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Be afraid. Be very afraid: Exploring the rhetoric of the monster in political and horror posters of the 20th Century

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Be afraid. Be very afraid:

Exploring the rhetoric of the monster in political
and horror posters of the 20th Century.

Julia Lane
Honours Thesis 2014

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Contents

Abstract	11
Descending the stairs to the basement	13
Locating the beast: A review of the literature	17
Dissecting the monster	41
Nationality Calamity: Political othering and the ethnic abject	49
Race in Outer Space: Dichotomies of primitivism and hyper-intelligence in the discussion of alien abjection	63
Gender Dismembered: Examining the anatomy of abject male and female	75
Lust and disgust: Representations of abject sexuality	93
Stitching the parts back together	107
Image References	137
Text References	145

Abstract

Australia's current social and political climate takes us back to a time when there was a strongly perceived fear of the *other*. This fear is heavily reflected by the monsters which we, as a society, create. This research unearths the constructed monsters of the 20th Century for a critical assessment of what makes a monster. More specifically, it focuses on depictions of monsters within political and horror poster designs. The purpose of this research is to identify and respond to the rhetoric apparent within and between poster images, specifically concerning the cultivation of fear of the *other* through the metaphor of the monster. A Kristevan theoretical perspective is employed to explore the monster as an abject *other* and also the rhetorical connections between these monstrous *others*. Creative work, in the form of poster design and production, is undertaken towards the end of this project, as a way to practically engage the results of the research, and apply this knowledge to contemporary Australian rhetoric. I will be making one propaganda poster and one horror poster, for presentation as the final creative works of this study. Through this design work, I propose that the poster's role as a means of entertainment and persuasion is key to visually interpreting the propagandistic discourse present today.

Descending the stairs to the basement.

Battle not with monsters, lest ye become a monster, and if you gaze into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you.

Friedrich Nietzsche

Having always been intrigued by horror, I have often reflected upon why I find it so fascinating. Is it that this genre allows the simultaneous experience of terror and the excitement of being afraid? Is it the awakening it encourages of our own internal struggle with death and, ultimately, the existential unknown? Is it a descent into the baseness of our human instincts, an exploration of the visceral meat-suits we operate, and their fragility? Whatever the psychological reasons for my interest, the fact that horror raises so many questions and exhumes a world of undiscovered possibilities, is perpetually entertaining.

Visual representations of horror are, for me, the most compelling. Coming from a visual arts and design background, I have always been drawn to images. My obsession with horror films began in childhood, and I gravitated towards tales of darkness and mystery. I fondly remember watching late night Vincent Price specials, graduating in my teens to more terrifying films such as *Aliens* (1986) and *The Exorcist* (1973). I actually recall first being frightened by a film upon watching *Halloween* (1978) around the age of thirteen. I must add that I was staying at a friend's house, as this film would not have been permitted at home. This point made my viewing of the film measurably more forbidden and exciting. The scene still burnt into

my mind is that which features the seemingly inescapable, masked, slow-moving madman, Michael Myers, silently stalking Jamie Lee Curtis's character, Laurie, in his childhood home, brandishing a large knife by his side. It was the soulless, emotionless expression on the mask, coupled with the opposing calmness of the killer and quiet hysterics of the innocent schoolgirl hiding in the pitch dark that was highly unsettling. The signature musical accompaniment, an ominous, high-pitched piano melody was reminiscent of Mike Oldfield's track, "Tubular Bells," the theme for *The Exorcist* (1973). What made *Halloween* more frightening than *The Exorcist*, was that the monster was human, instead of supernatural, that I was a schoolgirl, that this threat was fathomable; it was possible. Searching through the video store for my next fright, I realised how important film posters and covers were to my selections. The aesthetic audacity of this genre was not limited to the films themselves but extended to how they were advertised.

My enthusiasm for the poster had begun. After my realisation of horror posters, I found other avenues by which to explore a wide variety of poster art. Every part of the advertising industry used these bold and persuasive devices to sell their products, from lipstick to luxury cars. Posters seemed to be everywhere, on buses and bins, in magazines and newspapers, on walls in the city. The nature of the poster itself is inherently seductive – ink, shapes, words, colour and paper, demanding of attention. This form of print media combined a myriad of elements to construct a seamless creation of visual communication. An advertising poster draws the viewer into a promise, which although predominantly a constructed myth, is a highly desirable pseudo-reality for many. These posters point out that our lives are less than satisfactory in comparison. In episode four of his television series, *Ways of Seeing* (1972), John Berger reflects on the portrayal of "these fabulous rewards, and objects, and people" and asks "where do they exist?" He further asserts that, through these images, we become convinced that we can "change ourselves or our lives by buying something more" (Berger, 1972). Through my ex-

ploration of the aesthetic and psychology of advertising posters, I finally arrived at a form that was superior in persuasion and in the aggressive nature of its imagery: the propaganda poster.

This interest grew as I was drawn in by propaganda's use of violent colour palettes, alarming content, and sharp compositions. The political image is captivating in that it is usually a call to action. Whether it is a governmental or activist position being promoted, a clear message extends to the viewer, one that is difficult to ignore. These often volatile and controversial images are designed to alarm. I drew the conclusion that horror and political posters weren't that far removed from each other. A large proportion of propaganda works were brutally bloodthirsty and many contained grotesque monsters, as well as being a visual assault of intense images and text.

