the late 1970s, issues related to female reproduction were of particular political relevance in America. Due to the increased usage of contraceptives and the easing of restrictions surrounding legalized abortions, women in the United States enjoyed greater sexual freedom (Allyn 33). Specifically, the development of the birth control pill (which later became known simply as "the pill") began in 1953 when Katherine Dexter McCormick, a former suffragist, gave a major grant to Planned Parenthood to develop an oral contraceptive for women. The resulting product, created by Gregory Pincus and John Rock, was a synthetic steroid tablet which was subsequently marketed by Searle pharmaceutical in the United States under the name Envoid (Allyn 33). As Elaine Tyler May explains, the birth control pill was approved in the United States in 1960 and within four years it was "the most popular contraceptive in the country, used by more than 6.5 million married women and untold numbers of unmarried women" (1-2). She goes on to point out that the widespread release of this drug had a profound impact on sexual practices in the United States and significantly altered relations between men and women:

Despite the taboo against pre-marital intercourse and the widespread celebration of marriage and family, the trend toward sexual activity without wedlock had already begun. A youth culture was emerging that would challenge many of the social, political, and sexual norms of the past. (2-3)

As John D’Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman indicate, the birth control pill had a profound impact on social attitudes related to sexual politics, altering the “relationship between erotic activity and contraceptive practice” (250). Public health advocate Mary Calderone (1904-1998) expressed similar sentiments when she stated that oral contraceptives allowed women to “separate our sexual and reproductive lives” (D’Emilio and Freedman 251). Feminist icon Gloria Steinem even wrote an editorial piece in *Esquire* magazine fondly describing the virtues of the birth control pill, explaining that it was “more aesthetic than mechanical devices and, because it works chemically to prevent ovulation, it can be taken at a time completely removed from intercourse” (155). This increased access to various contraceptive and anti-fertility practices altered social perceptions related to intercourse—and specifically, female sexuality.¹⁷⁰

Following the mass marketing of the birth control pill in America, anxieties began to be expressed by the male populous concerning the increased emancipation of women regarding their reproductive rights. Anthropologist Ashley Montagu (1905-1999) optimistically speculated that the introduction of the pill would eliminate the American male’s “predatory exploitative attitude towards the female” and ultimately allow for “a healthier view of ... relations between the sexes” (481). However, as David Allyn points

¹⁷⁰ For further information concerning the role of contraceptive practices in American sexual politics during the late twentieth century see Gordon (2002).

out, the social climate during the mid-1960s was not nearly as utopic as Montague had predicted, and there were concerns that female sexual independence might make men feel insecure (34). Indeed, certain writers of the time vocalised fears concerning the potential impact of oral contraceptive on the sexual behaviour of women. For example, Steven Spencer, writing for the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1966 posed the overtly sexist question “Does the convenient contraceptive promote promiscuity?” (22). This query was answered the following year in a piece written for *TIME* magazine in which the author stated that “In some cases, no doubt it does—as did the automobile, the drive-in movie, and the motel” (80). As demonstrated by these statements, there was a fiercely misogynistic sentiment within the American popular culture of the 1960s prompted by the increasing sexual freedoms of young women.

The legalization of abortion in the United States which occurred in the early 1970s had a similar effect on cultural rhetoric related to female sexuality. During the 1940s and '50s in America, government authorities severely penalized abortion providers, forcing women from lower income sectors of society to “seek out illegal abortions, which were nearly always dangerous” (Allyn 261). During this period the only legal form of abortion that was permitted in many states involved “cases where the pregnancy endangered the woman’s life” (D’Emilio and Freedman 253). In 1970, New York became the first state to permit legal abortions with any licensed provider without medical necessity (Allyn 265). Three years later, during the case of *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decided to remove almost all anti-abortion laws in every state in the union by declaring such prohibitions in the first trimester unconstitutional and making second-

trimester abortions easily available (D'Emilio and Freedman 315).¹⁷¹ The combined impact of the introduction of the birth control pill and the legalization of abortion within the span of two decades gave women an unprecedented degree of control over their own bodies and placed reproductive rights squarely in the hands of the female population. However, the mass marketing of the birth control pill firmly pitted traditionalists against modernists and by 1965, conflict over sexual morality was “leading the nation to the brink of cultural crisis” (Allyn 39; 36). Likewise, the Supreme Court’s decision to legalize abortion resulted in a major backlash from the New Right, which “used the abortion issue to recruit thousands of individuals and groups to the conservative cause” (158).¹⁷² Thus, the shifting of hegemonic values related to sexual politics in America resulted in a culture clash that pitted liberals and conservatives against each other.

The youth culture in America found itself on the precipice of a paradigmatic shift concerning social attitudes related to sexual politics which, I assert, resulted in a collective neurosis. I argue that these anxieties related to the growth in recreational sex were projected into the American zeitgeist and manifested in the cultural landscape.

¹⁷¹ At the conclusion of *Roe v. Wade*, Justice Harry Blackmun specifically decided that during the first three months of pregnancy, a woman had an unlimited right to procure an abortion. During the second three months a woman could be required, if legislators so wished, to obtain hospital certification. During the final three months, a woman could be denied access to abortion, so long as her own life was not in jeopardy (Allyn 260).

¹⁷² The New Right (often termed the Religious Right) was a political movement that rose to prominence in the United States during the 1980s. One of the central concerns of the New Right was the breakdown of traditional moral standards in the United States brought about by social malaise. According to the fundamentalist movement, this collapse in established beliefs was the indirect result of increased civil liberties for minorities and greater accessibility to contraceptives causing a rise in premarital sex. The anxiety from these issues resulted in an ideological split within the American public and an increased level of civil strife. Phillips outlines the impact of the New Right on the social atmosphere in America:

The 1980s saw a dramatic rise in the religious Right as a new breed of politically savvy and vocal religious fundamentalist would come to dominate American culture. Driven by a literal interpretation of the Bible and a commitment to the idea that the America of the 1950s was a better, simpler, and more holy time, this “moral majority” would fight to roll back the cultural permissiveness and experimentation of the previous two decades. (*Projected Fears* 142)

Specifically, filmmakers of the slasher subgenre capitalized on the uneasiness caused by the changes to sexual mores in the U.S. and responded by creating regressive narratives in which characters who openly engaged in premarital sex were punished. As Huddleston (2005) indicates, the villain of the slasher film is “typically a man fixated on destroying those demonstrating irresponsible or wanton sexual behavior, primarily women” (219). Furthermore, there is a great irony in the fact that these films were primarily designed for teenage viewers, many of whom, due to the innovations in contraceptive technology outlined above, were themselves engaging in premarital sex.¹⁷³ Thus, the slasher and its morally conservative narrative served, in essence, as a cathartic means of alleviating the collective guilt of young audience members for their new-found freedom by allowing them to witness the fictional (and gruesome) consequences of “illicit” sex.

This facet of the slasher is particularly true of the female characters that are often slaughtered in brutal fashion directly following intercourse with their male partners. Characters such as Tina from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (whose abdomen is sliced open by Krueger), Lynda from *Halloween* (who is strangled by Myers with a telephone cord), and Marcie from *Friday the 13th* (whose head is split open with an axe by Mrs. Voorhees) demonstrate the strain of patriarchal misogyny that pervades the slasher. As Sue Short points out, although young males are targeted as frequently as their female counterparts in these films, it is often the “woman’s death the camera tends to linger over,” thereby emphasizing the punitive aspect of their deaths (45). Rankin also discusses the role of sexual politics in the slasher film, noting that “the ‘good’ girl typically lives long enough to fight the villain (and usually to survive for the sequel) while the ‘bad’ girl is usually killed along with her randy boyfriend after they have consummated their relationship”

¹⁷³ For further information about the target audience of the slasher subgenre see Rockoff (2002).

(47). These sentiments are similarly expressed by Rockoff, who crudely summarizes the role of sexual promiscuity in these films: “good girls don’t die, but loose ones do” (14). Indeed, the youthful characters who openly express their sexual energy in the slasher are often slaughtered in a ruthless manner by the male villain who serves as an incarnation of the Terrible Father.

Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger are therefore distorted embodiments of the symbolic parental figure and, much like the folkloric Boogeyman, reprimand characters that transgress established hegemonic boundaries. Similar to fairytales, these films promote a conservative ideological stance, serving to curtail progressive and/or defiant conduct. This connection between the fairytale and the contemporary horror film is noted by Twitchell (1985), who claims that these movies “are fables of sexual identity” and prepare the audience for the “anxieties of reproduction” (7).¹⁷⁴ It is therefore unsurprising that at the end of the slasher film, it is frequently a chaste female who is able to successfully arrest the villain’s impact on the community by vanquishing and/or incapacitating him. The heroine’s ability to repress and sublimate her libidinal energy into combating the villain is therefore a defining characteristic that distinguishes her from her peers and allows her to survive his attacks.

This connection between sex and violence is clearly demonstrated in *Halloween*, as many of the secondary characters are killed by Myers after placing their own carnal desires above their communal responsibilities. Functioning as a manifestation of the Terrible Father, Myers penalizes those individuals who breach moral boundaries with

¹⁷⁴ In her analysis of Twitchell’s work, Pinedo (1996) characterizes his reading of the horror film as a “morality tale that demonstrates the dangers of sexuality outside the heteromonogamous nuclear family.” She goes on to add that Twitchell perceives these movies as “promoting the status quo through its reinforcement of such classical binary oppositions as normal/abnormal sexuality (18).

acts of extreme physical cruelty. Phillips notes this facet of Myers when he states that he “stands in for the disciplining parental figure ... [and] watches the teenagers of Haddonfield more closely than their largely absent parents” (*Projected Fears* 138). Myers therefore comes to embody a heavily distorted image of the symbolic father, assessing the activities of the teenage cast and violently reprimanding them for any type of socially transgressive behaviour. The parents of Haddonfield either neglect or dismiss the disobedience and insolence exhibited by their children since they are depicted as preoccupied with fulfilling their own professional and leisurely desires.¹⁷⁵ We see this theme clearly demonstrated in the case of Annie’s father, Chief Brackett (Charles Cyphers), who is oblivious to his daughter’s recreational use of marijuana, despite his experience as a police official. Without adult supervision, many members of the teenage cast relinquish their civic duties and engage in hedonistic behaviour such as the consumption of narcotics, underage drinking, and premarital sex.¹⁷⁶ Through their indulgence in such activities, these characters succumb to temptation and inadvertently evoke the ire of the cinematic Boogeyman.

Specifically, we see this dynamic illustrated in the death of Laurie’s peers, who are murdered in rapid succession for engaging in unorthodox sexual conduct. For example, Annie (Nancy Loomis) is killed by Myers after she abandons her babysitting

¹⁷⁵ This theme of the absentee parent is also prevalent in many fairytales, and the folkloric Boogeyman similarly serves a disciplinary function in these stories, chastising individuals who defy authorial powers.

¹⁷⁶ Phillips relates this theme of parental absence to larger social trends in the American zeitgeist of the 1970s:

The young people who become Michael’s targets exist in a world largely devoid of parents, and indeed, the night of Michael’s first murder ... happens as his parents are away and he is left in the care of his negligent sister, who becomes his first victim. When Michael returns to Haddonfield, fifteen years later, the young people of the town are still largely unsupervised, and the lack of adult intervention, let alone effective intervention, is notable. In this way, Haddonfield represents the broader sense of American suburbia as a place in which the American family had begun to disintegrate. (*Dark Directions* 142-3)

responsibilities for the Wallace family to go to her boyfriend's house and make love. Annie's friends Lynda (P.J. Soles) and Bob (John Michael Graham) meet a similar fate when they exploit their access to the Wallace home to engage in sexual intercourse. Utilizing the house for their own selfish purposes, Lynda and Bob eat the family's food, drink their beer, and have sex in their bed. These acts are a betrayal of the trust the community has placed in these teenagers and demonstrates their lack of civic responsibility and moral decorum.¹⁷⁷ As Gill explains, the sexual activity of Laurie's friends serves as an indicator of "their giddy, thoughtless natures" and signifies that these characters have "no proper sense of hierarchy, no responsibility to themselves or others" (23).¹⁷⁸ Ultimately, it is their self-centered preoccupation with sexual fulfillment that prevents Annie, Lynda, and Bob from recognizing Myers' presence, and they are consequently murdered because of their absence of self-awareness and neglect of communal obligations. Sex thus operates as a metaphor to signify the morally decadent attitude of the Boogeyman's victims who, failing to uphold the values of the community, fall prey to the killer.¹⁷⁹

Koven similarly speculates that the theme of social duty lies at the heart of *Halloween*. He argues that this dynamic is evidenced by the fact that Myers appears at specific moments throughout the film to punish individuals after they have behaved

¹⁷⁷ For further information see Huddleston (2005).

¹⁷⁸ Newman refers to the secondary characters of the slasher film as "a parade of dumb American kids" that are "marked for death by [their] predilections for drink, soft drugs, stupid practical jokes and giggly making-out" (146). Furthermore, he asserts that films such as *Friday the 13th* depend upon the "Idiot Plot" which involves characters behaving stupidly by failing to exercise wisdom or forethought despite the obvious dangers that are closing in around them (146). He goes on to state that this device is included in the slasher so as to "build up suspense and justify the horror sequences" which involve graphic scenes of violence and gore (146).

¹⁷⁹ When asked about the fact that all of the characters who are sexually active in *Halloween* meet an abrupt and violent death, Carpenter jokingly stated "I didn't mean to put an end to the sexual revolution!" (Marriott 215). Though this comment is anecdotal in nature, it serves as evidence of the moral agenda of the film in regard to sexual politics in America and, by extension, the negative portrayal of liberated sexuality in the slasher subgenre.

irresponsibly (124).¹⁸⁰ He goes on to explain that Myers' violent reproach of these individuals is therefore a direct result of their conduct and is solicited by the fact their demeanour conflicts with the film's moral scheme. He even goes so far as to assert that Laurie is to blame for Myers' attack on her, as she neglects her parental responsibilities to the children, Lindsey (Kyle Richards) and Tommy (Brian Andrews), in order to go to the Wallace house and check up on her friends (124). I disagree with Koven's reading of this particular facet of the film, and instead argue that it is Laurie's sense of communal duty that in fact places her in peril—as the central reason for her trip to the Wallace home is concern for her friends, who she believes are in danger. Aside from this detail, Koven offers an intriguing analysis of Myers' narratological role and the significance of communal responsibility in relation to the fate of the characters featured in *Halloween*. Furthermore, I assert that duty and delinquency are key themes in the slasher films examined in this thesis, as these topics directly relate to the Boogeyman's social function.

Throughout the course of Carpenter's film, Myers embodies the role of the Terrible Father by enforcing a regressive moral and social ideology. This aspect of his identity is conveyed in the opening prologue when he stabs his sister Judith to death with a butcher knife. Through this violent act Myers establishes himself as a destructive entity within the town of Haddonfield, and his reputation as a Boogeyman springs forth as a direct result of this event. No explicit reason is offered in the film to account for his violent behaviour; however, Koven suggests that it is motivated by Judith's lack of parental attentiveness to her younger sibling (124). In the film, the viewer witnesses Judith kissing and flirting with her boyfriend before climbing the stairs of the Myers'

¹⁸⁰ In reference to Judith Myers' death, Koven states that “[s]ex is merely an extension of neglect as a result of poor babysitting” and her death is ultimately the result of her complete rejection of her communal responsibilities (124).

family home to have sex in the upstairs bedroom. According to Koven, it is Judith's preoccupation with sexual fulfilment that distracts her from her role as her brother's caregiver and thus elicits his homicidal response (124). This reading of *Halloween* is reiterated by Phillips, who argues that "had Michael been attended to by some strict parental figure instead of his overly amorous sister, the events of the film would not have taken place" (*Projected Fears* 140). Thus, according to Koven and Phillips, Judith's death is a direct result of her negligent behaviour and complete rejection of familial obligations. I concur with these assertions and further argue that this notion of disobedience lies at the core of the slasher film and is the source of the cinematic Boogeyman's murderous rage.

Unlike the other characters in the film, Laurie is attentive to her civic duties and demonstrates a moral commitment to the community—characteristics that distinguish her from her peers. She is described by Phillips as a "model teenager" who is "studious, prudish, loyal, and obedient to her parent's wishes" (*Projected Fears* 139). He adds that it is ultimately these admirable qualities that allow her to overcome Myers and "ward off the harsh hand of the bogeyman's punishment" (*Projected Fears* 140). Interestingly, Phillips suggests that Myers' preoccupation with Laurie may stem from the fact that she reminds him of his older sister Judith, whose murder initiates the entire plot of the film.¹⁸¹ Though it is true that Judith and Laurie share a superficial resemblance to one another (they are young, attractive, and blonde), I assert that there is one defining feature that distinguishes the two women—Laurie's resourceful nature. Unlike Judith, Laurie is more attentive and responsible, which enables her to exercise ingenuity and strength

¹⁸¹ This perspective is similarly expressed by Robin Wood, who argues that Michael's pursuit of Laurie is motivated by her resemblance to Judith, and the opportunity to re-enact his childhood crime of killing his sibling (26).

when combating the villain. In the end, Laurie successfully vanquishes the Boogeyman because of these unique qualities—traits that provide her with the wisdom and shrewdness to thwart his attacks.

It is important to note that the attributes observed in the character of Laurie Strode are reiterated in the other slasher heroines featured in this thesis. Indeed, these women are endowed with a strong sense of obligation, as well as a moral centeredness that allows them to combat their respective adversaries. Whereas her peers fail to exercise caution and modesty and are subsequently slaughtered, the Final Girl possesses the will to challenge her adversary. In many ways the killer represents the heroine's violent alter ego, and their climactic faceoff, which typically occurs at the end of the film, represents the fulfillment of an archetypal conflict that has been building from the opening of the narrative. As such, the Final Girl is the literal and symbolic antithesis to the cinematic Boogeyman, and by overcoming him she is able to restore harmony to the community and ensure its future salvation.

