

Directions:

You're going to write three short papers this quarter (worth a total of 30% of your course grade). For each paper, I'm going to give you a question/prompt and you'll respond with 2-3 pages (double-spaced), addressing all aspects of the question and providing examples from class materials (readings, screenings, discussions, etc.) as needed. Be sure to give it a good look before turning it in, the more polished your short paper is, the higher your score will be. Each short paper is worth 10% of your final grade, so take this seriously. **Short paper #4 is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, November 25** (I'm giving you an extra week for this one because it requires a little more work and time than the others).

"Everything Old is New Again"

For the first six weeks of class, we looked at supernatural horror movies produced in the U.S. between roughly 1976 and 1982, in addition to this sub-genre's origins in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Starting tonight and for the final three classes, we're going to move forward in time and look at a more recent cycle of supernatural horror movies released in this decade (*Insidious*, *Paranormal Activity 3*, and *The Conjuring*). Historical and cultural context were crucial in examining the earlier cycle of films, and this remains true for the newer cycle. At the same time, attempting to historicize recent history can be tricky: we're still sort of living and digesting it. While time and distance are often necessary in gaining some perspective on cinema and history, we're going to try to watch these more recently produced films and think about them in the context of the 2010s. **As always, we're asking this question: why this sub-genre and why now? What made people more receptive to these films at this point in time?**

First, choose a movie to focus on: your choices are *Insidious* or *Paranormal Activity 3*. Next, I want you to present and support a thesis stating why your chosen film may have appealed to audiences in 2011. You need to give me at least three pieces of historical context (for this paper, I'll take any context from the last ten years or so to explain audience engagement in 2011) that suggest why your film might have responded to timely concerns, anxieties, and fears. You'll have to do a little digging around for this one; while present-day supernatural horror movies actually draw on many of the same general motivating factors as the earlier cycle, there could be some slight revisions or changes in the source of said factors and the corresponding fears. Your job on this final short paper is to find out what those are.

- You'll want to tie your three pieces of historical context to specific examples from your chosen movie. **The more specific, the better.**
- I am not requiring that you draw from the readings, but you may if you find useful quotes or information to help support your thesis statement.
- Top-scoring papers will have **an introduction with a clearly stated thesis, three pieces of historical context, and specific examples that help prove your thesis.**