From these visual examples, coupled with my creative interests, a desire to bridge the chasm between the political and film graphic emerged. Immersed in the current Australian political climate which is one of fear, particularly directed towards the *other*, I was interested in discovering how such rhetoric was communicated historically. In this research, I explore how political and social fears were analogous to those reflected in horror films – this shared rhetoric is particularly magnified around times of war and conflict. In this study I acknowledge similarities in iconography within political and horror posters and wish to explore whether these visual parallels extend further to the implied meanings inherent in both texts. I have become fascinated with the monster.

The structure of this text aims to lead the reader on a journey to understanding the meaning of the monster in political and horror posters and also the manner in which these images share a common visual rhetoric. This thesis begins with a literature review, tracing the breadth of key subjects I explore. The literature review chapter will help to locate my research within the context of areas traversed, these being propaganda, poster as medium, horror, and visual meth-

odologies. In the next section, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods specific to this study will be explained in detail in order to clarify the process involved in the following analyses. A Kristevan perspective is employed throughout this research, to examine the monster as an abject *other*. Throughout her work, Kristeva defines the *other* as abject, through its dejected physicality, but also its position as outcast. Methodologies utilised are visual rhetoric and practice-based research in order to both analyse and practically apply my findings on the monster. I then arrive at the formal examinations of the monster, which are divided into four chapters, nationality, race, gender, and sexuality. These chapters will serve to articulate both the discussion and results of my research. Finally, the last chapter encapsulates the conclusion of the research undertaken and provides a formal exegesis of the process and products of my own creative work. The practical component of my research will take the form of one political and one horror poster, screen printed. This work seeks to visually summarise the findings of my research, as well as physically reveal the rhetoric occurring in Australian society today.

Locating the beast: A review of the literature

I set out to discover the why of it, and to transform my pleasure into knowledge.

Charles Baudelaire

INTRODUCTION

Upon commencing my research into political and horror posters, it was immediately apparent that although there seems to be much popular enthusiasm for these design works, in-depth scholarly consideration is absent. There are resources that present vast collections of images such as *War Posters: Weapons of Mass Communication* (Aulich, 2007); *Persuasive Images* (Irwin-Lewis, Paret & Paret, 1992) *What Did You Do in the War Daddy?* (Stanley, 1983); and *Horror Poster Art* (Nourmand, 2004), but none which delve thoroughly into the visual metaphors, symbology and inherent subtexts of such posters. Certainly, horror films have been successfully dissected within academic discourse, but there seems to be a large gap in critical discussion of the advertising materials which attracted an audience in the first place. Similarly, detailed visual analyses of propaganda is lacking.

In this review of the literature I will mark out the territory that surrounds my research into the designed monster. As I will demonstrate in this review, propaganda and horror share similar approaches to *othering* and their portrayals of the abject. This chapter is divided into the four main sections; Propaganda, Horror, The Poster as Medium, and Methodology. For the sake of clarity, each

section has subheadings to guide the reader through the otherwise scarcely mapped terrain.

PROPAGANDA

Defining Propaganda

Throughout the literature, definitions of propaganda largely summarised it as a form of communication by which to persuade or alter the views and opinions of a society (Aronson & Pratkanis, 2001; Berkhoff, 2012; Edelstein, 1997; Jowett & O'Donnell, 1999; Lee, 2010; Marlin, 2002; Taylor, 1998). Key authors have, more specifically, defined propaganda as “a deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, mental states, and, above all, behavior [sic], so as to achieve a response that furthers the propagandist's intent” (Berkhoff, 2012, p. 3); “a form of communication that was untruthful and manipulative” (Lee, 2010, p. 1); a one sided mode of communication “concerned with the transmission of ideas and/or values” (Taylor, 1998, p. 7); and “the dissemination of biased ideas and opinions, often through the use of lies and deception” (Aronson and Pratkanis, 2001, p. 11). Although these definitions of propaganda are at their core unanimous, discordance is evident amongst discussion of its history.

History

Scholars present conflicting views on when propaganda first appeared. The conflict seems to relate to whether each author is considering the implementation of the activity of propaganda, or the official conception and popular use of the term. Aronson and Pratkanis (2001), Jowett and O'Donnell (1999), and Taylor (2003), note the origin of the term ‘propaganda’ as first documented by Pope Gregory XV in 1622, in his institution of the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, a “papal propaganda office [established] as a means of coordinating efforts to bring men and women to ‘voluntary’ acceptance of church doctrines” (Aronson & Pratkanis, 2001, p. 11). Marlin (2002), and Jowett and O'Donnell (1999) reference Ancient

Greece as the beginning of propagandistic activities, relating its inception to persuasive rhetoric and critical argument. Moore (2010) names King Eannatum's Steele of Vultures, aged approximately 2550BCE, as the earliest standing relic of visual propaganda, however, he states it “was not until the emergence of Greek civilization, a more structured society, that we can see a methodical approach to propaganda in the conduct of war and politics” (p. 16). Although commentators have varying opinions on the marked beginnings of propaganda, much of the literature suggests that propagandistic activity emerged within ancient civilizations, particularly Ancient Greece, but the term itself was not coined until 1622.