VI. The Final Girl and the Cinematic Boogeyman

In the slasher film, the Final Girl serves as the villain's primary adversary; she is both his victim and vanquisher and, at the end of the film, often subdues and/or exiles him to the margins of the community. As the film progresses, the villain moves inwards towards the center of the community, gradually occupying spaces that are both literally and figuratively closer to the female protagonist. The deaths of the secondary characters in these films therefore serve not only to advance the moral agenda of the narrative but also to shift the killer closer to the object of his murderous desire—the heroine. To

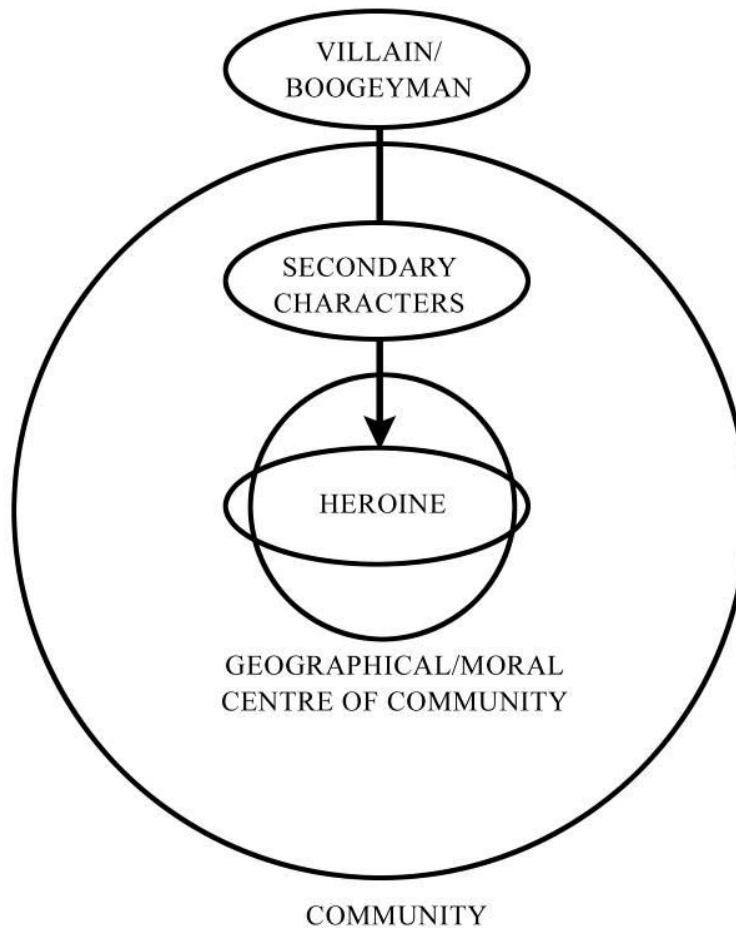


Fig. 7. Narrative structure of the American slasher film. Source: Kevin McGuiness.

illustrate this pattern, I have included a diagram above that articulates the narrative structure of these films and charts the relationship between the Final Girl and the cinematic Boogeyman (Fig. 7).

As outlined in Chapter 1, the slasher film serves a cautionary function (much like fairytales) and is arranged to highlight the virtue of the heroine who, unlike her peers, is able to avoid the danger of the killer through keen observation and self-awareness. As a result, the Final Girl plays a pivotal role in the narrative, as she is posited as the strongest point of identification for the audience, and the character with whom the public is

intended to feel the greatest sympathy. This notion is communicated cinematically through the continuous use of point-of-view shots that showcase her perspective, thus inviting the viewer to psychologically connect with her.¹⁸² Rankin indicates that these film techniques solicit the audience to root for the heroine as she “stabs, shoots, burns, and even beheads the killer” (51).¹⁸³ Similarly, Indick argues that the Final Girl serves as the “primary symbol of the self” and often reflects the values and beliefs of the audience (117). Furthermore, Clover points out that the Final Girl is the only character in the narrative “whose perspective approaches our own privileged understanding of the situation” in the film, and she is therefore the one with whom the viewer is intended to identify (44). Protagonists such as Laurie Strode from *Halloween*, Nancy Thompson in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, and Alice Hardy featured in *Friday the 13th* all share a remarkable number of traits: they are young, intelligent, physically active, and insightful beyond their years. These characters are essentially variations of the same core figure, and each serves as a point of identification for the audience, allowing the viewer to vicariously experience the world of the slasher film.¹⁸⁴

Among her other qualities, the Final Girl frequently exhibits a repressed sexual drive that distinguishes her from the other characters in the narrative. As outlined earlier in this chapter, virtue in these films is manifested through the avoidance of narcotics, alcohol, and, most conspicuously, premarital sex. Partaking in these activities not only

¹⁸² James Marriott explains that the Final Girl is “presented from the start as the central character, both savvy and more resourceful than her peers,” and her privileged status in the film is demonstrated by the fact that her perspective is visually revealed through point-of-view camera shots (214).

¹⁸³ Rankin specifically makes this statement in reference to *Halloween* and *Friday the 13th*, though it can also easily be applied to *A Nightmare on Elm Street* as the character of Nancy Thompson sets Freddy ablaze during their final confrontation.

¹⁸⁴ Clover characterizes the Final Girl as “intelligent, watchful, and levelheaded; the first character to sense something amiss and the only one to deduce from the accumulating evidence the pattern and extent of the threat” (44).

signifies a character's lack of self-control and defiance of communal values but also distracts and dulls their senses, making them susceptible to the Boogeyman's onslaught. The repression and sublimation of the Final Girl's sexuality serves a dual function in the narrative: (1) it distinguishes the heroine from her peers by highlighting her commitment to communal values, as opposed to satisfying her own sexual desires, and (2) it grants her the capacity to focus her energies on more cerebral pursuits, thus allowing her to recognize the Boogeyman's presence. In fact, the sexual frustration that the heroine exhibits often plays a key role in her ability to overcome the villain by allowing her to appropriate and manipulate his weapon (which is usually a knife, machete, chainsaw, or other phallic instrument of destruction). The virginity and/or sexual repression of the heroine therefore has symbolic relevance within the narrative—highlighting the fact that her mind is unclouded by carnal desires and is focused instead on her civic responsibilities.¹⁸⁵ Perhaps the clearest illustration of this notion is in John Carpenter's *Halloween*, a film in which the killer Michael Myers slaughters a series of sexually active teenagers before encountering the Final Girl.

Throughout the film, Laurie's trepidation towards sex is a central theme and contributes to her unique status in the narrative. In certain scenes, it is made evident that she is unable to forge connections with her male peers due to her intelligence and social anxiety. This theme is particularly apparent during the conversation she shares with Annie on her way to the Doyle house: Annie asks Laurie if she plans on going to the school dance and encourages her to ask various classmates to be her date, to which Laurie

¹⁸⁵ Newman notes the symbolic implications of the Final Girl's virginity in relation to *Halloween*, stating that Laurie's sexual prudence functions as a "defence against Evil in an almost mystic sense" (147). Furthermore, Blennerhassett refers to the Final Girl as a "Madonna archetype" who operates in contrast to her peers who are often projections of the "patriarchal 'bad' woman" (102).

shyly replies that she is simply incapable of approaching men. Likewise, when Laurie learns that Annie has revealed to a classmate that she has a crush on him, she is mortified and insists Annie retract the statement. As a result of Laurie's inability to connect sexually with other individuals in the community, she is isolated and continually mocked by her friends.

Because of her sublimated libido, Laurie operates in a mental realm that is rooted in the cerebral (as opposed to the carnal) and is slightly removed from the other characters in the film.¹⁸⁶ This is illustrated when she is walking home from school with Annie and encounters Myers watching the two women from behind a bush. While Laurie immediately takes notice of the villain, Annie remains oblivious to his looming presence. The difference between both women's response to the danger of the Boogeyman is demonstrative of their distinct social priorities: while Annie is preoccupied with her boyfriend and desire for sexual companionship, Laurie is concerned with her babysitting duties and schoolwork. It is immediately obvious that Laurie is much more highly attuned to the larger community than her peers and thereby possesses a keen insight that appears to be lacking in her friends. This self-awareness is a recurrent theme in the film and plays an integral role in Laurie's ability to combat Myers and survive his attacks.

Ultimately, Laurie functions as a protective parental figure for the other characters in the film, ensuring the overall safety of the community: she can be seen as "the *eternal mother*" who is also able to act as a "tough killer if she has to defend herself (or indeed her little ones)" (Rieser 378). Her dedication to "duty and to a set of ideals" establishes Laurie as the heroine in the film and distinguishes her from her peers, who are

¹⁸⁶ Marriott points out that Laurie is distinguished from her friends because of her "resourcefulness and quick-witted awareness of the threat" posed by Myers (215).



Fig. 8. Film still from *Halloween* (John Carpenter, 1978) showing Laurie Strode (Jamie Lee Curtis) and Michael Myers (Tony Moran). Source: Compass International Pictures.

“represented as wasting time on trivial activities” (Dika, *Games of Terror* 55). We see this notion clearly illustrated when Laurie willingly takes on the role of babysitting Lindsay Wallace after her friend Annie abdicates responsibility for the child to instead meet up with her boyfriend. Functioning in a maternal capacity, Laurie cares for both Lindsay Wallace, as well as her own ward, Tommy Doyle, and defends these children from the threat of the slasher villain. Indeed, the antithetical roles of Laurie and Myers are specifically highlighted through their relationships in proximity to Tommy and Lindsay: whereas Laurie dispenses affection and wisdom, Myers brings the threat of death and destruction (Fig. 8). Laurie even extends her maternal role to her friends by treating them like children: she places herself in peril when she ventures to the Wallace house to check up on them after receiving a disturbing phone call from Lynda. Gill explains that the “young people who survive [in slasher films] possess traits in common:

they are smart, determined, quick thinking, and inventive, but most importantly, they are caring. They protect the weak, tend to the wounded, go back into known peril to help their friends, and risk their lives to save the group” (23). By assuming this parental role within the narrative, Laurie ultimately serves as the maternal protector against the invading intruder of the cinematic Boogeyman and rescues the community from doom.

The relationship between Laurie and Myers is reflective of a dynamic that is present in each of the slasher films included in this thesis. These movies invariably feature a young woman with an elevated sense of integrity and conviction who is charged with temporarily arresting the destructive reign of a deadly killer. Much like Bluebeard’s final wife, the slasher heroine must rescue the community from total collapse under the threat of a villainous male figure. Short describes the Final Girl as “resourceful, intrepid, and courageous” and explains that these qualities “enable her to survive” (39). She goes on to discuss the pivotal role that these women play in their respective communities and how they serve as examples of courage and fortitude: “The Final Girl is ... charged with the responsibility of defending not only her community, but a future generation. While Nancy’s mother [in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*] drank because she could not face reality, and Laurie’s parents [in *Halloween*] were virtually invisible ... these women show they can offer a better example” (67). As Short points out, the privileged status associated with the Final Girl in the slasher narrative is predicated on her understanding of civic duty and it is her commitment to the community that ultimately makes her heroic.

The psychological relationship between the heroine and villain in the horror film is addressed by Linda Williams in “When the Woman Looks,” in which she discusses the role that the gaze plays in establishing the link between these two figures. According to

Williams, the woman's gaze is punished by "narrative processes that transform curiosity and desire into masochistic fantasy" ("Woman Looks" 17). She goes on to claim that the "belated adoption of the woman's point of view undermines the usual audience identification and sympathy with the look of the cinematic character" ("Woman Looks" 19). However, as I have demonstrated in my analysis of *Halloween*, the viewer is continuously invited throughout the duration of the film to adopt Laurie's perspective and thereby encouraged to sympathize with her. Likewise, Williams fails to account for the fact that the same curiosity that posits the heroine as the victim, is also the site of her salvation. Within the slasher film, the Final Girl often places herself in peril in order to rescue her friends, but it is only by taking this risk that she is ultimately able to conquer the villain and save the community.

Furthermore, I assert that the heroine's victimization functions not as a manifestation of the sadistic impulses of the male audience as Williams claims, but instead as a pivotal rite of passage that is necessary in the process of acquiring maturity.¹⁸⁷ I also disagree with Williams argument that Laurie's "ignorance of sexual desire" enables her to evade Myers' attacks, as she is clearly aware of her sexuality, but has chosen to repress and sublimate this energy into other pursuits ("Woman Looks" 29). Additionally, I put forth that the sexual independence of the Final Girl in the slasher is not a point of weakness, but instead a symbol of independence and empowerment. Unlike her female peers who seek refuge in the company of their boyfriends (such as Tina from *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, and Annie and Lynda from *Halloween*), the slasher heroine utilizes her sexual energy in the pursuit of other, more communally focused pursuits.

¹⁸⁷ Short similarly discusses the psychological importance of the Final Girl's encounter with the slasher villain and how it contributes to her personal development (32).

Williams correctly identifies a virulent strain of misogyny present within the slasher film; however, she is looking to the wrong source for the culprit. The female sexual desire that she claims is the site for punishment in these films is in fact a mask—a metaphor used to reference a deeper “crime” committed by the character. As I have previously mentioned, the ire of the cinematic Boogeyman is incited not strictly by the literal expression of sexual desire, but also by the relinquishment of communal responsibility. As Koven indicates, sex functions metaphorically in these films, serving as an “extension of neglect” that marks the character as morally defiant (124). As a consequence for such conduct, the villain punishes the individual in a violent manner that frequently entails torture and death.

Finally, in Williams’ discussion of the link between the heroine and villain of the horror film, she frames these characters as inextricably bound together. Specifically, she refers to the villain as a “double” for the heroine, a “distorted reflection” of the female protagonist’s image that is bereft of a penis and yet sexually powerful (“Woman Looks” 20; 22). Williams claims that this notion accounts for the “strange sympathy and affinity” that often develops between the monster and the heroine of the horror film (“Woman Looks” 23). I agree with Williams that the monstrous male villain is a double for the heroine—but a double that is predicated on opposition, not on similarity. Instead, I suggest that the cinematic Boogeyman represents the heroine’s negative Animus, and personal Shadow embodied in a deadly figure who is diametrically opposed to her within the narrative structure of the film. The relationship between these two characters is hardly built on sympathy, but instead is fraught with sexual tension that manifests in aggression and hostility. It is only by exercising keen insight and prudence that the Final Girl is able



Fig. 9. Film still from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (Wes Craven, 1984) showing Nancy Thompson (Heather Langenkamp) and Freddy Krueger (Robert Englund). Source: New Line Cinema.

to achieve the level of consciousness necessary to forge a plan of attack and exile the Boogeyman from the community.

Nancy Thompson from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* similarly demonstrates the admirable qualities outlined above, as she functions as the quintessential matriarch and an arbiter of justice in the town of Springwood. Much like Laurie Strode, it is implied that the protagonist Nancy is a virgin and is abstaining from sex with her boyfriend Glen (Johnny Depp) until marriage. This fact is made evident early in the film when she and Glen stay overnight at Tina's house to console their friend after she suffers a terrifying nightmare. Glen begins to kiss Nancy, and she resists his advances, telling him, "We're here for Tina now, not ourselves"—even though Tina herself engages in sex that evening with her boyfriend, Rod (*A Nightmare on Elm Street*). Within the film's narrative Nancy's virginity functions not only as a sign of her "purity" but also her selflessness in

continually prioritizing the wellbeing of her friends ahead of her own desires. This notion is echoed by Humphries, who claims that the Final Girl is “more altruistic and socially responsible” than her peers, who give themselves over to “narcissism and ... selfish individualism” through their sexual indulgence (151).¹⁸⁸ This ability to recognize her higher purpose as a beacon of moral authority within the community allows Nancy to harness her strength and ultimately overcome Krueger. Thus, she is posited in the film as Krueger’s primary adversary, and his ultimate challenge both psychologically and symbolically.

Indeed, Nancy shares an antithetical relationship with Krueger and serves as his ideal nemesis since the two characters encapsulate the opposing forces of life and death. Short even goes so far as to describe Krueger as “the ultimate ‘*bad father*’” due to the fact that he perpetrates acts of cruelty and violence in order to attain domination and control (my italics; 55).¹⁸⁹ Under this light, the heroine and killer not only function as rivals but also as mirror opposites within the world of the film (Fig. 9). This dichotomous relationship between the heroine and villain can be explained by Indick, who argues that every archetype “has an opposing negative archetype” which possesses contradictory psychological properties (124). Krueger fulfills this role of Nancy’s “negative archetype” as he represents the threat of torture, pain, and death while Nancy exhibits a strong sense of social conscience and moral gravity. These qualities are highlighted when Nancy attempts to protect those individuals who lack the resources to defend themselves, like her friend Rod, who is accused of murdering his girlfriend Tina based on circumstantial

¹⁸⁸ Short argues that the Final Girl’s abstinence imparts a cautionary lesson to the viewer not about the need to remain chaste, but instead to “be true to yourself, and act responsibly, or pay the consequences” (46).

¹⁸⁹ The theme of control is central to many fairytale villains and is clearly demonstrated by the wicked stepmothers included in the Brothers’ Grimm *Snow White* (1812), Perrault’s *Cinderella* (1697), as well as other antagonists from the fairytale tradition.

evidence. It is Nancy alone who comes to his defence and tries to prove his innocence by unravelling the mystery surrounding Krueger and his role in the calamities that have befallen the citizens of Springwood.

Likewise, after her mother's relapse into alcoholism, Nancy adopts the parental role in the relationship, inverting the traditional mother-daughter dynamic. This emotional interplay is clearly demonstrated in the final scene between the two women when Nancy puts her mother to sleep after she collapses into an intoxicated stupor. Indeed, Nancy continually prioritizes the wellbeing of her friends and family above her own safety and desires, risking her life to save the ones she loves.¹⁹⁰ Unfortunately, despite her noble efforts, all of Nancy's friends meet their death at Krueger's hands and the only person she is able to save is herself. As the community around Nancy begins to crumble, she is left to face Krueger alone and must use her insight and wisdom to overcome him.

By vanquishing the Terrible Father/cinematic Boogeyman, the Final Girl is able to temporarily restore peace to the community and simultaneously acquire a personal sense of psychological maturity. Viewing this interaction through a Jungian lens, I assert that the heroine's victory over the villain represents the enlightened aspects of her conscious mind triumphing over the monstrous facets of her unconscious psyche. If the villain were to succeed in his objective of fully infiltrating the collective, it would represent the potential collapse of the community as his presence represents a perpetual danger to the younger generation. The Boogeyman must therefore be destroyed or, at the very least, relegated to the margins of society to allow for the survival and healthy

¹⁹⁰ As Short points out, "[m]oral maturity and a social conscience are placed with Nancy over any of the adults we see, proving her integrity and heroism" (54).

perpetuation of the collective. However, the threat of the Boogeyman is constant, as he is summoned by the need to preserve hegemonic boundaries and communal codes of conduct, and it is therefore only a matter of time before he will return. As discussed in the next chapter, the threat of the Boogeyman serves to galvanize the community by delineating the boundaries between the living and the dead.

Chapter 4:

Blades, Machetes, and Claws:

The Boogeyman as the Personification of Death

I. Edgar Herzog and the Death-Demon

Edgar Herzog's text *Psyche and Death* (1966) provides an insightful examination of morbidity as it relates to depth psychology and outlines the manner in which the human mind internalizes the insurmountable obstacle of death.¹⁹¹ This book is largely based on lectures Herzog delivered in 1948 at the Munich *Institut für Psychologische Forschung und Psychotherapie* in which he endeavoured to “show how [hu]mankind has always attempted to express and come to terms with death by means of images” (10). Herzog proposes that once an individual has become consciously aware of death, anxieties related to this topic will collect in the unconscious in the form of the archetypal Death-Demon (75).¹⁹² Much like the personal Shadow, the neurosis that is born out of the individual's powerlessness against the force of death will adopt the form of dangerous predatory figures.

Once the Death-Demon has emerged in the conscious realm of the psyche, it is incorporated into the cultural imaginary and begins to surface in popular narratives. The Death-Demon is therefore embedded within many of the monstrous creatures present in the cultural zeitgeist such as the Boogeyman. Herzog stipulates that this archetypal form

¹⁹¹ Hendrika Vande Kemp discusses the phenomenon of the archetypal death dream (specifically the possible anthropomorphic forms Death may assume in dreams) in her dissertation, *The dream in periodical literature: 1860-1910 from Oneirocriticon to Die Traumdeutung via the questionnaire* (1977).