Although propagandistic activity is evidenced as beginning in the Ancient World, the popular establishment and mass usage of the term ‘propaganda’ is consistently attributed to the 20th Century – several authors agree that propaganda was first officially utilised on a large scale prior to World War I (Aronson & Pratkanis, 2001; Edelstein, 1997; Taylor, 1998; Welch, 2001). Taylor (2003) suggests that World War I saw the beginning of the media saturation of propaganda, partly attributing this to the introduction of film as a means of mass persuasion. Reeves reports that the propagandistic use of cinema was originally employed to show “factual films, faithfully recording the course of the war,” with total disregard to the subjectivity perpetrated by human framing and editing (1993, p. 189). It is stated across the literature that developments in media were largely responsible for the steep rise of propaganda, particularly throughout the war years, and that this phenomenon wasn't limited to film.

Advances in printing technology are also cited as a major contributing factor to the progression and evolution of propaganda (Edelstein, 1997; Marlin, 2002; Jowett & O'Donnell,

1999; Taylor, 2003). Marlin (2002) notes print media such as newspapers, magazines, and posters as being of primary significance to WWI and WWII propaganda. Common to the findings of Edelstein (1997), Jowett and O'Donnell (1999), and Taylor (2003), is that post WWII propaganda changed to become less obvious in format, instead filtering into all aspects of popular culture. This shift is attributed by most to the rise in consumer culture, changing societal attitudes and structures, and inherent problems with traditional propaganda models (Sawchuk, 2005). Thus, it is established that the first half of the 20th Century is the most recognized period for propagandistic activity and materials, which is mainly attributed to vast developments in printing technology, which in turn created an accessible and easily reproduced medium.

Problems of Historic Propaganda

Throughout the literature, it is evident that usage of the term 'propaganda' is now somewhat obsolete and popularly rejected, in that it is ultimately subjective to the user (Berkhoff, 2012; Lee, 2012; Marlin, 2002; Taylor, 1998). Illustrating an ethical dichotomy in relation to war propaganda, Taylor states that "'propaganda' becomes what the enemy engages in, while one's own 'propaganda' parades under the disguise of 'information' or 'publicity'" (1998, p.7). The problems and ethics of propaganda are debated vehemently throughout seminal texts.

Some authors argue that propaganda is natural and unavoidable in human societies. Bernays (cited in Marlin, 2002, p. 20) alleges that "the only difference between 'propaganda' and 'education,' really, is the point of view." Bernays further states that "the advocacy of what we believe is education. The advocacy of what we do not believe is propaganda" (cited in Marlin, 2002, p. 20). In a similar vein, Taylor argues that propaganda is inescapable in stating that contemporarily "we are all in fact propagandists to varying degrees, just as we are all victims of propaganda" (2003, p. 2). Further to this argument, Wollaegeer asserts that the intent and reception of propaganda is

inherently subjective, in that "one person's propaganda is another person's information, and the distinction between the two is often difficult to draw" (2008, p. 2).

Other authors, namely Doob, Orwell, Lasswell, and Ellul, (cited in Marlin, 2002) all share the perception that propaganda is inherently manipulative, and therefore they deem it unethical. Taylor concurs in his statement on the development of "early propaganda" which was "grounded in the needs of totalitarian societies to create and exploit mass cultures" (1998, p. 17). Taylor goes on to comment on the manipulative purpose of propaganda as a "means of encouraging civic pride and popular loyalty and [that governments] understood the need for censorship and propaganda campaigns to promote public support for their military campaigns" (1998, p. 34). Marlin further declares that "there is a strong association, in English-speaking countries, between the word 'propaganda' and the ideas of lying or deception" (2002, p. 15). Ideologically, many authors agree that propaganda is ethically flawed and intrinsically negative.

Other concerns arise in the discussion of the ethics of propaganda, particularly concerning depictions of race and nationality. Marlin (2002) asserts that it is not only an issue of deceit and the ethics of lying within propaganda, but also the way in which nationalities are represented that is established as severely problematic. Marlin refers to the depiction of Germans and Japanese in atrocity propaganda of WWII as the morally flawed "[promotion] of racism and ethnic hatred" (2002, p. 168). Many authors (Giner-Sorolla, 2011; Reeves, 1993; Taylor, 2003; Tobing-Rony, 1996; Welch, 2001; Wollaegeer, 2006) also express the concern that the *other* was consistently presented as demonised and frightful. Later in this review of the literature, I will show how horror imagery mirrors some of the devices used in propaganda, to portray a character as an abject *other*. The research mostly concurs in establishing historic propaganda models as negatively perceived, problematic and therefore largely debated by scholars. As demonstrated through opposing views, propaganda remains a

substantially inextricable theoretical argument. Propaganda is not a favourable term used to describe contemporary political practices. More recent models of propaganda and their corresponding communication models are acknowledged in the next section.

Communication Theory and New Definitions

Due to the aforementioned concerns surrounding historical propaganda, there seems to be a reasonable consensus that contemporary demarcations must include the audience as a participant in propaganda, instead of being positioned as passive receiver (Aronson & Pratkanis, 2001; Edelstein, 1997; Jowett & O'Donnell, 1999). Earlier models of propaganda supported outdated models of communication, such as Shannon and Weaver's simplistic conceptualization of sender, message, and receiver (cited in Jowett & O'Donnell, 1999, p. 25). Contemporary propaganda models and definitions are more reflective of Fiske's theory of communication, in his statement that "the message...is not something sent from A to B, but an element in a structured relationship whose other elements include external reality and the producer/reader" (1982, p. 3). From this grounding, Aronson and Pratkanis perhaps best articulate a more recent definition of propaganda as:

the dextrous use of images, slogans, and symbols that play on our prejudices and emotions; it is the communication of a point of view with the ultimate goal of having the recipient of the appeal come to "voluntarily" accept this position as if it were his or her own. (2002, p. 11)

Similarly, Edelstein defines contemporary or, in his words, "new propaganda" as that which "enhances the abilities of individuals and groups to participate in the popular culture" (1997, p. 14). These examples of contemporary definitions include the receiver as an active participant in the message.

Contrarily, some authors present contemporary propaganda as increasingly camouflaged and insidious. Hammer and Kellner offer a view of this perception in their comparison of two contemporary models of propaganda, totalitarian and democratic, in stating:

In countries where the levers of power are in the hands of a state bureaucracy, monopolistic control over the media, often supplemented by official censorship, makes it clear that the media serve the ends of a dominant elite. It is much more difficult to see a propaganda system at work when the media are private and formal censorship is absent. (2009, p. 63)

Edelstein (1997) further reinforces this view asserting that today's language, film, music, sports, comedy, television, radio, and journalism are all mass communicators of propaganda and persuasion. Edelstein's view is reminiscent of Lazarsfeld's distinction of the hypodermic model (Pooley, 2006) of propagandistic persuasion within the media:

that mass media exert[s] a direct influence on the individuals by their messages, without the individual having to be in touch with any other members of any of his groups; and secondly, that 'mass media [can] often influence most or many individuals indirectly...[by which] intermediaries "interpret" the messages of the mass media to other people. (cited in Anderson, 1959, p. 20)

Thus, key authors suggest that contemporary models of propaganda are also imbued with problems and controversy and bring to question whether historic models were more recognisable and explicit than the more subtle media and advertising based messages conveyed today. The above examples of new definitions seemingly change the purpose and approach of propaganda and are more closely synonymous with theories of persuasion. The conclusion of my own research will be a set of two posters – their purpose being

to explicitly reveal the insidious propagandistic rhetoric present in current Australian political and cultural forums.

According to Jowett and O'Donnell, persuasion can be defined as "a communicative process to influence others" which is "interactive and attempts to satisfy the needs of both persuader and persuadee" (1999, p. 1, 27). Several key authorities (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1999; Marlin, 2002; Taylor, 1998) state that persuasion is key to propaganda, yet can also be separate from it. Jowett and O'Donnell articulate the relationship between the two terms; "elements of informative and persuasive communication may be incorporated into propagandistic communication" (1999, p.1).

The term propaganda, although no longer in popular usage, is certainly apt in situating promotional political materials of the 20th Century, the period in which it was most bluntly executed and certainly most recognizable, according to the literature. Propaganda from last century is described as highly focused in visual forms of media. The poster was one such vehicle for the conveyance of propagandistic opinions and mass persuasion.

THE POSTER

Defining Design

According to key authors, the poster was an important development in creating the distinction between graphic design and visual art (Hollis, 1994; Meggs, 2006). Aynsley (2001) attributes the coining of the term 'graphic design' to American typographer William Addison Dwiggins in 1922, the reason for this distinction, to categorize materials for printing purposes. Aynsley (2001) cites the emergence of 'graphic design' from the earlier terms 'graphics arts' and 'commercial arts.' Contemporarily, the American Institute of Graphic Arts (2014) concisely defines graphic design as "a creative process that combines art and technology to communicate ideas."

The AIGA (2014) states the purposes for design as a need or desire to "announce or sell something, amuse or persuade someone, explain a complicated system or demonstrate a process." By these definitions, the poster as a form of graphic design was a perfect vehicle through which to visually engage propaganda's persuasive rhetoric. Graphic design is produced for a deliberate purpose, the conveyance of a message to an audience. This is how graphic design separates itself from visual art, which Elimeliah (2006) asserts is more concerned with artistic expression and interpretation than direct communication. Many authors (Goldstein, Lupton & Rothschild, 1998; Hollis, 1994; Gallo, 2000) agree that the art poster was the beginning of what is now recognized as graphic design.

There is much discussion in the literature, as to when graphic design became a recognised discipline and field to be studied. Heller (2004) argues that throughout the 19th Century 'graphic design did not exist as a true profession' instead asserting that the start of the magazine *Das Plakat* in 1910 was the beginning of critical discourse in this subject. Heller (2004) states that this publication "not only exhibited the finest poster examples from Germany and other European countries, but its high standards, underscored by exquisite printing, established qualitative criteria that defined the decade of graphic design between 1910 and 1920" (page number needed). Aynsley (2001) cites the Berlin based publication *Gebrauchsgraphik* (literally, 'commercial art' in English) as the first graphic design journal in which the field was discussed critically, beginning in 1924. However, Goldstein, Lupton and Rothschild (1998) argue that it was not until post WWII that graphic design was "categorised as a field worth knowing about and preserving."