¹⁹² The archetypal Death-Demon is also examined in the essays “Science and the Unconscious” and “The process of individuation” by Marie-Louise von Franz featured in *Man and His Symbols*.

will potentially adopt one of three anthropomorphic guises: (1) the Death-Mother,¹⁹³ (2) an abducting bridegroom/seducing bride, and (3) an encounter with the Father (99). I propose that the Boogeyman represents a combination of the second and third category, manifesting as a violent and destructive paternal figure, as well as a deadly suitor.

In this chapter, I analyze the physical characteristics associated with the Boogeyman and demonstrate the relationship that he bears with the Death-Demon, as well as the fears that he incites within the public concerning morbidity. I specifically focus on four characteristics of the monstrous Other that reflect his association with Death: (1) his narrative role as a purveyor of violence, (2) his social isolation from the communal space, (3) his physical appearance that usually references a corpse or the general decomposition of the body, and (4) his use of weapons to inflict torture upon his victims, often resulting in their demise. As I demonstrate, these qualities are endemic to the Death-Demon and symbolically express the Boogeyman's connection with mortality.

Herzog's work concerning the Death-Demon has likely been neglected by succeeding generations of scholars due to his suspected affiliation with the Nazi party. Training at the University of Leipzig in Germany Herzog was introduced to psychoanalysis and, by extension, the research of Jung, by his teacher Professor Gustav Schmaltz (1884-1959). Herzog later became a member of the governing board for the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute, a medical establishment in Germany, which was directed by Matthias Göring, first cousin to Nazi military leader Hermann Göring. Herzog's indirect ties with such a prominent figure from the Nazi party may account for the

¹⁹³ Herzog explains that the Death Mother is closely aligned with Jung's general notion of the Mother archetype and, to illustrate this point, he offers a number of examples of this figure from Western popular culture including the Sirens and the Furies from Greek mythology. Likewise, Herzog's Death Mother possesses many qualities that coincide with Neumann's concept of the Terrible Mother discussed in *The Origins and History of Consciousness*.

exclusion of much of his research from subsequent academic discourse, even though his work is neither informed by nor reflects the National Socialist ideology. The marginalization of his research concerning the relationship between death and the human psyche is to the detriment of the scholarly community, as his thoughts on this topic are highly astute. My adaptation of Herzog's writings in the study of monstrosity therefore represents an extension of his original ideas, and a reintroduction of this material into academic discourse. In my treatment of Herzog's work, I do not address the political facets of his life but instead focus strictly on his thoughts related to psychoanalysis and his contributions to Jungian scholarship.

In conjunction with this research, I also examine the archetypal "marriage to Death" theme that is frequently included in narratives that feature the Boogeyman. This motif occurs when a female protagonist is literally or symbolically wed to a creature that represents Death. Neumann wrote extensively about this phenomenon in *Amor and Psyche*, positing it as a pivotal rite of passage in the development of the feminine psyche. By surviving her encounter with this monster, the heroine reaches a new level of consciousness and attains greater psychological maturity.¹⁹⁴ We see this motif presented

¹⁹⁴ This notion of a deadly male villain who attempts to kill a female protagonist on the verge of womanhood is a common trope in fairytales. One of the most popular examples of this motif is the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*, in which a predatory wolf meets a young girl who is travelling to her grandmother's house. In the version of this tale recounted by the Brothers Grimm, Red Riding Hood reveals the location of her destination to the wolf and he subsequently visits the elderly woman and consumes her. Disguising himself as the grandmother, the wolf welcomes the young girl once she arrives at the cottage and quickly eats her. Red Riding Hood is saved by the figure of the huntsman who cuts her out of the stomach of the wolf with a pair of scissors and they both fill the beast's stomach with stones which kill him (Tatar, *The Grimm Reader* 94-100). In his discussion of *Little Red Riding Hood*, Bettelheim explains that the story articulates the dangers associated with an immature sexual ego being placed within an erotic context. He goes on to state that the villainous wolf is a "dangerous seducer" and embodies the "destructive tendencies of the id" (172). The wolf is therefore a projection of Red Riding Hood's libidinal desires which she is not emotionally or psychologically prepared to control. Due to the fact that Red Riding Hood does not possess a sexually mature ego, she is unable to negotiate the potentially treacherous terrain of adult sexual politics and thus spends much of the tale trying to evade the attention of the wolf. It is only by facing her predatory adversary (with the aid of the huntsman) that she can shed her childish innocence

in Perrault's tale whereupon Bluebeard's wife is presented as the object of the villain's murderous desire, and by overcoming his attacks she is able to reach adulthood.¹⁹⁵ This harrowing experience of confronting Death (embodied by Bluebeard) allows the heroine to gain wisdom and acquire a state of individuation.

The "marriage to Death" theme is similarly observed in the contemporary slasher film, whereupon a young female protagonist is faced with the responsibility of subduing the figure of Death that is manifested in the form of a masked and/or disfigured villain. In these narratives, sexual impulses are sublimated into physical aggression, and the act of killing is transformed into the perverted expression of the villain's sexual energy.¹⁹⁶ The cinematic Boogeyman's continued use of violence against the heroine therefore serves as a symbolic consummation of their relationship, echoing the dynamic between Bluebeard and his wife in Perrault's tale. Unlike her peers, the Final Girl takes note of the villain's presence, and they engage in a savage conflict that often ends in the exile and/or death of the cinematic Boogeyman. Developing the rational facets of her psyche, the slasher heroine must establish a strategy to surmount her adversary's attacks and conquer him.

and exchange it for wisdom. As Bettelheim articulates, when Red Riding Hood is cut out of the wolf's belly, she "is reborn on a higher plane of existence ... [and] returns to life a young maiden" (183). Though the wolf fails to fulfill the criteria of the folkloric Boogeyman, the tale demonstrates the theme of the "Marriage to Death" that Neumann discusses in *Amor and Psyche*.

¹⁹⁵ This motif of a heroine overcoming a predatory male villain to acquire psychological maturity is observed in several fairytales including the Brothers Grimm's *Little Red Riding Hood*, and Perrault's *Donkeyskin*. In both stories, a female protagonist must outwit a male adversary to reach adulthood. As Short explains, "Red Riding Hood is not simply a female-in-peril, distinguished by vulnerability and innocence, but has a keen sense of curiosity that may lead her into danger yet also raises her suspicions when she finally gets to her grandmother's house and re-encounters the wolf in disguise. Indeed, this is the most prominent feature of Red Riding Hood's character: the fact that she asks questions, as it is precisely this level of inquiry that makes her alert to change" (31-2).

¹⁹⁶ In his work, Jung does not distinguish sexual energy along lines of biological sex but, instead, gender. However, within this framework it is assumed that masculine sexual energy (manifested as the Animus) is predominant within the male subject, and feminine sexual energy (manifested as the Anima) is related to the female subject. The distinction between these two psychological forces is expressed through the connotative designates Jung associates with them: the Anima is frequently connected with the unconscious, the primitive mind, and the history of religion (*C.W. Vol. 9.I*, 26), whereas the Animus is associated with consciousness (*C.W. Vol. 9.I*, 214).

Adapting Neumann's work concerning the "marriage to Death" theme in my analysis of the Final Girl, I uncover the psychological implications of the destructive interactions between the heroine and villain in these cultural artefacts.

By applying the theories of Neumann and Herzog to the slasher film and the fairytale, I reveal the narrative function of the Boogeyman as a symbolic manifestation of Death. I argue that his aggression is motivated by a desire to control and dominate the other characters of the narrative. By murdering his victims, the villain is not only able to express his libidinal energy (which has been sublimated into violence) but also transform these individuals into objects that he can possess and use to adorn his home. This analysis also elucidates the psychological underpinnings of the villain's relationship with the female protagonist who must eliminate her adversary in order to reach psychological maturity.

II. The Boogeyman and Death

In his discussion of mortality, Edgar Herzog explains that the ability to "feel horror at death is one of the most essential characteristics which distinguish [humans] ... from the animals" (22).¹⁹⁷ Indeed, the fear of death is elemental to life and is certainly amplified by the individual's conscious awareness of its inevitability. This existential anxiety is frequently expressed culturally through murderous mythical creatures that manifest in myth, folklore, literature, and film. These horrific monsters function as projections of our collective dread related to morbidity and thus bear a close relation to death—either directly killing their victims or orchestrating their demise via a third party. Isabel Pinedo (1996) highlights this relationship when she states that monsters dissolve

¹⁹⁷ Tobe Hooper similarly states that in the horror film "the true monster is ... death" (Jaworzyn 28).

“binary differences” such as “life/death” and thereby bring the public into close contact with the abject aspects of mortality (21). Such creatures act as corrupting agents in popular narratives, causing chaos and destruction through their intrusion on the community. I assert that the Boogeyman represents a particularly acute cultural example of this phenomenon, as his heightened propensity for destruction highlights his connection with death.

Indeed, the Boogeyman’s affiliation with death is demonstrated by the fact that his presence in the community results in the injury and/or demise of members of the collective. Much like Death, the monstrous Other is an anarchic figure that “emphasizes the uncertainties of human existence” and can arrive “when least expected and disrupt human relationships” (DeSpelder and Strickland 102).¹⁹⁸ Furthermore, in *Terror and the Everyday Life* (1994), Jonathan Lake Crane highlights this relationship between the monster and death, explaining that the fear incited by both is virtually indistinguishable. According to Crane, the public’s anxiety surrounding death is the primary driving force behind the horror film, which allows individuals to explore their feelings of dread and panic related to mortality. Specifically, Crane argues that the horror film harnesses this terror and offers a venue to confront the knowledge of our impending demise in the symbolic form of the monster:

When we take account of our chary connection to the dead, we must also consider our relationship to the monster. What is a monster other than a reanimated corpse? We may turn our back on the dear departed and hurry home once the coffin lid is strewn with dirt, but the horror film returns us

¹⁹⁸ This quote is made by DeSpelder and Strickland in reference to the medieval motif of the “Dance of Death,” in which Death leads the recently deceased to their gravesites.

back to the dead and forces us to confront that which we had hoped to confine to the quiet grave. Whatever abjection we strive to avoid, the corpse being the most potent of all objects, we can be assured that the contemporary horror film will most certainly accommodate its grotesque return. (31-2)

Building on Crane's characterization of the monster as a personification of death, I propose that the Boogeyman represents a particularly acute cultural manifestation of this concept, as his heightened propensity for destruction highlights his connection with morbidity. As outlined in the previous chapter, the monstrous Other is often depicted as a threatening predator and his persona is therefore predicated on his relationship to bodily harm and the physical danger that he poses to his victims.

As an incarnation of the folkloric Boogeyman, Bluebeard fulfills this criterion by imposing deadly punishment upon those characters in the narrative that defy communal values. His connection with death is multi-faceted; he is both a dangerous predator of women and a violent harbinger of destruction who surrounds himself with the rotting corpses of his victims.¹⁹⁹ His identity as a serial killer is revealed when his bride enters the forbidden chamber in his mansion and finds his previous spouses "suspended against the walls" with their throats cut (Perrault, *The Story* 30). Upon the discovery that his wife has entered the forbidden chamber, Bluebeard similarly attempts to kill her as well by cutting off her head (Perrault, *The Story* 52-3). His continuous use of violence as his sole means of communication not only manifests the volatility associated with the Terrible Father but also transforms him into a monstrous personification of Death. His homicidal

¹⁹⁹ In this chapter, I use the term "death" to refer to the physical act of dying and the term "Death" to refer to the personified figure that the human psyche creates as a response to anxieties related to morbidity.

behaviour ultimately results in his expulsion from the community and alienation from the realm of the living. These connotative qualities that connect the Boogeyman with Death are expressed visually through his abject appearance, which often includes physical characteristics that symbolically reference death and/or the deterioration of the body.

An examination of visual depictions of the personified figure of Death from the Western tradition reveals conventions that are also present in representations of the Boogeyman. In these images Death is commonly envisioned in the form of a skeleton or partially decomposed corpse that mocks or derides the living. Art critic Matilde Battistini points out that in artwork from Western Europe Death often appears as a male figure “holding a scythe and an hourglass or kissing a girl ... [and can also] assume the form of a solitary horseman or a shadow” (82). Death is depicted with many of the token qualities associated with physical monstrosity: his face, which is usually partially or completely stripped of flesh, bears a stoic, blank expression similar to a mask and evokes notions of putrefaction and decay (Fig. 10). These artistic representations of the personified figure of Death allude to the degenerative process that the body undergoes following the termination of life. Specifically, these figures include sunken cheeks, rotting skin, and shrivelled limbs that mimic the appearance of a corpse. Though these visual articulations of Death are frequently found in Western Europe and are therefore culturally specific, they also reference a fundamental aspect of human life and therefore possess archetypal properties.

The visual traits associated with Western depictions of Death are similarly referenced in cultural articulations of the folkloric Boogeyman. For example, the monstrous blue beard that is synonymous with Perrault’s villain functions not only as a



Fig. 10. Hans Baldung's 1518 painting titled *Death and the Maiden*. Source: Public domain.

physical manifestation of his inner depravity, but also indirectly connects him with the notion of death. As Knapp explains, Bluebeard's unsettling appearance divorces him from the natural world and reveals a disturbing relationship with morbidity: "blue is usually identified with cold, remoteness ... and for some even preludes *death*" (my

italics; 95). Indeed, the blue beard functions as a symbolic indicator of the villain's role as a harbinger of destruction capable of wreaking devastation upon the community, which is later manifested through his homicidal treatment of his wives.

This link between the Boogeyman and visual markers associated with morbidity is similarly present in his cinematic manifestations. The villains of the slasher film are presented with physical traits that reference the visceral impact of death either in the form of a horrible disfigurement (e.g. Krueger) or a mask that resembles the face of a corpse (e.g. Myers and Voorhees). The appearance of these characters references the abject aspects of mortality and the loss of identity that results from the degeneration of the body. Similar to depictions of Death, the disturbing visage of the slasher villain serves to symbolically indicate his corrupting impact on the community and his role as a destructive force in the lives of his victims. As I explain throughout this chapter, the cinematic Boogeyman's close ties to Death are symbolically expressed through his physical traits, his living conditions, and his use of violence as the dominant method of communication with other characters.

In order to draw a clear parallel between cultural perceptions of Death and images of the cinematic Boogeyman, it is first necessary to gain an understanding of how morbidity was visually articulated in the American public consciousness during the 1970s. In *The Psychology of Death* (1972), Robert Kastenbaum questioned 662 U.S. citizens in order to assess how death was personified within the national cultural imaginary. Kastenbaum groups the results under four categories: (1) the Gentle Comforter, (2) the Gay Deceiver, (3) the Automaton, and (4) the Macabre. It is this last group that most clearly relates to depictions of the Boogeyman, as the Macabre vision of

Death bears many of the physical signs of decay outlined above, such as rotting flesh and deathly pallor. As Kastenbaum points out, the Macabre vision of Death is characterized “as a powerful, overwhelming, and repulsive figure” that manifests as “an emaciated or decaying human, or ... a monster with only [a] faint resemblance to human form” (168).²⁰⁰ Many of the physical traits linked with the Macabre Death figure are reflected in cultural depictions of the Boogeyman, who is likewise connected with morbidity and the decomposition of the body. This association between the monstrous Boogeyman and the personification of Death can be explained by the fact that they share a common psychological grounding in the archetypal vocabulary—namely, the figure of the Death-Demon. The results of Kastenbaum’s research and its connection with the Boogeyman can therefore be explained by Edgar Herzog and his work concerning manifestations of anxieties related to death within the human psyche.

III. The Mask

Herzog’s description of the visual cues that characterize depictions of the Death-Demon bear a striking resemblance to cultural representations of the Boogeyman. He states that the Death-Demon is “often represented with corpse-like traits” that include deathly pallor, large teeth, and empty eye sockets (78-9).²⁰¹ He goes on to describe the facial characteristics of the Death-Demon as mask-like and suggests that this is reflective of the fact that after death a corpse becomes rigid and takes on a stoic expression: “the

²⁰⁰ Representations of the Macabre Death figure had a powerful and visceral impact on certain subjects, as one young man reported that he became nauseous when he thought about this mental image (Kastenbaum 168).

²⁰¹ Vande Kemp discussed the appearance of the Death archetype in dreams and included an account of an individual (Mrs. Paton) who was interviewed concerning a dream she had in which Death appeared in the guise of a “little, crooked old man” who bore an axe (350-51). Though this example is purely anecdotal, it bears all of the features that Herzog associates with the Death-Demon archetype.

man who had been alive is still there but is now shrouded behind a mask of mysteriously unapproachable rigidity” (79). Based on Herzog’s observations, I assert that these subconscious images of the Death-Demon play a significant role in popular depictions of threatening purveyors of death such as the Boogeyman. As I demonstrate, the slasher villain possesses various physical attributes associated with the anthropomorphic Death-Demon, such as the expressionless corpse-like mask that has become a common feature of the subgenre.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the Boogeyman’s face is invariably obscured or distorted in some fashion to visually convey his threatening nature to both the audience as well as other characters in the narrative. Acting as a physical and symbolic barrier, this disfigurement may manifest in the form of anomalous facial hair (as in the case of Bluebeard), scars, burns, or the complete concealment of the face through the employment of a mask. Herzog discusses the psychological implications of the mask, pointing out that it is used “all over the world ... [as] a means of representing the dead or the Death-Demon” (79-80).²⁰² The mask is utilized extensively in filmic depictions of the Boogeyman to convey the fact that he is psychologically removed from the other characters in the narrative. These ideas are expressed visually through the unsettling appearance of the mask which often mimics the stoic image of a cadaver and evokes the notion of morbidity: “the essentially immobile and unchangeable aspect of the mask—the face that lives without living—indicates that one of its original connotations ... was with death” (Sorell 11). Indeed, the motionless nature of the mask references the static qualities of a human corpse, as these disguises are either fashioned from the flesh of the

²⁰² In *The Other Face: The Mask in the Arts* (1973), cultural writer Walter Sorell discusses the psychological implications of the mask, claiming that it allowed early humans to reach beyond the physical world into the realm of the subconscious (12).

dead (such as in the case of Freddy Krueger) or reference images of death (such as in the cases of Michael Myers and Jason Voorhees).²⁰³ The Boogeyman's physical resemblance to the dead is intended to evoke the notion of physical decay as well as reference the vulnerable nature of the human body. These abject characteristics of the mask remind viewers of their own mortality and force them to momentarily recognize the overwhelming force of death that is personified in the form of the cinematic Boogeyman.