History

Key seminal texts agree on the origins of the poster in design. Hollis (1994) and Meggs (2006) cite artists Cheret and Grassat as original practitioners of the poster medium. Such pioneers of the Art Nouveau movement, broke free of the established Victorian graphic

to create a new aesthetic movement in design. Meggs (2006) contextualizes the decorative style of Art Nouveau, which had earlier emerged in France from the broad influence that Japanese print-making bestowed upon European artists. Hollis (1994) further cites Mucha, Beardsley and Toulouse-Lautrec as key contributors to the poster medium, all making their mark with new and distinctive personal styles. Hollis (1994) also suggests that Italian and German artists were the first to employ visual metaphor in their posters, adding a new conceptual dynamic to the medium. It would be this device of metaphorical depiction, common to the poster, that would later lend itself to propaganda. Hollis (1994) further describes the poster's increase in popularity, hype surrounding this medium eventually spreading to America.

Hollis (1994) cites the beginning of the monthly journal, *The Poster*, in 1898, as representative of when posters became collectable articles. He states the purpose of this publication was "to satisfy public curiosity in and enthusiasm for this new art" (1994, p.15). Meggs (2006) establishes that the progression of the poster echoed modernist art movements throughout the 20th Century, retaining its significance and position as a predominant medium in advertising and information.

The Poster as Communication Medium

The research states that as a form of graphic design, the poster is a means of visual communication (Berger, 1973; McLuhan, 1964). In Gallo's definition, the poster is a two dimensional image printed on paper which becomes "part of the landscape of our cities" (2000, p. 9). Key commentators note the exhaustive uses of the poster in: advertising (Gallo, 2000; Purvis, 2003), politics and propaganda (Heller, 2008; Irwin-Lewis, Paret & Paret, 1992; Yanker, 1972) activism (Goldstein, Lupton & Rothschild, 1998), and the promotion of entertainments (Marsh & Nourmand, 2004; Trombetta, 2010). Gallo (2000) asserts that the lack of posters in contemporary cities is the removal of colour and cultural richness from our streets.

The purpose of the street poster, Gallo states, is to "channel our dreams, excite our desires it must speak to us and secretly appeal to weak spots of which we ourselves are not aware" (Gallo, 2000, p. 9). Australian cities are currently devoid of such street poster exhibitions, which is one of the reasons that a resurgence of this art form would be the perfect opportunity to publicly shift political and social rhetoric, and to engage the everyday viewer to be critical of the many ways in which they are being persuaded via more popular media formats. Gallo (2000) articulates the lack of research into the historical poster, a gap which seems significant due to the number of poster works produced. The literature suggests that the poster's uses are many, however two key functions are clearly identified and discussed below.

Key Purposes

Throughout the literature, the poster is historically heralded as an effective means of communication for two major purposes. On one hand, the poster's original role of advertising is discussed at length by several key authors (Aynsley, 2001; Gallo, 2000; Hollis, 1994). Hollis neatly summarizes this function in his statement that the 'art poster' was in essence "an expression of economic, social and cultural life, competing to attract buyers for goods and audiences for entertainments" (1994, p. 11). On the other hand, the poster is highlighted for its power to capture the political attention of the masses. Whether it was intended to cement propagandistic messages (Aulich, 2007; Heller, 2008; Paret, 1992) or to spread revolutionary camaraderie (Bartelt & Sylvestrova, 1992; MacPhee, 2010), many authors agree that this was its most important function. In a statement which encapsulates both angles, Gallo asserts that posters are "indicative of what is rarely perceptible: the ideology of a society" (2000, p. 10).

Media and Techniques

The research suggests that in order to effectively analyse poster images, not only the content but also the technical aspects of graphic design must be employed. It is widely accepted that printing tech-

niques have evolved with technology, constantly transforming the poster. Goldstein, Lupton and Rothschild (1998) note the analogue printing techniques of lithography, linocut, woodcut, and screen print, as primarily employed until digital printing became possible. Purvis (2003) discusses the contemporary use of electronic media as increasingly prevalent in graphic design – the poster changing form from something we view in print, to that which we view mostly on screen. Thus, the literature suggests that the format of the poster and execution has changed, but not the key conventions.

Key contributors (Hollis, 1994; Meggs, 2006; Purvis, 2003) note that the codes and conventions employed in the production of poster images are relevant to the analysis of most visual texts. Dondis (1973) instructs on conventions such as balance, tension and composition, in the analysis of images and how they are constructed. Dondis (1973) further distinguishes the codes employed in visual communication as line, tone, shape, texture, colour, scale, dimension and movement. In examination of the poster, as a form of graphic design, Meggs (2006) cites a further code in need of scrutiny, that of typography. In his voluminous history, Meggs (2006) is heavy handed in his discussion of typography as the dominant element of graphic design. This unevenly weighted focus on typography is shared by many authors in the field (Goldstein, Lupton & Rothschild, 1998; Purvis, 2003) and opposed by few who note the importance of the image or picture in design (Berger, 1973; Hollis, 1994; Medley, 2012). As posters were designed for the conveyance of a message, be that informative or advertorial, they often contained both image and text in explicitly communicating with the viewer.