The mask also obscures the face of the slasher villain, reducing him to a mere silhouette and forcing the viewer to participate in the construction of his visual identity. As the face is traditionally viewed as the most expressive part of the body, the act of removing it from the visual spectrum has a profound impact on the villain's connection and relationship with other characters that populate the story.²⁰⁴ Even his eyes are obscured by the dim lighting used in these films, nullifying any possibility of a psychological connection with other characters. The slasher villain is therefore elevated to a mythical level, embodying the personal fears and unique terrors of each spectator. Conrich adds that the mask serves to symbolize the deep psychological fissure that exists between the villain and the surrounding community and allows the killer to reach a state of "detachment" that is required in order to carry out his murderous deeds unhindered ("The *Friday the 13th* Films" 180).²⁰⁵ As a result of this emotional distance, the monstrous Other develops a distorted self-image, which is reflected in his rejection of

²⁰³ The importance of the mask in the slasher film has been discussed by Crane (1994), Conrich (2010, "The *Friday the 13th* Films), and Bradley (2004).

²⁰⁴ Dario Campbell discusses the role of the face in the horror film and explains that it is the "most visible and vulnerable medium of our narcissism" (135). He goes on to explain that due to the fact that "the face becomes a focus of acute attention during adolescence," it is no coincidence that the disfigurement of this body part is a source of fixation in the horror film, as the key audience for this genre is teenagers (135).

²⁰⁵ Dika points out that the killer's alienation from his environment is represented by the fact that he is "either kept off-screen or masked for the greater part of the film" which literally depersonalizes him, leaving his body and "the more intricate workings of his consciousness hidden from the spectator" ("The Stalker Film" 88).

social values shared by the collective. This absolute state of otherness results in a situation whereupon the villain takes on not only a monstrous presence within the community, but also, paradoxically, a sacred one because he is able to operate in a realm that is completely foreign to humanity. This dynamic is reflected in the fact that the cinematic Boogeyman possesses qualities that are both subhuman and superhuman--a state that distinguishes him from the other characters in the narrative.²⁰⁶

The cinematic Boogeyman's dissociation from the community is often the result of an earlier trauma that he suffered during childhood which causes a dramatic transformation and stunts his psychological development. This turmoil arrests the antagonist's emotional maturity, leaving him in a child-like state of narcissism that alienates him from the other characters in the narrative and results in his lack of empathy and inclination towards violence—traits that relate to both the Terrible Father and the Death-Demon. He is consequently transformed into a violent observer of the world around him, unwilling to engage with his peers verbally or emotionally and integrate into the collective. Indeed, the killer's absence of speech (a characteristic we observe in both Michael Myers and Jason Voorhees) adds to his alterity and situates him outside the social realm. The fact that he is largely silent places greater importance on his violent behaviour since murder becomes his sole method of communication. His unwillingness to verbally interact with others can also be indicative of a lowered mental capacity and

²⁰⁶ This facet of the mask has deep philosophical and ethical implications that are best articulated by French philosopher and theorist Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995). In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas discusses the notion of the encounter with the Other, arguing that such an exchange calls into question the ethics of autonomy as “[t]he Other remains... infinitely foreign,” and therefore operates within a realm entirely separate from the self (194). His notion of the “absolute Other” is essentially predicated on the preservation of otherness and maintaining respect and reverence for the Other. In *Aspects of Alterity: Levinas, Marcel, and the Contemporary Debate* (2006), Brian Treanor summarizes Levinas' stance concerning the absolute Other: “Rather than seeking to eliminate otherness by grasping it and analyzing it in order to reduce it to a known quantity, [Levinas'] philosophy seeks to preserve the otherness of the other and to respect the difference that distinguishes the other from the self” (5).

operates in tandem with the mask, further distancing the viewer from the villain and reducing him to a subhuman status.

This brings to light the most disturbing aspect of the cinematic Boogeyman's character—namely, his lack of a fully developed identity, which accounts for his deficient moral nature. Darryl Jones states that under the mask of the slasher villain there “may be no face at all, for the killer may have *no identity* other than as an embodiment of unmotivated destructiveness” (my italics; 115). This absence of selfhood is communicated through the mask which supplants the killer's face and cements his disconnection not only from his social environment but from humanity in general. Without an autonomous identity, the villain utilizes violence as a means of expression to interact with the world around him. However, the murderous acts that he commits only serve to further distance him from the community while also highlighting his lack of empathy for others and solidifying his role as an inhuman monster.

Lacking conscience, intellect or thought, the slasher villain is essentially devoid of personality aside from the most basic instincts, and thus the mask serves as a surrogate face, symbolically compensating for his abnormal psyche. René Girard (1995) explains that the mask can also aid in creating an alternate identity, as it is designed to “cover the face, to replace it, or in some way to substitute for it” (167). Based on Girard's observations, I argue that the mask in the slasher film is a mediating force between the cinematic Boogeyman and the community, allowing him to operate in the social sphere without directly interacting with others. By putting on the mask, the villain can temporarily forge a fully developed ego through the perpetuation of an artificial persona. Huddleston discusses this facet of the mask, arguing that it allows the villain to “hide



Fig. 11. Film still from *Halloween* showing Michael Myers in his ghostly white mask. Source: Compass International Pictures.

who he is, *compensate for who he is not*, and enable him to release the anxiety created by his own sexual repression” (my italics; 220). Anna Powell adds that the theme of “stolen or altered faces in horror implies that the personal ‘self’ resides in the face and, more particularly, the eyes” (87). The façade of the mask, therefore, literally takes the place of the internal being, compensating for the inherent shortfall in the killer’s character and endowing him with a tentatively coherent identity. However, this objective is fundamentally flawed, as the mask fails to create a convincing image of the human face, and instead transforms him into the living embodiment of Death. Arguably, the most

disturbing depiction of this motif occurs in John Carpenter's *Halloween*, in which the character of Michael Myers dons a stark white mask that resembles a human corpse as he carries out his murderous deeds.

Drained of pigment and depicted with generic humanoid features, the luminous mask Myers wears throughout much of the film is a striking image evocative of death (Fig. 11).²⁰⁷ J.P. Telotte points out that this disguise resembles “the face of a dead man” and effectively divorces Myers “from the world of the living” (119). Similarly, in her analysis of Myers’ image, Dika argues that it references the “white mask of death utilized by the ancient Greek theatre” (83). By concealing his face, Myers’ unblemished mask works to foster the audience’s fear of his unstoppable power and allows him to take on a supernatural presence within the narrative.²⁰⁸ Steve Neale explains that it is ultimately the spectator who invests Myers with “an omnipotence and aggressiveness which cannot be fully controlled” (341). Like other cinematic embodiments of the Boogeyman, Myers personifies the audience’s subconscious anxieties related to death, and the mask aids in this process by acting as a blank canvas onto which viewers can project their deepest fears.

The fact that Myers’ mask so closely imitates the features of the human face invokes Freud’s notion of the uncanny. Francis notes this facet of Myers’ disguise, stating that the mask “creates a Freudian *unheimlich* reaction, where viewers are torn between the recognition of a human face and the fear of its alien appearance” (53). This

²⁰⁷ John Carpenter attributed the specific look of Michael Myers to George Franju’s film *Eyes Without a Face* (1960), in which the lead character Christiane appears in a white mask following an automobile accident (Kerswell 19).

²⁰⁸ Doug Bradley comments on the inaccessible nature of the mask when he states that it isolates Myers from the audience and thereby makes it impossible for the viewer to connect with him on an emotional or psychological level (183).

observation is similarly reflected by Debra Hill, producer and co-writer of *Halloween*, who claims the objective behind the mask was to make Myers appear “faceless” and transform him into a “pale visage that could resemble a human or not” (Rockoff 54). As Freud explains, the uncanny refers to experiences that arouse a sensation of “dread and creeping horror” (*Standard* 219), which is at its most heightened state “in relation to death and dead bodies”—morbid themes that are reflected in Myers’ appearance (*Standard* 241). Furthermore, Freud explains that the uncanny sensation is elicited by two psychological principles: repetition and repression. Freud asserts that due to the repression of a childhood complex, the emotion is transformed into “anxiety” and when the memory of this experience is rekindled, it elicits an unsettling sensation (*Standard* 241).²⁰⁹ Through the process of suddenly confronting a repressed memory, one experiences a mixture of familiarity and strangeness that epitomizes the uncanny.

Freud’s notion of the uncanny is useful in understanding the thrilling sensation and unsettling impact that Myers’ mask has on the viewer. However, I propose that this dynamic is not predicated on an infantile complex, but instead on the terrifying nature of the Death-Demon archetype. I assert that the key to the uncanny is not recurrence (as Freud states), but instead the stimulation of a repressed archetypal form in a process I refer to as the “archetypal uncanny.” Unlike Freud’s model of the uncanny which requires the individual to experience the arousal of a childhood emotion, I suggest that the subject must simply encounter an image (or other stimulant) that invokes a repressed archetype (such as the Death-Demon). In the case of Myers, his mask not only references the face of a man, but more specifically a corpse, which in turn stimulates thoughts

²⁰⁹ Jung proposed a similar sensation to the uncanny results from experiencing “synchronicity” which occurs when “two things happen together in a miraculous way” with no causal connection to one another (*Analytical Psychology* 26).

related to the Death-Demon (such as morbidity and the decay of the body). The stimulation of this archetype results in the odd mixture of familiarity and strangeness associated with the uncanny due to the fact that the viewer is forced to confront aspects of the human condition that are unsettling and psychologically overwhelming.

The jarring artifice of Myers' "face" elicits dread due to the fact that it is both humanoid and inhuman and serves to visually distinguish him from the other characters in the film. Furthermore, within the diegetic space of the film, the villainous Myers occupies a liminal position along the periphery of his hometown of Haddonfield, and the mask serves to visually establish his status as a volatile and dangerous intruder. Sheldon Hall explains that Myers' inability to communicate with other characters and integrate into the collective makes him a perpetual outsider: "he is *from* Haddonfield but not *of* it" (my italics; 71). The mask distances him from the community by blocking the inner workings of his mind and is therefore symbolic of the unbridgeable gap between Myers and the citizens of Haddonfield—a divide that ultimately allows him to commit violent acts without hesitation. Ultimately, the mask allows Myers to function as an orbiting sentinel, perpetually surveying the characters of the narrative while remaining entirely self-contained and removed from the social sphere.

A similar dynamic is depicted in the *Friday the 13th* films, in which the masked antagonist Jason Voorhees viciously attacks numerous generations of teenage camp councillors at Crystal Lake to avenge the death of his mother. Initially Jason appears in the series with his head shrouded in a simple burlap sack, a manner of concealment that entirely negates his facial features (Fig. 12).²¹⁰ Francis asserts that this particular disguise

²¹⁰ Bernard Welt (1996) likens this disguise to that worn by the character of John Merrick in the film *The Elephant Man* (1980, David Lynch) (81).



Fig. 12. Film still from *Friday the 13th Part 2* (Steve Miner, 1981) showing Jason (Warrington Gillette) clothed in a burlap sack. Source: Paramount Pictures.

creates a sense of mystery by employing the “fear of the unknown” (53). Indeed, the absence of Jason’s face from the visual spectrum of the film implies that he has transformed into a ghostly apparition that is no longer human. This quality is similarly reflected in his later (and more famous) disguise of a hockey mask which also conceals his face from the audience. Both masks successfully obscure the inner workings of Jason’s mind by covering his face (most conspicuously, his eyes), and thereby obstruct any possibility for emotional or psychological engagement.

Like Myers’ disguise, Jason’s hockey mask captures the image of a stoic human face stripped of emotion and thereby reflects many of the physical traits Herzog associates with the Death-Demon archetype. This mask is such an integral aspect of Jason’s persona that it has literally overtaken his identity and functions as a disturbing



Fig. 13. Film still from *Friday the 13th Part 8: Jason Takes Manhattan* (Rob Hedden, 1989) showing Jason (Kane Hodder) wearing his iconic hockey mask. Source: Paramount Pictures.

substitute for his face (Fig. 13).²¹¹ In his description of Jason’s hockey mask, Crane identifies the powerful and unnerving symbolic implications of this manner of concealment:

[Jason] has no identity beyond the blank hockey mask ... A hard plastic shield with nothing more than black ports, empty cavities that allow the thing to see and breathe as it kills, it is not truly a face. The faceless mask, equipped with tiny circles for selecting targets, small dots for nostrils, and a thin rectangular slit representing a mouth, is the human face horribly reduced to a plane of purely vicious instrumentality ... The antihuman mask, so denatured from an actual human visage, is a wholly vacant

²¹¹ Famed French dramatist Jacques Copeau (1879-1949) explains that the mask has profound psychological implications by transforming the actor into an alternate persona that “proceeds to substitute itself for him [or her]” (Sorell 64-5).



Fig. 14. Film stills from *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare* (Rachel Talalay, 1991) and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* showing Freddy Kruger before (left) and after (right) his transformation into the Boogeyman persona. Source: New Line Cinema.

signifier that completely absorbs anything that speaks of human understanding. Jason can express nothing and his mask hides nothing, as there is only meaningless death behind the blank holes. (151)

As Crane indicates here, the functional purpose of the hockey mask as a piece of sports equipment is less important than its visual impact on the viewer.²¹² In this same vein, Welt likens the appearance of the mask to the make-up of the Kabuki theatre and argues that it signifies Jason's role as "Death the Avenger" (81-2). Indeed, the black orifices of the mask substitute for Jason's eyes and mouth, reducing his identity to a thin layer of hard plastic that is both unmoving and impenetrable, thereby mimicking his stoic personality and leaving little hope for compassion or empathy.

²¹² Welt suggests that through its association with sports, the hockey mask transforms Jason into "an angry god playing a game with human life" (81).

Due to the emphasis placed on the mask, the act of removing it marks a dramatic moment in the *Friday the 13th* films, revealing the viewer's nightmarish fantasies come to life. Since Jason is posited as the personification of the audience's fears, his unveiling allows viewers to momentarily confront their innermost anxieties. Conrich claims that Jason's face is "more frightening than the mask," as what lies beneath is no longer human ("The *Friday the 13th* Films" 180). This is mainly because Jason is not only the *symbolic* personification of Death, but is also *literally* dead, and therefore suffers from the degenerative impact of morbidity—transforming him into a rotting corpse beneath his mask. Indeed, once the killer's face has been exposed, the audience is confronted by a visage that is "recognizably human, but only marginally so" and is often horribly distorted by time and decay (Clover 30).²¹³ Dika comments on this aspect of the slasher villain, noting the role his appearance plays in communicating his monstrous nature: "[when] the killer is finally revealed, we find him to be grotesque, either physically or mentally, and sometimes both" (*Games of Terror* 55). Indeed, the disfigured features of the slasher villain differentiate him from the community and visually indicate his monstrous alterity.

We see this principle similarly exercised in Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, in which the villain Freddy Krueger's unnerving appearance serves to visually mirror his malevolent persona. Unlike the other slasher villains discussed in this thesis, Krueger does not wear a mask, thereby allowing the audience to gaze directly upon his face. However, due to the fact that he was burned to death, his flesh has melted into a

²¹³ Cettl points out that, much like cinematic depictions of the Boogeyman, serial killers are often shown with some form of physical deformity that distinguishes them from the community: "in early horror films ... the monster/killer was deformed in an often horrific, physical way ... the killer was different from 'you and I,' and had to be shown as clearly separated from any unifying social order on screen: the killer was an alien threat to that social order, and to women in particular" (7).

hideous mass of muscle and bone that is no longer recognizably human (Fig. 14). Indeed, the image of Krueger's mutilated face plays on the abject qualities of the human body and brings the viewer into close contact with the degenerative impact of death.²¹⁴ Without the encumbrance of a mask, Krueger is granted the luxury of speech, and throughout the film he is able to "speak, grimace and crack his trademark bad-taste jokes" as his victims plead for mercy (Robb 81). This feature has a dual effect: it humanizes him, but at the same time gives an added dimension of cruelty and sadism to his actions. Francis explains that the fact that Krueger verbally communicates with his victims "makes fear more tangible because it lets characters and viewers know how dark the human spirit and heart can get when seeking revenge" (66-7). In an ingenious twist, Craven incorporates Krueger's appearance directly into his mythology: he is a confirmed child killer burned to death by a group of parents from the community in an act of vigilante justice. Therefore, Krueger's disfigured face brands him as a predator and serves as a constant reminder of the murderous acts he committed during his lifetime.

Following Krueger's death by immolation, he undergoes an extraordinary apotheosis that changes him into an indestructible being with fantastic powers. Because of this process, he is unrestrained by natural laws which, in turn, contributes to his indifference to the suffering of his victims. Voorhees and Myers experience similar metamorphoses and are likewise endowed with exceptional physical capabilities. Specifically, these antagonists possess superhuman strength and are capable of recovering from potentially fatal events—even returning from the grave.

²¹⁴ As stated in the Introduction, I am using the term "abject" in relation to the writings of French philosopher and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva who defines this term as a breakdown of identity. Though the abject is often associated with filth and contamination, Kristeva provides a much more nuanced approach to the notion, one that is predicated on the blurring of self and other through the dissolution of fixed boundaries.

IV. The Metamorphosis into the Boogeyman

In addition to the conventions established by Warner and Widdowson that characterize the folkloric Boogeyman, cinematic depictions of the monstrous Other also include a loosely defined mythology that explains the slasher villain's dramatic transformation into a harbinger of death. Indeed, the role of the slasher villain as a manifestation of the Death-Demon archetype is further solidified by the inclusion of an origin story in which he undergoes a literal or symbolic demise and is reborn into the state of the Boogeyman. This transformation will take one of two forms: either his death is due to neglect or cruelty, followed by his subsequent resurrection (eg. Voorhees and Krueger), or a horrendous crime is perpetrated by the antagonist that converts him into a monster (eg. Myers).²¹⁵ Dika adds that the killer evolves into the slasher villain because he is "either driven to madness or is already mad because of an exterior trauma ... [and he] responds with rage, sometimes expressed immediately in an act of vengeance or sometimes withheld until the second segment of the film" (*Games of Terror* 59). This event consequently alters him physically, psychologically, and emotionally and moves him outside the mortal realm into the world of the supernatural.

Through his apotheosis, the cinematic Boogeyman changes from a mortal being *subject to death* to an immortal being that *embodies death* and is preoccupied with revenge, carnage, and the desire to inflict pain upon others.²¹⁶ An unbridgeable schism

²¹⁵ As Blennerhassett explains, the character of the slasher villain is rarely developed, though sometimes the "spectre of childhood sexual abuse is raised" to account for his rage and explain why he "appears to be living out a murderous repetitive compulsion" (102).

²¹⁶ The slasher film capitalizes on fears related to morbidity and offers a venue to symbolically address these anxieties. The villains that populate these movies embody death and by witnessing their defeat, the viewer is able to evacuate the feelings of dread that accompany the recognition of morbidity. Dika discusses this phenomenon, explaining that the thrill of the horror film involves the viewer's "release from

between the villain and the community is born out of this event, and throughout the remainder of the film he is incapable of forging empathic bonds with other characters.²¹⁷

The emotional turmoil and deadly rage that the killer harbours over this event makes rehabilitation and redemption impossible, further dehumanizing him and accentuating his transformation into a monster. As a result of this ordeal, he is significantly impacted and takes on attributes that make him both subhuman and superhuman, allowing him to survive calamities that would be fatal to a typical human.²¹⁸ Due to his invulnerability to death, the slasher villain is both unstoppable in his murderous rampage and indifferent to the suffering of others—traits that allow him to pursue his victims without mercy or relent.

This practice of associating supernatural abilities with the slasher villain is part of a larger trend in representations of fictional homicidal figures of American cinema. As Richard Blennerhassett explains, serial killers in contemporary culture have become “an archetypal manifestation of the shadow” and a modern vision of evil (104). He goes on to state that in the medium of film, the serial killer has “emerged as one of it’s most popular archetypes” (102). In her essay “The New Mythic Monster,” Su Epstein expresses similar sentiments as she discusses the extraordinary attributes that are often ascribed to filmic

... fears of bodily injury” by facing the possibility of death within the comfort of the theatre (*Games of Terror* 10). Similarly, Sobchack has commented on the cathartic impact of mediated violence by claiming these images are intended “to make us feel secure about violence and death” and thereby allow “us to purge our fear, to find safety in what appears to be knowledge of the unknown” (“Violent Dance” 116). As Dika and Sobchack make evident, the experience of watching these films allows viewers to symbolically harness and subdue the threat of the cinematic Boogeyman, thereby granting them a sense of invincibility and the illusion of control over death.

²¹⁷ Gill points out that the slasher villain is emotionally unattached and lacks a “sense of humanity,” resulting in aggressive and hostile behaviour (23).

²¹⁸ Marriott notes the extraordinary attributes associated with the slasher villain: “The killer tends to be closer to the supernatural than the insane ... and in his on-screen actions he defies natural law. He can move with absolute silence, appearing and disappearing apparently at will; even the spaces he inhabits take on supernatural qualities, with familiar houses turning into darkened labyrinths and screams inaudible to others only a short distance away” (216).

depictions of serial killers. According to Epstein, the serial killer is frequently portrayed as a “fantastic character” that is “associated with occult forces that provide them with special powers” (71). To support her argument, Epstein claims that “more than 60 percent of the serial killers in American films display obvious superhuman abilities” (73). As I demonstrate in my analysis of the slasher villain, characters such as Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger represent an extreme vision of this practice, possessing physical traits that are inhuman.

As outlined earlier, this motif is clearly presented in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* wherein the villain Freddy Krueger is executed by a group of civilians and is transformed into a violent spectre unbound by natural laws. Krueger’s existence beyond death is evidenced by the repeated acts of self-mutilation that he performs on his own body without experiencing pain. Phillips refers to this phenomenon as a “gothic body” and argues that Krueger’s physical self exists “on the peculiar fault line between the real and the fantastic” which allows him to exercise violence on his body without causing it permanent damage (*Dark Directions* 81). To demonstrate Krueger’s gothic body at play, Phillips references a number of instances throughout the film whereupon he defaces his own flesh without any ramifications: “He gleefully chops off his own fingers with the knife-fingered glove he wears, cuts open his own abdomen to reveal oozing guts, and even pulls his own face off to reveal a cackling skull beneath” (81). By inflicting these injuries upon himself, Krueger illustrates the harm he is capable of exerting upon others and comes to embody social fears related to suffering, pain, and death (Francis Jr. 68). Therefore, his existence outside the material world endows him with a sense of invincibility that makes him indifferent to his own pain but, most importantly, apathetic



Fig. 15. Film stills from *Halloween* showing Michael Myers before (left) and after (right) his transformation into the Boogeyman persona. Source: Compass International Pictures.

to the suffering of others. Variations of these remarkable attributes associated with Krueger are similarly exhibited by Myers and Voorhees and indicate their role as living embodiments of death.

For example, in *Halloween*, Myers survives numerous incidences that would kill any ordinary human, such as being stabbed in the abdomen with a butcher knife and falling from a second storey balcony. The extraordinary nature of Myers' status in the film is explained by Nicholas Rogers who states that he is "a mythic, elusive bogeyman, one of superhuman strength who cannot be killed by bullets, stab wounds, or fire" (115). Conrich further highlights Myers' supernatural qualities when he states that he is "indestructible, focused, devoid of a conscience, omnipresent yet also quick to vanish, and operating on the edges of society" ("Killing Time" 98). I would further add that Myers' invulnerability to deadly force signifies that he is a figure who possesses

awesome powers traditionally ascribed to demons and/or deities.²¹⁹ These astounding physical abilities are most clearly demonstrated in the final moments of the film when Myers falls from a second storey balcony and quickly resurrects himself. Escaping into the night, he flees from the scene of his murderous rampage—an act that, as Hogan explains, transforms him into “a dark figure of the subconscious” (252). By vanishing and materializing continually throughout the film, he is framed as a fantastic spectre who can defy the boundaries between life and death.

Myers’ reputation as a figure synonymous with Death stems from the killing of his sister Judith, an act which he carried out at the age of six. Through this violent act he establishes himself as a pernicious force within the town of Haddonfield and a deadly agent of terror (Fig. 15). This notion is openly acknowledged when Dr. Loomis recounts his first meeting with Myers who was a young child at the time:

“I met him fifteen years ago. I was told there was nothing left, no conscience, no reason, no understanding, in even the most rudimentary sense, of life or death of right or wrong. I met this six-year-old boy with a blank, cold, emotionless face and the blackest eyes—the Devil’s eyes.”

(Halloween)

This speech solidifies Myers role as a supernatural source of ruination and serves to emphasize his complete absence of humanity. This notion is further highlighted by the fact that Loomis explicitly refers to Myers as “Death” at numerous points in the film,

²¹⁹ Epstein notes the fact that, despite Myers’ superhuman capabilities, he is ultimately presented with certain characteristics of a regular mortal:

In this film, although the killer, Michael Myers, is described by the psychiatrist as “evil” and “not human,” he appears to follow a normal human development pattern, aging from a six-year-old boy to a twenty-year-old man. . . . The first film of the series, in particular, clearly presents Michael as a human being, while simultaneously attributing superhuman abilities to him. (74)

thereby indicating that his former patient is not a man but instead a dark force of nature.²²⁰ Rathgeb also comments on Myers' unique status in the film and states that he is an "entity that transcends death because he *is* death" (not my italics; 40). Indeed, Myers' existence outside the mortal realm is made clear throughout the film by his ability to continually resurrect himself and endure extreme physical trauma without dying. Furthermore, Myers' presence in Haddonfield has a purely destructive impact on the community, as he eventually injures or kills almost every character with whom he comes into contact—once again reinforcing his role as a manifestation of the archetypal Death-Demon.

These supernatural capabilities associated with Myers, such as extraordinary resiliency and uncanny strength, are similarly exhibited by Jason Voorhees in the *Friday the 13th* films. Following his drowning as a young boy, Jason is transformed into an unstoppable superhuman creature that is solely concerned with murdering the inhabitants at the site of his supposed demise (Fig. 16). Unlike Myers and Krueger, Jason is disfigured *before* his rebirth as the Boogeyman and exhibits many physical markers of monstrosity while he is still mortal. Conrich describes Jason as a "human aberration" that is deformed from birth with a distorted skull, malformed face, and asymmetrical features ("The *Friday the 13th* Films" 180). This detail complicates Jason's role as a manifestation of the monstrous Other, as it blurs the clearly delineated relationship between physical ugliness and evil that is essential to the slasher. However, I argue that prior to his metamorphosis into the cinematic Boogeyman (while he is still mortal) Jason is framed as a sympathetic figure, and his disfigurement is presented as a source of pity. Whereas

²²⁰ While discussing Myers, Dr. Loomis informs Police Chief Leigh Brackett that "death [referring to Myers] has come to your little town [of Haddonfield]" (*Halloween*).



Fig. 16. Film stills from *Friday the 13th* (Sean Cunningham, 1980) and *Friday the 13th Part 3* (Steve Miner, 1982) showing Jason Voorhees before (left) and after (right) his transformation into the Boogeyman persona. Source: Paramount Pictures.

following his death and subsequent resurrection, his ruthlessly violent behaviour negates any possibility for compassion from the audience and he is thus cast in the role of the monstrous Other.

The volatile nature of the cinematic Boogeyman prohibits him from integrating into the community since his presence is frequently accompanied by destruction and devastation. He is therefore exiled to the outskirts of society where he resides like a recurring plague that infiltrates the collective when moral boundaries begin to break down. Indeed, the Boogeyman exists beyond the geographic boundaries of the communal space in the “untamed” terrain of the wild which, as I demonstrate, signifies the realm of the dead within these narratives. The locations that he occupies are remote and isolated, both for practical purposes (as it provides secrecy and discretion), as well as symbolic

reasons (as these venues reflect the inertness and sterility of the Death-Demon). The lair of the Boogeyman is therefore emblematic of his connection with the darker facets of nature and the nihilistic force of death.

V. The Lair of the Boogeyman

The remote areas that the Boogeyman inhabits tend to be decrepit, disgusting, and septic; they are harshly contrasted by the sanitized and beautiful settings of the community and symbolically delineate the boundary between the realm of the living and the dead. These desolate locations have often fallen into disrepair over the years due to neglect and thereby emphasize his detachment and rejection of the present world. As Warner explains, “[b]ogeymen ... are frequently imagined as single, anomalous outsiders” residing beyond the shared space of the collective (*No Go* 28). These sites also represent a complete collapse of the basic structures that underpin modern progress such as sanitation and communal living. That is, the cinematic Boogeyman’s home operates beyond the limits of “civilization” and stands in stark opposition to the otherwise contemporary world presented in the narrative, thereby distinguishing him as the quintessential outsider. Phillips refers to these sites as “gothic houses” and defines them as “mysterious structure[s] of peril in which past crimes and secrets continue to haunt” (*Dark Directions* 83). Indeed, these buildings often commemorate horrific violence from the past, and serve as the site for future violence perpetrated by the villain.

We see this motif clearly expressed in Perrault’s *Bluebeard*, wherein the villain lives in an isolated mansion that the other inhabitants of the community refuse to visit. At the climax of the story, we discover that this mansion contains a chamber concealing the

dead bodies of Bluebeard's previous wives. Though Perrault offers no explanation as to why Bluebeard has retained the corpses of these women, it can only be assumed that they are mementos to decorate his private lair. In symbolic terms, Bluebeard's objective entails snatching individuals away from the world of the living and depositing them in the realm of the dead. Abducting his victims, he brings them to his lair where he kills them, then uses their bodies in the adornment of his home. By appropriating and objectifying the corpses of his victims, he is able to acquire total domination over them and possess them unequivocally.

This disturbing fetishization of the dead is a trope reiterated in the slasher film, and, as I demonstrate, reflects the Boogeyman's close affinity with sadism, necrophilia, and death. Harper notes the similarities between Bluebeard's mansion and the haunted locations featured in slasher films, explaining that these sites are "mysterious place[s], where the young and curious are forbidden to go" (53). The disturbing image of Bluebeard's bloody chamber filled with the corpses of his dead wives is mimicked in each of the films included in this thesis. For example, in *Halloween*, Myers utilizes the bodies of his victims to adorn the Wallace home and create a makeshift shrine paying homage to his murderous deeds. Likewise, during the climax of *Friday the 13th* Alice Hardy finds the slaughtered remains of her peers strewn throughout the campsite at Crystal Lake as she attempts to escape the killer. Finally, in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, the heroine, Nancy Thompson, ventures into Krueger's dream world to confront him and end his killing spree only to discover the bloodied possessions of her deceased friends.

Likewise, in the context of the selected slasher films, Bluebeard's mansion is transformed into a rambling suburban house, an abandoned campsite, and an industrial

basement—all of which are rumoured to be haunted.²²¹ The villains in these films become permanently tied to these locations, and the site is transformed into both their lairs and the setting for their violent activities. Within Jungian analysis, the house is often posited as a symbol of psychic entrapment, and the slasher villain's refusal to vacate his dwelling highlights his obsession with the trauma he endured in his youth (Chandler 10).²²² The cinematic Boogeyman's emergence from his home is only solicited by the rediscovery of his past crimes and/or the encroachment of a younger generation in close geographical proximity.²²³ The house therefore serves as a visual articulation of the killer's psyche and functions as a haunting reminder of his legacy of violence.

The inclusion of the lair as a mythological component of the Boogeyman is clearly illustrated in John Carpenter's *Halloween* in the form of the abandoned Myers' home. This location is the site of Judith's death (the event that sets the plot of the film in motion) and is forever branded by this single act of brutality. Falling into a state of disrepair, the house becomes dark, dank, and foreboding, and is ultimately transformed into a sinister symbol of Michael's heinous crime as well as an eyesore in the otherwise bucolic town of Haddonfield. The violent actions that took place at the Myers' house are suppressed by the inhabitants of the community, and Michael is transformed into a myth

²²¹ In his work, Cavallaro notes the emergence of the monstrous Other from the confines of the castle in Gothic literature into the realm of the contemporary suburban environment in the modern horror film:

The dark Other can no longer be contained within the boundaries of the castle, for otherness courses through society. This recognition has steadily been gaining momentum since the Victorian age and has culminated, in recent years, in the insistent desecrations of the apparently safest places. In contemporary articulations of the Gothic vision, most notably in film, the suburban bourgeois dwelling has come to play a prominent role as a site of fear and violence. This is clearly demonstrated by films such as John Carpenter's *Halloween* (1978), Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), and their various sequels and spoofs. (30)

²²² Jung discusses the motif of the house in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1990). This notion is reiterated by Marilyn Chandler, who points out that the physical dimensions of a character's home bear "a direct relationship or resemblance to the structure of [his or her] psyche and inner life" (10).

²²³ See Harper (2004).

that haunts the town's collective subconscious. This is evidenced by the resistance Dr. Loomis encounters upon arriving in town and attempting to warn its citizens of the impending carnage that Myers will inflict on the public. Likewise, the only inhabitant of Haddonfield to openly discuss Judith's death is an elderly groundskeeper who tends the cemetery where her grave is located, further emphasizing the collective desire to repress Michael's violent legacy. As a result, Myers is transformed into a secret that is protected by the community, and in so doing he comes to personify the dark underbelly of the town.

As a result, the Myers' home is considered haunted by all subsequent generations, and it is evident that locals do not wish to be associated with this location and its nefarious past.²²⁴ This avoidance of the Myers' home is hinted at early in the film when Laurie is warned by Tommy, a young boy she will be babysitting later that evening, not to set foot on the property. Despite Tommy's protests, Laurie consciously disregards the dangerous reputation associated with the building and ventures onto the property to drop off a key for her father.²²⁵ Unbeknownst to Laurie, Michael has selected the house as his primary dwelling upon his return to Haddonfield, and her unintentional violation of his private space transforms her into the object of his murderous rage.²²⁶ Likewise, her

²²⁴ During one scene in *Halloween*, children from the community taunt and challenge each other to enter the Myers' home as a rite of passage to prove their bravery and "manhood," demonstrating the dangerous reputation associated with the house.

²²⁵ Phillips points out that Laurie's act of crossing the threshold of the Myers' home places her "under Michael's murderous gaze, and the remainder of the film involves her efforts to survive the evil that she has unleashed" (*Dark Directions* 144).

²²⁶ In many ways the Myers' house serves as a physical manifestation of the inner workings of Michael's mind, as demonstrated when Dr. Loomis walks through the building with Sheriff Brackett re-enacting Judith's murder and speculating about the potential thoughts Michael had while stalking and murdering his older sister. This interaction between the two men demonstrates the relationship that the building shares with Michael's psyche and the important role that the house played in the slaughter of his sister which initiated his role as an incarnation of the Boogeyman.



Fig. 17. Film stills from *Halloween* showing the Myers' house (left) and the Wallace home (right).
Source: Compass International Pictures.

unwillingness to engage in the mythological lore that surrounds the Myers' home ultimately draws the Boogeyman out of his lair and releases him on the town.

During the latter half of *Halloween*, the action shifts to the Wallace home, a suburban bungalow where many of Laurie's friends meet and are later killed. This site bears an eerie resemblance to the Myers' house where Judith died, and functions as a substitute for Michael's original lair, as it is here that he chooses to re-enact his original crime (Fig. 17). After killing Annie, Bob, and Linda in the Wallace house, Michael arranges their bodies in the upstairs bedroom for Laurie to discover before he finally attacks her. As a disturbing addition, he places Annie's body on the bed and crowns it with the tombstone of his dead sister, which he stole from Judith's gravesite earlier that day. Through this macabre display, Michael is able to relive his sister's murder by transforming Annie's body into a shrine commemorating his childhood crime. This scene helps to bookend the film, by framing the narrative with a tableau that reinforces the violence the viewer witnesses in the prologue.

Similarly, the plot of *Friday the 13th* is structured around the location of a past traumatic event that motivates the villain to kill future inhabitants of the area. Set in the grandeur of nature, the film takes place in a proverbial *locus amoenus* named Crystal Lake, which encompasses a bucolic stretch of forest in New Jersey surrounding a tranquil body of water. However, the beauty of this locale is deceptive, as visitors to the site quickly discover that the woods are remote, isolated, and difficult to navigate at night. Referred to colloquially as “Camp Blood,” there is a dark history of violence associated with the area, and it is believed to be haunted by the spirit of Jason who, in fact, uses Crystal Lake as his personal killing grounds. This area has special significance for Jason as it marks the site of his mother’s death—the event that prompts his murderous desire to rid the area of all future residents. Thus, entering the site marks a transgression which



Fig. 18. Film still from *Friday the 13th Part 2* showing the exterior of Jason’s shack in the woods.
Source: Paramount Pictures.

invokes Jason's ire and he responds to this violation of his personal realm with carnage.

Jason's makeshift hut is located in the woods that surround Crystal Lake and is cobbled together from wooden planks and discarded pieces of aluminum (Fig. 18). The impression created by the structure is that Jason lives off the scraps he has pilfered from neighbouring towns since the interior of the hut includes only the basic amenities for survival: a few candles, a cracked toilet, and an oil lantern. Jason lives without any mode of modern communication or technology, and the fact that he exists in such squalid conditions reinforces his subhuman status. Harper likens Jason and his feral lifestyle to the wolf from *Little Red Riding Hood*, stating that he "lives in the wilderness, where he can punish those who stray into the woods, away from society and its conventions" (52). Furthermore, the only distinguishing piece of furniture in Jason's hut is a macabre shrine dedicated to his mother, which is crowned with her partially decomposed head (Fig. 19). This monument not only invokes notions connected to the abject attributes of the human body but also indicates Jason's strong affiliation with his mother's crimes and his perpetual rage over her death. The fact that Jason is so heavily invested in the memory of his mother that he would retain portions of her corpse indicates his lack of an autonomous identity. This preoccupation with events that occurred years earlier distances Jason from the younger generation and simultaneously spurs his hatred for anyone that reminds him of the crime committed against his mother.

Throughout the series, Jason piles the bodies of his victims around this altar and, much like Bluebeard, transforms his lair into an abode of the dead by incorporating their corpses into his home. This practice serves as a visual articulation of his emotional and psychological perversion and demonstrates his disturbing fetishization of death, in which



Fig. 19. Film still from *Friday the 13th Part 2* showing the rotting head of Jason's deceased mother inside Jason's shack. Source: Paramount Pictures.

the deceased are transformed into objects to decorate his surroundings. The altar also commemorates Jason's love for his mother and demonstrates the fact that he is frozen "at a stage of psychological development that marks his overinvolvement with ... the past" (Dika, *Games of Terror* 83). The notion that Jason and his mother are inextricably bound together, almost to the point of merging into a single entity, is made evident in the first two films through the intense psychic connection that the two share. Jason therefore lacks the maturity required to make sound moral judgments, which in turn allows him to carry out murderous acts more easily. Entrenched within the nihilistic aspects of his personal history, Jason is incapable of progressing into the future and, as a result, destroys those symbols of renewal and life that surround him.