The poster as medium was, according to the literature, most prevalent during the 20th Century. The art poster is largely recognised as a marker for the beginning of the discipline of graphic design, and as such an important relationship exists between print media and the contemporary graphic. The two key purposes of the poster are described as being to entertain and persuade their audiences. Some

of the finest examples of poster art were designed for the advertisement of films. Horror film posters are particularly dynamic in their shocking subject matter and depictions of the grotesque.

HORROR

Defining the Horror Genre

Across the literature, there are several definitions of the horror genre. Many of these definitions pay homage to the experience of horror rather than to the term itself. The Horror Writers Association (2014) website refers to horror fiction as “a guide through a nightmare world, entered freely and by the reader’s own will.” Another author uses the Latin origin of the word “horrere...[which] means to tremble, shiver, shake or shudder...in some cases because of fear” (Kawin, 2012, p. 4). Dirks, (2014) asserts that horror is “unsettling...designed to frighten and panic, cause dread and alarm, and to invoke our hidden worst fears” Similar definitions to those stated above are prevalent across the literature. Perhaps the most well known and succinct definition would be Noel Carroll’s definition which he refers to as “art horror” which “serves to name a cross-art, cross-media genre whose existence is already recognised in ordinary language” (1990, p. 12). According to Carroll (1990, p. 13), this genre was “crystallized...around the time of the publication of *Frankenstein*.” Across the literature it seems the term ‘horror’ is now synonymous with a genre and is not as commonly used in the context of actual horror.

The literature presents further companion terms in close relationship with horror. The link between horror and the fantastic is marked as being essential to the genre. Todorov’s definition of the fantastic, is “that hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event” (2000, p. 14). Jackson classifies fantasy as “any literature which does not give priority to realistic representation” (1982, p. 12). These definitions

of the fantastic and fantasy can also be applied to horror imagery in propaganda. An effective visual text example of this cross over is the British *Maneater* poster (1941-42), which depicts Hitler feasting on the carcasses of his enemies. It must be noted that Todorov's definition of the fantastic is more concerned with human psychology, while Jackson's fantasy is focused specifically in genre. Freud's definition of 'the uncanny' must also be taken into consideration when approaching horror. Freud describes 'the uncanny' as "that class of the terrifying which leads us back to something long known to us, once very familiar" (cited in Daniels, 1975, p. 2). Daniels (1975) describes the unsettling nature of the uncanny, being that which is simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar, as frequently employed in the horror genre. Daniels (1975), King (1982), and Carroll (1990) agree that supernatural themes and beings are central to early horror, particularly Gothic literature. King's (1982) discussion of the macabre as relevant to horror's preoccupation with death and violence, is the final companion to horror. As demonstrated through the literature, these key terms all contribute to the establishment of horror as genre.

Origins of the Genre

Horror is a genre which authors suggest has evolved over a number of centuries, however its roots extend back several millennia (Daniels, 1975; Hutchings, 1993; King, 1982). Key texts trace the lineage of the horror genre back to the oral and visual traditions of religion, myth and legend, in which the manifestation of frightening creatures, demons and punishments resides (Daniels, 1975; Carroll, 1990). Elements of horror are particularly apparent in the visual arts, evident in such early works as Hieronymus Bosch's *The Last Judgment* (1504), and later Francisco Goya's *Saturn Devouring His Son* (1819). Carroll (1990) states that the horror genre was not officially conceived, however, until Victorian literature was born, as part of the Gothic fantastic. Daniels (1975) suggests that fictions such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (2012), and Edgar Allen Poe's published works, clearly centered in the macabre, saw a new trend

emerge in the thrill of being frightened. The Horrorpedia website (2014) cites Le Théâtre du Grand-Guignol in Paris (translating literally to 'The Theatre of the Big Puppet' in English) as the catalyst for the emergence of the horror film. The Horrorpedia (2014) site states that this theatre opened in 1897, specializing in "naturalistic, usually shocking, horror shows....realistic, gory and terrifying re-enactments of brutality exacted on the actors, with such believability that many audience members took the plays as acts of torture and murder."

The Horror Film and Evolution of the Genre

The French film by Georges Melies, *Le Manoir du Diable*, (1896), which translates to The Haunted Castle, is unanimously agreed upon as the first official horror film (Dirks, 2014; Odell, 2007; Southcote, 2014). Hutchings (1993) asserts that horror film continued to gain popularity throughout the decades, the successful Hammer Horror franchise operating up until the 1970s. King (1982) discusses horror's move to the airwaves, following its success in literature and film, citing the most famous case of Orson Welles' Halloween radio adaptation of H.G. Wells' *War of The Worlds* (1938). King (1982) explains that this specific broadcast sparked a flurry of fear and panic in listeners who believed an alien invasion was actually occurring due to the news report format of the first section of this show. Trombetta (2010) regards horror comic books as key to the genre, emerging in the 1940s and growing in popularity through to the 50s. Depicting monsters, death and the supernatural, Trombetta (2010) cites titles such as *The Crypt of Terror* (1950), *Dark Mysteries* (1951), and *Ghostly Weird Stories* (1953) as being leading collectibles. Scullion (2013) delineates horror's emergence in the video-games of the 80s, with such basic releases as Atari's *Haunted House* (1982), to the 90s favourite *Doom* (1993), and the ongoing *Resident Evil* series (1996; 1998; 2000; 2002; 2005; 2009; 2012; 2012). As concluded across the literature, so far it is only horror films that have proven to stand the test of time against other media, with over a century's worth of content produced. Memorable contributions such as *Creature from*

the Black Lagoon (1954), *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), *The Exorcist* (1973), *Alien* (1979), and *The Shining* (1980), speak to the diversity of texts within this film genre.