Jason's affiliation with death and his desire to destroy symbols of vitality and life also connect him with the notion of necrophilia. Though necrophilia is traditionally understood as a sexual attraction to corpses and the flesh of the dead, it also designates a fixation on morbidity and chaos. German sociologist Erich Fromm (1900-1980) points out that necrophilia entails an affinity for "all that is dead, decayed, putrid, [and] sickly;" adding that it is "the passion to ... destroy for the sake of destruction" (441). Fromm goes on to propose that the condition of necrophilia results from immature psychological development and the failure to advance beyond the state of "narcissism and indifference" (486). Based on Fromm's observations, it is evident that Jason exhibits a preoccupation with necrophilia, as he perpetrates violence to satisfy his own malicious and egoistic desires. The slaughter of the younger characters in the film is therefore demonstrative of this facet of Jason's character, as their deaths are both unwarranted and carried out with brutal efficiency.

The motif of the Boogeyman's lair is repeated in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* in the form of Krueger's dream world, where he torments his teenage victims. Visually, Krueger's private domain resembles an industrialized Hell, with a series of Escher-like stairs blanketed over a pit of smoke and fire. This subterranean basement is peppered with torture implements and is covered with blood and other bodily fluids, evoking notions of decay and psychological ruination. Harper explains that this locale is essentially a mythologized vision of the boiler room where Krueger brought his earthly victims and therefore references the site of his demise and subsequent monstrous resurrection (51). Within this context, Krueger is posited as a predatory figure that successfully lures his victims into this nightmarish domain only to exploit their fears and

weaknesses. Accordingly, he is both the architect and ruler of this world, and its design is clearly intended to evoke disgust and terror.

Unlike the sites associated with Myers and Voorhees, Krueger's private sanctuary does not contain the corpses of his victims, though it does house their personal belongings, which he collects as souvenirs. This is demonstrated in a pivotal scene from the film when Nancy journeys into Krueger's world and discovers a series of items along the way that belong to her deceased friends. Specifically, she finds her boyfriend Glen's bloodied headphones, as well as a crucifix that belonged to her close friend Tina. Like a serial killer collecting trophies from his victims, Krueger presumably gathers these items to reminisce and revel in his murderous accomplishments. By surrounding himself with mementos from his kills, Krueger transforms his world into a shrine commemorating his savage behaviour which intrinsically reinforces his role as a personification of Death.

By subjugating and enslaving his victims, Krueger is able to fulfill his distorted self-image as a domineering figure who wields unprecedented power. This sense of self-aggrandizement is a central driving force behind the actions of all the slasher villains included in this thesis and manifests in the form of sadistic acts of cruelty.²²⁷ In these films, death is usually prolonged and excruciating, occurring only after an extended period of psychological and physical torture. By lengthening the suffering of his victims, the killer can satisfy his desire to inspire terror. Whether it is Michael Myers marvelling at Bob's skewered corpse, or Freddy Krueger taunting Tina as he rips open her chest, the relationship between violence and gratification is integral to the cinematic Boogeyman.

²²⁷ Freud (1930) described sadism as a destructiveness that is "accompanied by an extraordinarily intense narcissistic enjoyment, due to the fulfilment it brings to the ego" (48). Bartlett extends this definition further by characterizing it as "a pathology in which the instincts of aggression and destructiveness become exaggerated" (76).

As Baumeister notes, the villains that populate these films appear to be “driven primarily by the wish to inflict harm merely for the pleasure of doing so” (72-3).²²⁸ The victim becomes the subject of the killer’s fury and rage, and is subsequently crushed under the weight of their attacker’s ego. Hence, the goal of the slasher villain is to achieve complete control over others: a dynamic that reaches its fulfillment through death, whereupon the victim is literally transformed into an inanimate object that can be entirely possessed.

VI. The Boogeyman’s Weapon

As previously outlined, the Boogeyman’s propensity for sadism is rooted in his desire for domination over his victims and is expressed through acts of extraordinary brutality. In perpetrating these assaults against members of the community, the Boogeyman utilizes some form of weaponry that will allow him to physically and psychologically torment and eventually murder his victims.²²⁹ These tools are designed to mutilate the victim’s body and prolong the pain and suffering associated with death while also allowing for intimate contact and excessive amounts of bloodletting.²³⁰ These items may assume the form of defensive extremities (such as claws and talons) or may even be manufactured weapons that mimic the appendages of the body (such as knives, saws, and machetes). This characteristic of the Boogeyman is an expression of his role as an

²²⁸ Movie critics Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert echo Baumeister’s sentiments when they state that “enjoying being evil is the key to any successful villain” in the slasher subgenre (*Siskel & Ebert*).

²²⁹ The characteristics of the Boogeyman are similar to those associated with the tyrant ruler in Plato’s *Republic*, which include “lust and madness” and engaging in taboo behaviours such as cannibalism, murder, and incest (573c). Plato goes on to explain that the tyrannical personality is aligned with the bestial aspects of human nature and is awakened when “the reasonable and humane part of us is asleep” (571c). Much like the Boogeyman, the tyrant feels no commitment towards anyone but himself and defies all overarching moral codes defined by the community/state.

²³⁰ Clover notes that the rudimentary nature of these weapons necessitate close physical interactions that bring the “attacker and attacked into primitive, animalistic embrace” (32).

incarnation of the Death-Demon, as this archetypal form is commonly equipped with armament for trapping and killing its prey (Herzog 76).²³¹ The Boogeyman is therefore frequently portrayed with signature weapons which reflect his monstrous character and further establish his role as a punishing avenger and ruthless tyrant in the cultural imaginary.²³²

This dynamic is clearly demonstrated in the character Bluebeard, who utilizes a cutlass to harm his victims as punishment for opposing him. This weapon features quite prominently in Perrault's story, as it is the instrument with which he attempts to cut off his wife's head after discovering that she has entered the forbidden chamber (Perrault, *The Story* 52). This vignette has become an integral aspect of Bluebeard's iconography and a common scene that is featured in depictions of the homicidal bridegroom. Tatar explains that in artwork Bluebeard is frequently portrayed as "a sabre-wielding tyrant" engaged in the act of decapitating his wife (and previous victims) for defying his orders (*The Hard Facts* 167). The brutality that Bluebeard perpetrates against his wife contributes to his role as a manifestation of the Death-Demon and the phallic weapon that he uses helps to cement his monstrous reputation in the public consciousness.

Like Bluebeard, the slasher villains examined in this thesis have become inextricably associated with their weapons and these tools have helped shape their terrifying role in the cultural imaginary. As Clover indicates, the items utilized by these killers generally include "knives, hammers, axes, ice picks, hypodermic needles, red hot poker, pitchforks, and the like" (31). These synthetic weapons, which are typically

²³¹ Herzog cites the claws of the Harpies from Greek mythology and the iron hook used by the water demon Hakemann of Germanic folklore as examples of the weaponry associated with the Death-Demon archetype (76).

²³² According to Herzog, manifestation of the Death-Demon will possess weapons that "have symbolic meanings which point to the essential character" of the monster (76).

forged from metal, leather, and wood, reference the predatory features of animals and function as symbolic limbs. As Harper explains, these tools contribute to the public image of the slasher villain, aiding in the development of their mythology: “The aspects of the [slasher] films that stick out in the audience’s mind are invariably the weapons and equipment used by the relevant psychopath” (40). Indeed, the violent thrust of Myers’ knife, the flick of Krueger’s metal talons, and the clumsy chop of Voorhees’ machete all contribute to their owner’s monstrous persona.

For example, in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, the threatening nature of the razor-taloned glove Krueger wields contributes to his frightening presence and elicits fear from both the other onscreen characters and the audience. Moreover, the importance of the glove is clearly established in the prologue of the film, which documents the construction of Krueger’s weapon. This scene indicates that the glove is not merely a device but is an extension of Krueger’s body, and is as vital to the killer as his own limbs. As actor Robert Englund states, the glove acts as a vessel for Krueger’s dreams and fantasies, and “when he put it on, it emboldened him” (*Never Sleep Again*). The intense process of fashioning the glove is depicted as a labour of love, requiring hours of work to forge the blades and joints. This sequence presumably occurs in Krueger’s boiler room while he is still busily pursuing his vocation as a child killer years prior to the main storyline.²³³ The fact that Krueger uses the glove during his lifetime to dispose of his victims allows it to function on numerous levels within the narrative: it is a symbol of his anarchic nature, a talisman for his spirit, and a relic from his violent past. The wearing of the glove

²³³ Phillips notes the fact that Freddy’s dream world is “a nightmarish recreation of the boiler room in which he committed his earthly crimes and in which almost all his victims in *Nightmare* find themselves eventually” (*Dark Direction* 83).

ultimately contributes to Krueger's supernatural transformation into the Boogeyman because it permits him a more efficient method for expressing his murderous appetite.

Krueger's trademark weapon has clear primal connotations as the blades of the glove resemble the nails of an animal. This facet of the weapon is noted by Liz Dixon who argues that the metal talons Krueger uses to dispose of his victims are reminiscent of a "predator baring its claws" (165).²³⁴ It is these types of evocative images that make the glove such a memorable fixture in the series, tapping into universal and foundational fears concerning torture, pain, and death. Krueger's weapon merges the primitive with the modern, allowing the villain to dispose of his prey in a manner that is both efficient and bloody. The glove's audible qualities are also terrifying as demonstrated during Nancy's first encounter with Krueger when he runs his finger blades along the metal piping in his boiler room, creating a screeching noise that mimics the cries of a human. The raw sound of the instrument has an overwhelmingly visceral quality and clearly evokes a feeling of dread within Nancy who covers her ears and screams.

The razor-taloned glove successfully amalgamates the notions of sadism and sexual rage, allowing Krueger simultaneously to satisfy both his destructive and carnal appetites. As Dixon indicates, the glove helps Krueger express his "monstrous urges" and "revel in threatening and killing his young victims" (161). Indeed, this weapon grants Krueger an extraordinarily high degree of physical control when manipulating his prey, permitting him to touch his victims as he pursues his murderous impulses—all of which heighten the sexual undertones of his actions. As film producer Jeff Katz explains,

²³⁴ As Craven explains, inspiration for Krueger's bladed glove came from terrifying images of wild animals: "[the] earliest weapon that [hu]mankind might have been afraid of ... would be ... the weapon of an animal, the cave bear, something [that] could reach around the corner with those big giant claws" (*Never Sleep Again*).

Krueger's "modus operandi" is to evoke fear from the other characters in the narrative, as his enjoyment derives from prolonging his victim's pain (*Never Sleep Again*). Sublimating his libidinal energy into sadistic behaviour, Krueger's weapon serves as a conduit that externalizes his sexual frustration through the acts of murder and dismemberment. The blades of the glove bite into the flesh of his victims with raw intensity and transform the act of murder into an orgy of destruction. Releasing a geyser of bodily fluids, Krueger relishes the process of butchering the teenage cast of the film and the deaths of the younger characters are transformed into a Bacchanalian celebration. This practice of conflating sex and violence is a trope endemic to the cinematic Boogeyman and is similarly exhibited by both Voorhees and Myers.

Like Krueger's razor-fingered glove, the knife used in *Halloween* has become synonymous with Myers, and the weight, appearance, and movement of the weapon contributes to his persona within the public consciousness. This weapon figures prominently throughout the film—it is the instrument used to kill Judith, slice Annie's throat, impale Bob, and wound Laurie. Furthermore, the thrusting action of the knife has obvious sexual connotations, and its phallic shape has caused theorists such as Carol Clover to speculate that it serves as a metaphor for Myers' libidinal frustration.²³⁵ The knife is a powerful image in the film as it signifies the symbolic threat of sexual penetration as well as the literal danger of physical violence. Interestingly, this weapon only becomes the centerpiece of the action during the scenes between Michael and Laurie, as the heroine alone can appropriate and use it herself against the villain. This is

²³⁵ For further information concerning the relationship between violence and sexual frustration see Clover (1992).

largely because both characters possess a sexual drive that has been repressed and sublimated into violent acts.

Myers' use of a weapon to violently express his libidinal energy is a practice that is similarly exhibited by Krueger and Voorhees. By torturing and killing other characters, the villain is able to symbolically consummate his relationship with his victims and thereby externalize his sexual urges. It is therefore no coincidence that many of the weapons utilized by the slasher villain are phallic in nature and mimic the shape of male genitalia. Wood explains that the release of sexuality in the horror film is "always presented as perverted, monstrous, and excessive" as a result of repression (21). Through this dynamic, the concepts of death and eroticism are brought into close proximity with one another and the act of killing is transformed into a disturbing euphemism for the act of intercourse (a notion discussed later in this chapter).

This theme of the phallic weapon is similarly observed in the *Friday the 13th* films which present Jason Voorhees savagely slaughtering a series of victims with a machete. Larger and more cumbersome than the knife employed by Myers, the machete expresses certain facets of Jason's persona—particularly his feral and ungoverned nature. Used extensively in the jungle and forests for hunting and expedition, the machete is generally associated with the wilderness and is intended to portray Jason as a being that operates outside the boundaries of "civilization." Subverting its functional purpose of clearing brushwood and creating paths in the wild, Jason uses the machete to violently massacre his victims' bodies. In the original *Friday the 13th* this weapon is used by the heroine Alice Hardy to decapitate the villainous Mrs. Voorhees during their climactic fight scene. The machete therefore signifies the Voorhees' family legacy and functions as a symbol of

Jason's internalized rage. Utilizing this tool, Jason perpetrates unspeakable horrors on his victims and, more so than any other slasher villain, treats their bodies with an extraordinarily high degree of brutality that can only be described as savage. The machete therefore becomes an effective symbol within the *Friday the 13th* series that communicates and emphasizes Jason's volatile nature.

The sadistic impulses that characterize Voorhees and the other villains of the slasher subgenre are an integral component of the Boogeyman persona. The monstrous Other is driven to commit repeated acts of brutality to maintain his terrifying grip on the community. By killing his victims, the slasher villain also creates a moral and social divide between himself and the collective that is largely unbridgeable, as this transgressive act implies that he has forfeited any ties to civilized conduct. As von Franz points out, when an individual commits the act of murder, he/she "transcends human nature, and in that way the deed has *a demonic or divine quality*" (my italics; *Shadow and Evil* 41). The victim is dehumanized and reduced to an object that can be emotionally and physically exploited to serve the desires of the killer. Through such acts, the villain comes to embody the role of the archetypal Death-Demon and personify the public's anxieties related to morbidity, suffering, and pain.

In the guise of the Boogeyman, the Death-Demon assumes the form of a homicidal villain who murders individuals that defy the overarching values of the narrative framework. Slaughtering victims who fall within his clutches, the terror and panic inspired by the monstrous Other instils fear in the public and reinforces prevailing regressive values. The close affiliation between death and the Boogeyman is further evidenced by the physical markers of morbidity that decorate both his person and home.

Withdrawing from the realm of the living, he resides in decrepit locations and collects symbols of death drawn from his murderous exploits, such as the bodies and/or possessions of his victims. To achieve these ends, he often torments his prey physically, emotionally, and psychologically so as to extend their suffering and heighten his enjoyment. Thus, the Boogeyman persona is closely aligned with the themes of sadism, pain, and torture—all characteristics that we observe in folkloric and cinematic iterations of this mythic monster.

VII. The Boogeyman and the “Marriage to Death” Theme

In the cultural artefacts examined in this thesis, the villain’s brutal reign of destruction is finally brought to an end through the intervention of a female protagonist who utilizes her skills to combat and defeat him. By confronting the killer, the heroine rescues herself and the community from the nihilistic control of the monstrous Other and simultaneously acquires a personal sense of psychological maturity. This narrative structure closely reflects the archetypal “marriage to Death” theme that Neumann describes in his research concerning the development of the feminine psyche. This concept involves a female protagonist encountering and deposing a monstrous entity that personifies death in her journey to reach the state of consciousness. As I demonstrate through my examination of Neumann’s work in the following section, the “marriage to Death” theme is a pivotal component in fairytales and films that feature the Boogeyman.

In *Amor and Psyche*, Neumann outlines the five stages involved in the development of the feminine subject. Much like in his other publications on depth psychology, he looks to mythology (specifically the Greco-Roman tale of *Amor and*

Psyche) as a reference point in his assessment of this topic.²³⁶ He divides this story into the following stages that serve as significant markers in the evolution of the feminine psyche: (1) the introduction, (2) the marriage to Death, (3) the act, (4) the four tasks, and (5) the happy ending (*Amor and Psyche* 57). Neumann characterizes “the marriage to Death” phase as a symbolic articulation of the physical act of intercourse as experienced by the female subject. His analogy between sex and an encounter with Death articulates the potential dangers of heterosexual intercourse that are unique to the female experience such as the possibility of pregnancy, childbirth, and by extension, death. He describes this event as a rite of passage that marks the individual’s transition into adulthood and is often expressed metaphorically as a terrifying act of sacrifice in which the female subject is offered up to “a monster, dragon, wizard or evil spirit” (*Amor and Psyche* 62).²³⁷ He goes on to state that the “marriage to Death” theme is a common trope in myths and tales and serves to symbolically highlight a foundational rite of passage in the process of individuation for the feminine subject. We see the “marriage to Death” theme presented in narratives associated with both the folkloric and cinematic Boogeyman, whereupon the

²³⁶ In this tale, the young Psyche is a mortal woman who is despised by the envious goddess Venus for her beauty. Out of vengeance, Venus solicits her son Cupid (Amor) to force Psyche to fall in love with a physically hideous man, but upon seeing her he is enamoured and disobeys his mother. Psyche’s father consults the oracle and discovers that his daughter is destined to wed a monster. Out of desperation, Psyche’s parents attempt to kill their daughter through the act of exposure; however, she is whisked away by a wind and deposited in a meadow. Psyche then discovers a gilded castle and is instructed by the disembodied voice of Cupid to go to the bedroom where they then have intercourse. Though Psyche becomes Cupid’s lover, she is never permitted to see him since their bedroom is perpetually bathed in darkness. Eventually Psyche’s curiosity overcomes her and she uses an oil lamp to look at Cupid while he is asleep; she is so startled by the sight of the young god that she accidentally spills the hot oil from the lamp and burns him. Cupid flees and deposits Psyche on the bank of a river where she wanders the land searching for her lover. Eventually she is forced to become Venus’ slave and to complete a series of impossible tasks which she fulfills with the help of magical creatures. After she completes these assignments, she is reunited with Cupid and he seeks out the approval of Jupiter for the two of them to be wed (Neumann, *Amor and Psyche* 3-53).