Psychology

In order to more clearly demarcate horror, the literature also explores psychological terms related to this genre. Fear is important to the horror genre as it is the emotion inspired in horror's audience. Daniels (1975) defines fear as the emotion of being frightened of something that is perceived as a threat. According to Daniels, classically, the term 'horror' meant a sense of "physical revulsion, bordering on nausea" (1975, p. 2). However, by King's distinction, horror is one part of three possible stages of fear evoked by the genre. According to King, terror is the first and most important psychological affect, that of anxiety; a foreboding sense of ominous uncanny, the feeling that "things are in the unmaking" (1982, p. 22). The second, horror, is the shock factor, the appearance of and reaction to the monster or threat (King, 1982). The third, revulsion, in King's (1982) words is the 'gross out', physical, visceral horrors and responses to descriptions or depictions of severed limbs and such gory bodily details. Saricks (2011) sums up what many authors commonly agree upon in her statement that "The key to horror is the pleasure we take in experiencing fear generated by the unknown." A popular unknown in horror film is the phenomenon of the monster.

The Monster: Abject Other

Perhaps the most thorough of contemporary etymological discussions on the monster, is that of F. Gonzales-Crussi's dissection of teratology, within his book *Notes of an Anatomist* (1985). He quotes the definitive meaning of the word "monere" to remind, warn" and "one who shows deviation from the normal in behaviour or character" (p. 91). Gonzales-Crussi asserts that "the monster is seen as 'otherness'" (p. 103), and furthermore "a departure in form and structure from what is considered normal" (p. 92). He references Baudin's assertion that there are two:

degrees of "otherness": monster as "Altogether Different" (letout autre) and monster as "Almost Identical" (le Presque semblable). In the first case the threat comes from colossal dimensions, non-human emotions, incomprehensible geometries, or of any of a series of inexplicable attributes... (1985, p. 103).

In the second case, the horror resides in the fact that the monster could "pass" for a being of this world when, in fact, his nature is otherworldly (p. 103). Gonzales-Crussi's clinical distinction turns toward the monster as an abject being. He cites Eugenio D'Ors' statement that "The monster is alone... The authentic monster represents no one but himself... He is the exception" (p. 93).

Kristeva (1982) and Creed (1993) note a key psychological aspect of horror as that of abjection. Bakhtin's theory of grotesque realism (Robinson, 2011), deems the monster outcast from normal society, in that these beings "[celebrate] incompleteness, transgression and the disruption of expectations." This perspective also relates to Gonzales-Crussi's discussion of human malformations and the historic treatment of such 'freaks' (1985). The absolute abjection of the monster, is theorized by Creed (1993), Berenstein (1996), Tobing-Rony (1996) and Gonder (2003; 2004) as *other*, attributed to markers of gender, race, and sexuality. Neale (1999) cites gender as a particularly notable construct within the horror film, representing the oppression of the woman; Creed (1993) focuses more on the female monster, articulating that this depiction signifies the male fear of female sexuality known as castration theory. Gonder (2003; 2004) refers to the representation of race as a primitive monstrosity and horror as a medium for the reinforcement and "maintenance of white male supremacy." This view is further reinforced in consultation of the literature on propaganda, in which the monster also becomes the demonisation of nationality and race (Irwin-Lewis, 1992; Heller, 2008; Yanker, 1972). Although the literature spans several theories of the psychology of horror, the monster is perhaps

the most common and important convention, even though it is not present in all works of horror. Russell supports this in his statement:

The basic definition of any horror film may be centred around its monster character, and the conflict arising in the fantastical and unreal monster's relationship with normality – as represented through a pseudo-ontic space constructed through filmic realism – provides the necessary basic terms for its (filmic) existence (cited in Jancovich, 2002, p. 2).

Carroll (1990) proceeds to theorize on the psychology of horror monsters in his observation that although the monsters and situations of horror are quite unbelievable, we project our own fears into this fictitious space.

Film Codes and Conventions

Neale (1999) discusses the tradition of genre film in relation to horror. Neale (1999) articulates that the notion of genre in film is a way to categorise like examples through similar iconography, language, themes and plot lines. Jancovich alludes to Altman's perspective in distinguishing the role of genre in saying "there has been a long running assumption that the films of certain genres are not simply all the same, but they have specific ideological functions" (2002, p. 18). Jancovich also cites genre specific issues inherent to horror films and their readings, such as morality, gender, violence, and misogyny (2002, p. 18). Neale (1999) discusses the unavoidable overlap the horror genre can have with the sci-fi, mystery, action and adventure film genres.