²³⁷ Rankin explains that the heroine’s transformation into adulthood is a theme that is also present in many fairytales, as demonstrated in his analysis of the story *Briar Rose*: “We know that Brier Rose [sic] must ascend the tower staircase and go into the hidden room with the spinning wheel. Like all maidens, she must meet her fate in order to mature fully into womanhood and earn her happy ending” (50).

female protagonist is either literally or symbolically wed to the murderous male villain, who serves as a personification of Death.

In the cultural artefacts examined in this thesis, the Boogeyman is depicted as a monstrous bridegroom who uses violence as a means of expressing his libidinal energy. The villain can adopt two potential forms: (1) he may be a literal husband to his victims (as seen in *Bluebeard*), or (2) he may function as a symbolic suitor and utilize torture and murder as a perverse substitute for sexual intercourse (a practice that is seen in the slasher film). In both of these scenarios, the Boogeyman conflates the relationship between sex and death, and the demise of his victims serves as the fulfillment of his libidinal desire. This notion is further emphasized by the fact that after he has killed his victims, the Boogeyman will often use their bodies to adorn his private lair in an attempt to integrate their remains into his physical and psychological self—an act that I assert is a distorted and perverse metaphor for intercourse.

In Perrault's story we see the "marriage to Death" theme illustrated through the violent interactions between the villainous Bluebeard and his final wife. Bluebeard's role as the embodiment of Death is most clearly symbolized by his private lair that the heroine enters at the climax of the story. Inside this room she discovers the dead bodies of Bluebeard's previous wives hung from the ceiling with their throats slit. According to Cristina Bacchilega the heroine's choice to enter this room is an act of initiation that she *must* undertake, testing "whether she can acquire ... knowledge and then use it cleverly enough to triumph over *death*" (my italics; 107).²³⁸ The act of entering the forbidden

²³⁸ Tatar explains that the bloody chamber can be read both as a symbol of carnality and morbidity, resulting in the "heroine's recognition of death" and the nightmarish aspects of human sexuality (*The Hard Facts* 169). Bettelheim further examines the psychosexual symbolism that pervades the story of *Bluebeard*, describing it as "a tale about the destructive aspects of sex" (301). In his analysis, he argues that the "key

chamber is therefore a revelatory moment for the heroine, as she is confronted by a shocking vision of violence that foreshadows her own potential doom. As Philip Lewis explains, upon seeing the bodies of Bluebeard's previous wives, the heroine experiences the "bruising effect of ... self-recognition, in which ... she is forced to identify with her dead predecessors" and envision "the coming of her own death" (213-4). Indeed, by encountering the corpses of these women, Bluebeard's final wife realizes the threat her husband poses to her life and, on a broader scale, acknowledges the crippling truth of her own mortality. The only hope for the heroine to escape the same fate as Bluebeard's previous spouses is by crafting a plan to outsmart the folkloric Boogeyman and destroy him.

This harrowing experience changes her into a woman, forcing her to become cognizant of her husband's dangerous nature and, in turn, develop the resources and skills to outwit him or perish as a result. It is only by exercising her intelligence and cunning that she is able to escape Bluebeard's wrath and summon the help necessary to avoid certain death. Hermansson discusses the presence of the "marriage to Death" theme in *Bluebeard* and asserts that Perrault's tale revolves around the female protagonist undergoing a rite of "initiation" that involves symbolically "overcoming Death" personified by her husband (xv).²³⁹ As outlined in Chapter 2, the villain embodies the heroine's negative Animus and, by extension, the dangers of the conscious world such as those brought about through intercourse (pregnancy, childbirth, and the possibility of death). By overcoming the villain, the female protagonist can successfully integrate her

that opens the door to a secret room suggest associations to the male sexual organ, particularly in first intercourse when the hymen is broken and blood gets on it" (300-1).

²³⁹ Hermansson goes on to claim that this archetypal theme appears in fairytales around the world, and in these narratives, it is ultimately the heroine's ability to utilize her intelligence and strength to overcome Death that guarantees her survival (xi).

personal Shadow (which entails those anxieties and fears that pervade her psyche) into her conscious mind. Through the act of confronting Bluebeard and deflecting his murderous attacks, the heroine can achieve the state of individuation and acquire the maturity necessary to cope with the realities of the world—specifically the physical danger of death. The notion that fairytales such as *Bluebeard* serve as cultural markers that commemorate rites of passage is discussed by Bruno Bettelheim, who claims that these stories “depict in imaginary and symbolic form the essential steps in growing up and achieving an independent existence” (73). Following Bettelheim, I further argue that the same principle applies to the slasher film and that the “marriage to Death” theme is manifested in the relationship between the Final Girl and the cinematic Boogeyman.

According to Short, the trials of the final wife in Perrault’s story are remarkably similar to the journey faced by the heroine in the slasher film. Short claims that the Final Girl demonstrates the same resourcefulness and insight that is possessed by folkloric heroines, and by confronting the villain she similarly showcases her strength, ingenuity, and elevated sense of awareness (32). By comparing the final wife from *Bluebeard* to Nancy Thompson and Laurie Strode, Short illustrates the fact that the journeys these women undertake all involve a struggle to acquire truth and identity (32). Indeed, the curious and compassionate nature of these women may place them in peril, but it is also what leads them out of danger and transforms them into heroines. Clover similarly addresses the profound psychological transformation that the female protagonist undergoes following her encounter with the villain, explaining that “[w]hen the Final Girl stands at last in the light of day with the knife in her hand, she has delivered herself into the *adult world*” (my italics; 49). As Clover demonstrates in this quote, the slasher

heroine undergoes a profound change in her character by encountering the villain and surviving his attacks. Through this ordeal, the Final Girl can develop an elevated understanding of the dangers present in the world and how to cope with such threats. Though both Short and Clover are examining these films through a feminist lens, their conclusions are aligned with Neumann's research concerning the role of conflict in the development of the feminine psyche.

Applying Neumann's theoretical framework to the slasher film, it becomes obvious that the relationship shared by the villain and the heroine demonstrates the "marriage to Death" theme. Much like Bluebeard's wife, the Final Girl is pitted against a male adversary who embodies Death and threatens to destroy the community through acts of carnage. By confronting the villain, the heroine is able to arrest the cinematic Boogeyman's destructive reign and simultaneously attain individual psychological maturity. As Clover points out, it is the Final Girl who "looks death in the face" and possesses the integrity and courage to overcome him in the final act of the film (39). Indeed, it is through the process of waging battle with the slasher villain that the female protagonist undergoes a process of maturation that marks her transformation into adulthood.

As indicated earlier, this rite of passage that the Final Girl undergoes is made possible by the fact that, unlike her peers, she can repress and sublimate her sexual energy into alternate activities—specifically, the violence that she enacts against the villain during their final encounter. The redirection of the heroine's libidinal energy into acts of aggression allows her to appropriate and manipulate the killer's weapon. This quality of the Final Girl also results in a bizarre kinship with the villain, as he similarly

exhibits a repressed and/or sublimated sexual drive. Their savage interactions are consequently transformed into expressions of sexual energy and the prospect of death becomes a metaphor for the consummation of the sexual undertones of their relationship. Ultimately, this implicit link between heroine and villain serves to symbolically highlight their archetypal compatibility in the film's narrative. As outlined in the previous chapter, the Final Girl and the cinematic Boogeyman embody opposing psychological principles and are therefore ideal adversaries, as their encounter at the conclusion of the film resolves the tension that has built throughout the entire narrative. Perhaps the clearest illustration of this notion is presented through the violent clashes between Michael Myers and Laurie Strode in Carpenter's *Halloween*.

Throughout the course of this film, it is repeatedly insinuated that Laurie and Myers share a unique kinship rooted in sexual repression. Both heroine and villain have sublimated their libidinal energies into alternate activities, resulting in Michael's preoccupation with violent acts of destruction and Laurie's fixation on her schoolwork and other responsibilities. This quality is noted in both characters by director John Carpenter, who describes the film as "the revenge of the repressed" (*Halloween: A Cut Above the Rest*). Similarly, Phillips points out that both Michael and Laurie are "sexual misfits" with "stunted and immature" libidinal drives (*Dark Directions* 145). Despite their opposing roles in the narrative structure of the film, Laurie and Myers are bound together by their mutual plight of sexual frustration and, in a perverse twist, they are posited as bizarre lovers in the narrative structure of *Halloween*.

Within the film, it is repeatedly suggested that these two antithetical characters are not only fated to meet but are also perfectly matched to wage battle, thereby

permitting them an opportunity to externalize their sexual energy through a series of violent confrontations. This notion is established early in the film when Laurie is asked by her father, a real estate agent, to leave a key under the mat of the Myers' house so he can show it to prospective buyers. Unbeknownst to Laurie, as she walks onto the Myers' property, she is being watched by Michael from inside the house and, upon catching sight of this young woman trespassing on his property, he becomes instantly fixated on her. As the scene continues, Laurie begins her journey to school, humming a lullaby to herself that features the lyrics "I wish I had you all alone, just the two of us," all the while oblivious to the fact that Michael continues to watch her.²⁴⁰ Her singing is overlaid with the unsettling and almost sensuous sound of Myers' heavy breathing, and this sequence insinuates that he is the fulfillment of Laurie's repressed desire to have a boyfriend, establishing a disturbing sexual link between the two characters.²⁴¹

In a scene that occurs later that same day it is further suggested that Laurie and Michael not only share a psychosexual connection, but that their eventual encounter at the end of the film has been preordained. As Laurie sits in class listening to her teacher discuss the concept of fate in relation to the text *The Life of Collins* (by moralist Samuel Johnson), she glances out the window and catches sight of Myers on the street who is returning her stare. The teacher's monologue alludes to the fact that, much like Collins, Laurie is on a predetermined path that will culminate in her encounter with Myers: "fate caught up with several lives here. No matter what course of action [William] Collins took, he was destined to his own fate, his own day of reckoning." As the teacher concludes her lesson, Laurie once again glances out the classroom window to discover

²⁴⁰ For further information about this scene see Huddleston (2005).

²⁴¹ For further information about Myers' role as the perverted fulfillment of Laurie's desire for a boyfriend see Dika (1990).

that Myers has vanished, insinuating that he is a manifestation of Laurie's imagination and sexual frustration. This scene further cements the peculiar sexual bond between heroine and villain that will be fulfilled later in the film through their violent interactions.

Sexual repression is a pervasive theme in the slasher subgenre and in these films the villain is able to release his libidinal impulses through the ruthless act of unjustified killing. This savage behaviour serves as a symbolic substitute for intercourse and thus the relationship between victim and killer is metaphorically consummated. The sublimated expression of the cinematic Boogeyman's sexual energy in the form of violence is most conspicuous in the treatment of his female victims whose deaths tend to be particularly prominent and graphic in nature. Through their demise, these women are quite literally transformed into the brides of Death and, much like Bluebeard's wives, they are metaphorically wed to the villain, who often keeps their mortal remains in his lair as trophies.²⁴² These secondary characters (Annie and Lynda in *Halloween* and Tina in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*) are therefore of key importance in the narrative structure of these films as they anticipate the villain's meeting with his final bride, the heroine, who is frequently a chaste female. It is through the intervention of this Final Girl, who utilizes her libidinal impulses to combat and disable the villain, that the killer's destructive reign is finally arrested.

This theme is similarly presented in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, where Krueger is posited as Nancy's perverted love interest and their violent exchanges function as manifestations of their libidinal energy. Krueger is more overtly sexualized than Myers or Voorhees, and he possesses a carnal appetite that is both insatiable and depraved. Despite

²⁴² Williams asserts that the monster's violent attack on his female victims "enacts a symbolic castration that often functions as a kind of punishment for an ill-timed exhibition of sexual desire." ("Film Bodies" 174)

this distinction from the other slasher villains featured in this thesis, Krueger still expresses his libido through sadistic acts of cruelty that often results in the death of his victims. In fulfilling this task, he reduces these individuals to sexual objects for his personal enjoyment, a dynamic that is particularly prevalent to Nancy, since she is framed within the narrative as his main target. Actor Robert Englund stated in an interview that, by entering Nancy's dreams (as well as those of her peers), Krueger is able to violate his victim in an unprecedented fashion: "Freddy's in those teenage girls' bedrooms, he's in their bed with them ... that's more of a violation than rape" (*Never Sleep Again*). The strange sexual tension between Nancy and Krueger is one of the central driving forces behind *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and becomes an increasingly conspicuous element as the film progresses. The sexual battle in which they are engaged is therefore rooted in their archetypal properties, and Krueger's desire to murder Nancy is a manifestation of his longing to destroy her role as a force of goodness within the community.

This theme is clearly implied during Nancy's fourth dream sequence when she is attacked by Krueger while lying in a bathtub. As Nancy soaks in the warm water, Krueger's glove emerges from between her legs, directly juxtaposing the soft flesh of her thighs with the tarnished steel of his claws. In an act that invokes gyno-phallic imagery, and thereby symbolically references the act of sexual intercourse, Krueger transforms the tub into a pit, and grabs at Nancy's naked body in an attempt to drag her down to a watery grave. Rathgeb points out that this scene insinuates that "Nancy and Krueger are potential sex partners, [and] that they have somehow become compatible within the film's moral scheme" (42). As the film progresses, Krueger increasingly becomes the

physical embodiment of Nancy's sexual frustration and the nightmarish manifestation of her dream lover.

This notion is revisited in a later scene when Nancy tries desperately to contact Glen via the telephone in order to prevent him from falling asleep and becoming another one of Krueger's victims. However, instead of reaching Glen, Nancy hears Krueger's chilling voice on the other end of the line telling her, "I'm your boyfriend now" (*A Nightmare on Elm Street*). The phone then partially morphs into the form of a tongue, a manifestation of Krueger's "dream power," and begins violently licking Nancy's lips. Commenting on this scene, Rathgeb argues that Krueger's objective is to "become Nancy's dream lover, to legitimize sexually the union of their two rapidly converging worlds" (43). Actress Heather Langenkamp echoes these sentiments in an interview, confirming that "Nancy and Krueger's relationship has always had a sexual component" (*Never Sleep Again*). Indeed, Krueger's continued use of perverted sexual innuendo in his interactions with Nancy is rooted in the fact that she is his ideal adversary and represents his ultimate challenge both romantically and psychologically.

The sexual link between the Final Girl and the cinematic Boogeyman reaches its culmination in the dramatic confrontation that generally occurs at the end of the slasher film. The act of facing the villain marks a moment of transformation in the life of the female protagonist and symbolizes her graduation into adulthood. By confronting Death, personified in the form of the villain, the heroine transitions into a state of consciousness, whereby she is aware of morbidity in the world. Much like the act of heterosexual intercourse and its potentially harrowing consequences (which includes the possibilities of disease, pregnancy, childbirth and death), surviving her encounter with the villain

signifies that the Final Girl is no longer a child, but has become a woman. In her discussion of sexual penetration, Haskell (1987) explains that for many heterosexual women participating in intercourse “is more a terror than an opportunity” (399). I assert that Haskell’s statement is realized in symbolic terms within the slasher film through the aggression that the villain directs towards the heroine, signifying the harrowing facets of the sexual encounter for the female participant. For the Final Girl, this rite of passage is experienced purely on the symbolic level, as the sexual dimensions of this encounter are never consciously acknowledge in the narrative. Instead, the violent interactions that the heroine and villain share function euphemistically to express their libidinal energy and externalize their sexual drives.

This encounter with Death manifests in the form of a transgression, the slasher villain either violating the heroine physically (as shown in *Halloween* and *Friday the 13th*) and/or on a psychological level (as shown in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*). In the films in this thesis, the female protagonist is victimized by the cinematic Boogeyman who attempts to sabotage her sense of selfhood and thereby annihilate her. The act of facing the killer symbolizes an encounter with Death, and the Final Girl’s ability to survive this experience is predicated on both her moral virtue and her level of self-awareness. Through the appropriation and manipulation of the villain’s weapon, she is able to externalize her sexual energy through acts of aggression and self-assertion, and fulfill the process of individuation in the development of her psyche.

The heroine and villain symbolically embody the conflicting forces of life and death in the slasher film. Their encounter represents the shocking union of the most fundamental aspects of the human condition coming together in a moment of destructive

eroticism. This confrontation is not simply the denouement of the plot, but also marks the collision between two figures that possess opposing psychological/archetypal properties. The expulsion and/or destruction of the killer demonstrates the heroine's ability to cope with the dangers of the world (which include death) and operate within the realm of consciousness. Like Bluebeard's wife, the Final Girl struggles to protect herself and her peers from the destructive force of the villain and by deposing the Boogeyman, she restores harmony to the community and temporarily brings a close to the danger that he poses to the collective.

Conclusion:

The Continuation of the Boogeyman

The Boogeyman is essentially an organic entity, adapting according to environmental demands to articulate the fears that are prevalent to a particular group during a specific time period. Indeed, the monstrous Other never truly vanishes from the cultural imaginary, but instead is reconceived by each successive generation, and his reappearance is therefore not only recurrent, but also inevitable.²⁴³ This facet of the monster is discussed by Cristina Santos and Adriana Spahr who argue that such creatures have always been constructed and disseminated “based on the prevailing socio-cultural values of the era” (ix). This ability to transform and reflect contemporary attitudes and anxieties is the source of the Boogeyman’s vitality and is reflective of the fluid nature of the archetype. However, despite these extrinsic influences, the core function of the Boogeyman remains consistent: reinforcing hegemonic values through the brutal reproach of transgressors.

As outlined in the Introduction, the archetype is divided into two components: first, the form (the fundamental concept), which is fixed; and second, the image (the visual expression), which is prone to mutation and is easily affected by the cultural context. Based on this idea, one can surmise that the notion of the Boogeyman (the form) is universal, allowing for perpetual iterations of this monster all over the globe, although his physical characteristics (the image) will vary depending upon contextual elements. The Boogeyman is, therefore, a figure that is both specific and generic, as the expression

²⁴³ Geoffrey Hill explains that archetypes “remain the same, but the manner in which they appear will differ with each generation” (6).

of his visual persona is shaped by current trends related to the cultural imaginary in which it is situated. Jung touched on the mutability of the archetype in his work, explaining that primordial images “undergo ceaseless transformation and yet remain ever the same, but only in a new form can they be understood anew” (*C.W. Vol. 16* 196). Mackey-Kallis proposes a similar line of reasoning regarding myth, stating that these stories “must constantly be reborn and reinterpreted for every generation or they will die” (19). The slasher villain represents a prime example of this principle—a recalibration of the folkloric Boogeyman tailored to American society during the late 1970s and ’80s. Richard Tithecott (1997) adds that contemporary monstrosity “assumes its most compelling form for us as the serial killer” such as the villains featured in the slasher subgenre; a figure that “seems to require continual rewriting or ... rescreening” (3). Within the framework of the slasher subgenre, the figure of the monstrous Other evolves into a masked psychopath who murders younger members of the community as a form of punishment for their “misdeeds.” Indeed, in the figures of Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, and Freddy Krueger, we see the folkloric figure of the Boogeyman transmogrified into the cinematic medium.

Based on the observations listed above, I argue that archetypal criticism is the most effective methodological lens through which to examine the connection between the slasher villain and the folkloric Boogeyman. This approach offers the opportunity to explore the narratological connections that exist between cultural artefacts from disparate time periods. Mackey-Kallis notes the global nature of myth (and by extension, the archetype) by outlining the presence of certain narrative tropes in popular stories throughout the world:

Although myths may vary somewhat from culture to culture, they draw on a surprisingly universal storehouse of archetypal information about what it means to be human and how to live a meaningful human life. And although these archetypal stories offer dark and unsettling images and recount difficult and often terrifying experiences, they ultimately affirm the value of life and provide a primer, a set of instructions, for living. (14-5)

Additionally, by placing the artefact within a broader context, archetypal criticism allows the scholar to pinpoint common elements present in works from different media. This facet of the methodology is outlined by Izod, who claim that:

Jungian analysis makes much of the interrelated (intertextual) nature of all cultural artifacts [sic]. It elaborates the reading of characters, plots, settings and images in a given movie or screen drama by extending it through comparison with the language and symbolism of pre-existent texts (both on screen and embodied in other art forms). ... It enriches the significance of those texts that can sustain the comparison by setting them against the backdrop of legends and myths both ancient and modern. This is done not as an end in its own right, but because myth has an important function in the Jungian understanding of human psychology. (7)

This form of analysis also provides a psychological grounding for the similarities that are observed between cultural artefacts—as it is predicated on the notion of the recurrence of themes, and characters that stem from the collective unconscious. In regard to this thesis, I assert that archetypal criticism offers the most profitable method for analysing and

understanding the relationship between cinematic and folkloric manifestations of the monstrous Other in the fairytale and slasher film.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the presence of the archetype within the cinematic medium has been acknowledged by a series of theorists operating within the fields of film studies and psychology. Wright first noted this relationship in 1974, proposing that film was informed by material drawn from the collective unconscious, and therefore bears the mark of the archetype (9).²⁴⁴ This idea is also noted by Martin and Oswalt (1995), who argue that popular movies are “cultural standards-bearers” and carry within them the “values, beliefs, dreams, desires, longings, and needs of a society and, thus, can function mythologically” (68).²⁴⁵ Robert W. Rieber and Robert J. Kelly echo these sentiments when they state that film functions as “a means of recording and transmitting the collective dreams of [a] culture and society” (2). Conversely, I assert that the horror film (and specifically the slasher subgenre) serves a similar function by expressing the fears and anxieties of the masses by depicting those topics that are considered taboo and have consequently been repressed. Furthermore, horror film narratives often feature broadly delineated characters situated in a clearly defined world of good/evil which easily lends itself to archetypal forms.

Unfortunately, there is little research connecting the slasher film with the archetype; instead, much of the scholarly work published around this subgenre tends to

²⁴⁴ According to Mackey-Kallis, film is a particularly “powerful conduit for archetypal material” (20).

²⁴⁵ Films are a reflection of social attitudes and they resonate with the public because they invoke particular psychological and emotional triggers. Sam Grogg and John Nachbar explain that to view “an American film is to witness the dreams, values and fears of the American people, to feel the pulse of American culture” (5). Film’s ability to pinpoint social trends is similarly explored by philosopher Ian Jarvie, who argues that movies reveal the hopes, dreams, and fears of a community: “Apart from anthropological field work, I know of nothing comparable from the point of view of getting inside the skin of another society as viewing films made for the home market” (4).

focus on its historical and sociological facets.²⁴⁶ Indeed, there is a tendency within academia to view film as a purely modern medium that is largely divorced from earlier forms of narrative communication (Koven 114). Similarly, within the area of mythography and literary analysis, theorists often neglect to account for the role of film as a present-day manifestation of pre-modern storytelling, creating a gap in the study of both fields. Paul Smith explains that there has been little attention “given by folklorists to the role of the film and television industry as users and disseminators of contemporary legends” (138). This failure to connect filmic tropes and characters with those featured in folklore results in a schism between these two disciplinary fields that has not been fully investigated by the scholarly community.

It is within this discursive void that this thesis fits, revealing the common elements between the folkloric and cinematic depictions of the Boogeyman through the amalgamation of scholarly research from philosophy, psychology, and film studies. Using the archetype as a means of bridging these two narrative forms, I have revealed the commonalities shared by the antagonists of both mediums. Departing from the fairytale figure of Bluebeard, I have pinpointed the profusion of traits that he shares with the popular villains of the contemporary slasher film. Furthermore, I have demonstrated that the link between these characters is rooted in the fact that they are all manifestations of three archetypal forms: the collective Shadow, the Terrible Father, and the Death-Demon. Likewise, through the comparison of the folkloric and the cinematic Boogeyman, I have chronicled those characteristics that remain consistent and those that change due to external influences. Finally, by placing the slasher villain within a broader cultural

²⁴⁶ The slasher has been analysed through the prism of a gendered lens by theorists such as Creed (1993), Clover (1992), and Dika (1990).

context and revealing his role as a modern iteration of the folkloric Boogeyman, I have shed light on his narrative function and revealed the implicit fears that he evokes in the popular consciousness related to torture, pain, suffering, and death.

The slasher film shares its ideological function with the fairytale—imparting valuable life lessons concerning the dangers of transgressing collective values and shattering social taboos. This accounts for the reason that many slasher films involve protagonists who are on the precipice of sexual maturity and transitioning to a state of heightened cognizance and self-awareness. Much like the fairytale, which helps its audience to cope with “confusion, inner turmoil and certain drives which the pubescent ego must learn to control” (Bettelheim 73), the slasher film serves to inscribe social values in its audience concerning responsibility and the dangers of the adult world.²⁴⁷ This notion is similarly noted by Short, who explains that horror films punish “deviant” behaviour and serve “a conservative function that is used to support such institutions as monogamy, marriage, and the nuclear family” (22).²⁴⁸ In this sense, fairytales and slasher films share a common role: cautioning their audiences against potentially reckless and irresponsible behaviour that infringes upon established communal values. Beneath the entertaining veneer of these narratives, both storytelling mediums serve to outline the need for self-restraint and moderation.

Central to the slasher film and fairytale is the figure of the Boogeyman, who serves to enact horrific retribution against those characters that fail to adhere to the

²⁴⁷ Paul Wells explains that the “adult” horror texts such as popular horror films carry the “complex psychological, emotional, physical and ideological charges of ancient folklore, fairytale and myth” and thereby comments upon “deep-seated anxieties of its time” (35).

²⁴⁸ Short indicates that while horror films reinforce conservative values, they also function as a venue to challenge expectations concerning gender stereotypes as displayed through the figure of the Final Girl (22-44).

prevailing social ideology. His victims are often targeted due to negligent or questionable behaviour, as they have, or intend to, transgress social expectations. Adopting the form of a violent parental figure, the Boogeyman thwarts violators of collective values through acts of torture and murder, thereby serving a perverse disciplinary role in the narrative. Both the folkloric and cinematic Boogeyman fulfill this narratological function, punishing individuals who have failed to uphold their communal responsibilities. The duality of the Boogeyman therefore rests upon his paradoxical role as both a transgressor and enforcer of moral boundaries within the community.

As previously indicated, the Boogeyman is a cultural articulation of the collective Shadow, and therefore encapsulates those unstable facets of our psyche(s) that we, as a society, wish to repress and disavow. As Iaccino notes, the Shadow is “potentially the most powerful and dangerous” archetypal image, as it possesses a “demonic strength that knows no bounds or restraints” (*Psychological Reflections* 7). The relationship between the community and the Boogeyman is therefore strained but unbroken, and though we may try to sever all connection with the monstrous Other, we are inextricably and intimately tethered to him. This principle is explained by Debra Higgs Strickland, who defines monstrosity as a “metaphor for unacceptability” that is “located in the image-makers themselves rather than in those whom they pejoratively represent” (254). Phillip Cole similarly asserts that the chaotic violence of the monster terrifies audiences because it reveals the possibility of destruction that lies within all humans:

we are scared of our selves ... because we recognise our own capacity for evil. What frightens us is ... the boundary between our ‘civilised’ self and our ‘evil’ self. We may well project that capacity ... on to others and into

fictional representatives, but it is profoundly *our* capacity, and this is why we find such projections and representations so disturbing—they threaten to destabilise our conception of our selves as human beings, indeed our conception of humanity itself. (118-9)

Cole's argument is particularly pertinent to the Boogeyman who exhibits behaviour that is considered socially unacceptable in Western culture such as torture and murder. As the Boogeyman embodies those qualities that fail to adhere to the hegemonic ideology, the act of exiling him to the fringe of the community allows us to purge unwanted qualities from ourselves and simultaneously deny any link to such aberrant behaviour.²⁴⁹ This dynamic therefore illustrates the psychological mechanisms that underpin the collective Shadow and leads to the horrifying discovery that beneath the blank stare of the Boogeyman's mask is our own distorted image mirrored back at us.

In addition to his role as an incarnation of the collective Shadow, the Boogeyman is also a monstrous projection of the Terrible Father, and he therefore personifies the destructive aspects of the paternal archetype. As previously discussed, the Terrible Father embodies those qualities that are commonly bracketed under the term "toxic masculinity," which entails violent and sadistic tendencies exhibited by male figures. Kupers explains that toxic masculinity is manifested in acts of domination and subjugation that are motivated by an obsession with status and control. I assert that incarnations of the Terrible Father result from the development of a negative complex related to the literal father. This phenomenon occurs when the parent's oppressive overexertion of their authority arrests the child's ability to forge their own identity and

²⁴⁹ Judith Levine explains that mainstream society tends to project its vision of evil outward, creating "a monster to hate, hunt down, and punish" (27).

thus, the developing infant fails to acquire psychological maturity or reach the state of individuation.

By stifling the child, the parent becomes the embodiment of stagnation and death and comes to personify the role of the Terrible Father. This dynamic is symbolically illustrated through the homicidal behaviour of the Terrible Father featured in popular narratives (such as that exhibited by the Boogeyman). We specifically see these characteristics demonstrated through the acts of torture and murder perpetrated by Myers, Voorhees, and Krueger against their victims as punishment for irresponsible or reckless behaviour. Indeed, the methods for chastising “naughty” behaviour exercised by these slasher villains often entail brutality that concludes with the demise of his victims. As an incarnation of the Terrible Father, the Boogeyman therefore comes to embody fears related to suffering, pain, and death. Inflicting violent retribution upon his victims, the Boogeyman utilizes the threat of bodily harm as a disciplinary tool to instil conformity and obedience and, as a result, becomes a personification of death. This facet of the Boogeyman’s persona is explicitly acknowledged in his incarnation as the slasher villain who undergoes a literal or symbolic death that grants him supernatural attributes and consequently makes him impervious to the pain and suffering of others. The monstrous Other therefore not only signifies a *symbolic* threat to the moral and social fabric of the community, but also represents the *physical* threat of torture and death.²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰ There has been considerable discussion lately among transhumanists concerning the possibility of transcending the human condition through the augmentation and/or replacement of the human body through technological intervention (e.g. artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, bionic limbs, etc.). These developments would open up the possibility of the eradication not only of the Boogeyman, but also the role of the collective unconscious and the notion of collectivity as a foundational concept for human organization.

After killing members of the collective, the Boogeyman will often use their corpses to either adorn his person or home in a grotesque display of victory. Such behaviour demonstrates his deep connection with morbidity and complete disregard for the sanctity of life. From Bluebeard's use of his wives' cadavers to decorate his secret chamber to the arrangement of Myers' victims in the Wallace home, the fetishization of the dead is a common trope in depictions of the Boogeyman and reveals his unsettling preoccupation with morbidity. Due to the Boogeyman's close connection with the themes of necrophilia and sadism, a symbolic divide is established between the communal space of the living occupied by the other characters in the narrative, and the Boogeyman's lair which marks the realm of the dead.

In perpetrating these acts of violence, the Boogeyman frequently employs a phallic weapon that is designed to inflict tremendous pain and extend the suffering of his victims prior to death.²⁵¹ These tools serve as an extension of his body and allow for intimate encounters with his victims that also heighten the sexual undertones of his actions. These weapons contribute to the Boogeyman's terrifying persona and help to express his libidinal energy through acts of torture and murder. Ultimately, sex and violence become conflated in the Boogeyman's actions since it is through the practice of killing and appropriating the bodies of his victims that he expresses his libidinal energy.

The Boogeyman's reign of destruction is only arrested when he encounters the protagonist, often a young female, who possesses the qualities necessary to confront Death. On a symbolic level, she represents his antithesis and manifests opposing psychological qualities: where he embodies the stagnancy of death, she personifies the vitality of life. It is she who often deposes and/or kills the Boogeyman at the end of these

²⁵¹ See Liz Dixon (2010), and Harper (2004).

narratives and thereby eliminates the threat he represents to the community. Through her victory over him, the heroine is able to integrate those masculine facets of her own unconscious that have been repressed and thereby successfully reach the state of individuation while also protecting her community's moral well-being.

Though this narrative pattern is observed in both the fairytale and the slasher film, there is a profound difference between the "happy ending" that is granted to Bluebeard's final wife and the "victory" enjoyed by the characters of Laurie Strode, Nancy Thompson, and Alice Hardy. Unlike her fairytale counterpart, the Final Girl is rarely saved by the intervention of a male figure at the conclusion of these narratives. Whereas Bluebeard's wife is rescued by her brothers and shortly thereafter marries a "very worthy man," the Final Girl is often deserted by the community and left alone to reassemble her life following her harrowing ordeal (Perrault, *The Story* 59). This distinction has prompted Short to propose that the subgenre offers a "feminist twist" on the fairytale in which "assertive women ... are required to take action" and "learn to fend for themselves" (60; 153). She goes on to explain that the "morality" of the subgenre dictates that "to believe that romance, or sex, is the ultimate goal for womanhood is to effectively fail the test" (60). Unlike her friends, the Final Girl does not succumb to peer pressure and engage in premarital sex but instead finds a productive purpose for externalising her sexual energy through her violent interactions with the villain.

In this regard, the Final Girl challenges traditional gender roles related to heroism, as she exhibits the type of vitality and aggression that is conventionally ascribed to male protagonists. Indeed, through this process of absorbing her personal Shadow (manifested by the villain) and acquiring the state of individuation, the Final Girl offers an alternative

to the conventional female role of victim in the slasher film narrative. However, as Rieser points out, the slasher heroine's victory is tempered by the fact that "she rarely wins anything" such as valuable experience or social approval (377). Furthermore, despite her bravery and wisdom, the Final Girl is often incapable of saving her friends (who are brutally slaughtered by the villain) or finding companionship at the conclusion of the film. She therefore serves to simultaneously challenge and reinforce hegemonic perceptions concerning womanhood, demonstrating both the virtues and penalties of sexual independence. The complicated relationship that the Final Girl shares with heroism represents an area for future research as I further probe the narratological facets of the slasher subgenre and its relationship with the traditional fairytale.

Once the Final Girl/fairytale heroine has successfully vanquished the Boogeyman, peace is returned to the community and the chaos that he wrought upon the collective is alleviated. However, the Boogeyman can only be conquered temporarily before he reappears in the cultural imaginary to embody a new set of social anxieties, and this process begins anew. As time passes and new fears rise to the social forefront, the Boogeyman will return to embody them so that he may be symbolically exiled from the community once again. This cyclical process allows members of the public to perpetually rid themselves of the negative facets of their own psyche, as well as expunge collective fears and concerns that plague society. As I have demonstrated in this thesis, the figure of the slasher villain clearly illustrates this pattern, functioning as a modern manifestation of the folkloric Boogeyman and serving to personify collective fears within the context of the cultural imaginary. I therefore assert that the presence of the Boogeyman, and by

extension other monstrous manifestations in the cultural imaginary, provides a healthy method for the cathartic experience of eliminating communal angst.²⁵²

As I have indicated in my research, the persistence of the Boogeyman in the cultural imaginary is predicated on his relationship to the archetype. Deriving from the collective unconscious, the archetype is an inherent component of the human psyche that allows the individual to internalize personal experiences and arrange them around instinctive forms. These interactions between the individual and their social context result in archetypal images that emerge in the conscious mind and are subsequently projected into the cultural imaginary. Such images often manifest in popular narratives that appear in cultural artefacts, contributing to a shared communal identity. Hill claims that the persistent nature of the archetypal form is largely predicated on its ability to articulate collective sentiments:

whatever may happen in human civilization, with its changing ideologies, theologies, and worldviews, myth will always be threaded through the cloak of human expression in any medium that happens to be available at the time. Like dreams on the personal level, myth on the social level supplies the signs and symbols that help the human spirit resolve its dilemmas and transcend above the indignities of the temporal plain. (9)

As Hill outlines, the mythical language (which is rooted in the archetype) is a pervasive element in the stories that underpin society. Drawn from the collective unconscious, the archetypal vocabulary provides the lexicon of themes and motifs that resonate in the

²⁵² According to Asma, monstrous beings such as the Boogeyman will persist in the cultural imaginary due to the fact they assist the public in comprehending the nature of human calamity and malice (B12). He illustrates his assertion by proposing and then dismissing two possible scenarios under which the notion of monstrosity might be expunged: (1) that pragmatism and rational thought will eradicate the monster, and (2) the embrace of difference will remove alterity and diminish the otherness intrinsic to monstrosity (B12).

popular consciousness. Despite criticisms that the notion of the archetype conflates diverse groups and overlooks issues of gender, class, and race, this method of analysis offers an intelligent explanation for cultural identity.

In contemporary Western society, the archetype may be subverted, twisted, and queered, but it still persists within the mind of the public, acting as a binding agent that connects the popular narratives of the globe. Angela Carter points out that the “human imagination is infinitely resilient, surviving colonization, transportation, involuntary servitude, imprisonment, bans on language, [and] the oppression of women” (xxi). Though we in the progressive West may like to think that we are above the so-called “essentialist” nature of the archetype, the stories that occupy our collective consciousness reveal otherwise. The meta-cognition that is synonymous with postmodernism generates a feeling of superiority over our instincts and creates the illusion that we can control the most base and primordial aspects of our psyche(s) where the collective unconscious operates. However, such thinking is purely illusory, as these archetypal forms are more prevalent in contemporary Western culture than ever before, as evidenced by the forms of popular entertainment in which we indulge. As Jung argued, the archetypal foundations of the unconscious are so important to human existence that “we can never legitimately cut loose from them ... any more than we can rid ourselves of our body and its organs without committing suicide” (*The Archetypes* 157). Film, television, and other forms of digital technology have provided venues for communication never imagined by our ancestors, and within these mediums, the archetype is granted new forums in which to thrive.

After examining the psychological and philosophical role of the Boogeyman in Western culture, we are left to wonder what the future holds for this mythic monster. The core function of the Boogeyman is to personify those potential dangers that threaten social order and jeopardize the harmony of the community. By exiling and/or killing him, the collective is symbolically cleansed of fears concerning sin and death, allowing for a renewed sense of absolution. As the Boogeyman embodies universal and fundamental anxieties related to torture, pain, and death his continued role in the cultural imaginary is ensured. I therefore assert that it is simply a matter of time before the monstrous Boogeyman re-emerges in the public consciousness to terrify and thrill another generation.

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