The literature marks the codes and conventions of the horror film to include plot, setting, character, iconography, and the monster, which all speak to the ideology of horror (Carroll 1990; King, 1982). King (1982) notes plot as of paramount importance in horror. According to King (1982), in horror a monstrous threat is usually presented, whether that threat is a supernatural monster, or a human. Carroll (1990) agrees in his assertion that plots within this genre are struc-

tured to be predictable, suspenseful, and a process of discovery, such as the clichés of the "malevolent house" or the "onset" of a monster. Neale (1999) discusses settings which feature gothic iconography and motifs such as: tombstones; graveyards; decaying buildings; and are staged in the dark of night, under the full moon. Carroll (1990) and Neale (1999) concur that characters in the horror film are rigidly structured, usually consisting of the 'monster', the main protagonist, and minor characters in support of the protagonist. Carroll (1990) further states his observation that audiences tend to identify with specific characters, not only the protagonist but, at times, the monster. The plot, setting, motifs and characters all echo the audience's horizon of expectation of the horror genre.

Film criticism suggests that the ideology and subtexts of horror are visible in the codes and conventions, such as those outlined above (Carroll, 1990; Jancovich, 2002; Neale, 1999). Several sources establish the politics of 'body horror' as stemming from the French tradition of 'Grand Guignol' horror theatre as discussed in greater detail previously in this section (Horrorpedia, 2014). Neale (1999) describes 'body horror' as concerned with gore, dismemberment, mutilation, mutation and generally, the visceral corruption of the body. In horror films, this body horror can be related to the human and the monster (Carroll, 1990). Relevant to this corruption of the physical form, the analysis and psychoanalysis of sub-texts of horror are presented by the literature as a key theoretical way to understand our interest in this genre.

According to key authorities, the horror genre spans art, literature, theatre, film, radio, comics, and video games. From its inception in Gothic literature, to its existence in video games of today, it seeks to gain an emotional reaction from its audience. The monster is central to horror and represented more than a fictional creature, extending to provide comments on nationality, race, and gender contributing to cultural and political rhetoric. There is much commentary available on horror as a film genre.

METHODOLOGY

Studying Visual Texts

Many authors agree that there is an academic absence of structured criticism and understanding of visual texts. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) assert that the desire to analyse, theorise, and attribute meaning to visual texts, and the significance of such processes, is quite a recent notion, born of the mid 20th Century. Several sources have noted the dire lack of general thought and education given to the reading of the visual image (Berger, 1973; Dondis, 1973; Fiske, 1990; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; McLuhan, 1964; Medley, 2012). This shortcoming can perhaps be best articulated in Kress and Van Leeuwen's statement that there exists "a staggering inability on all our parts to talk and think in any way seriously about what is actually communicated by means of images and visual design" (1996, p. 16). Through observations in the literature, it is revealed that although we are constantly bombarded by visual imagery, we have become "so accustomed to being addressed by these images, that we scarcely notice their total impact" (Berger, 1973, p. 130).

Thus, it is argued by key theorists (Berger, 1973; Dondis, 1973; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996) that the need for us to understand the visual image is of equal, if not greater, significance to written language. Berger presents seeing as a precursor to language, outlining the importance of the visual in how we "[establish] our place in the world" (1973, p. 7). Dondis agrees with the necessity to learn how to evaluate images, and notes their importance in "inform[ing] the observer either about himself and his own world, or about other times or places, far away and unfamiliar" (1973, p. 146). Thus, the literature is intent on positioning visual analyses as an imperative adjunct to basic education.

Theoretical texts dissecting the composition of the image, while also promoting a meticulous, calculated reading of the visual text, are an apparent attempt at reeducation on the 'grammar' of images (Dondis, 1973; Kepes, 1967). Kress and Van Leeuwen argue that such approaches, although valid, do not "tell the whole story" in that

they omit the "equally vital role [of the visual text] in the production of meaning" (1996, p. 1). According to the literature, a balanced approach to the analyses of visual texts, therefore, would be to distinguish both the way in which an image is constructed, and also consideration of the meaning behind its construction.

Origins of Visual Methodologies

The data suggests that ways of discerning meaning from visual texts have largely evolved from the analysis of linguistics, the earliest applied model being Saussure's theory of semiology (Moriarty, 2005). Saussure was first to delineate the signifier, signified, sign relationship, attributing these facets to language, although stating that this model could be used more broadly to explain our society. Following on from Saussure's model, Peirce's work provided a model of sign, interpretant, and object. The interpretant, referred to the "idea evoked in a person's mind by the sign" (Moriarty, 2005, p. 228). In this way, Peirce brought personal experience into the decoding of the sign. Barthes further developed this semiotic theory in pointing out the ideological meaning (myth) in the "artificial and constructed nature of...images" (cited in Allen, 2003, p. 38). Barthes focused more on how images and visual material is constructed than on language, taking on Hjelmslev's distinction of denotation and connotation; that is, the literal and implied meaning inherent in a text (Moriarty, 2005). These developments in semiotics/semiology are seen as important throughout the research, because they developed a model for exploring not only what was physically represented, but also what underlying metaphors, references, cultural and personal meanings could be extracted from the visual text.

When undertaking any analytical research into visual texts it is quite impossible to ignore semiotic theory – in most texts it is presented as a default methodology for researchers in design, visual art, film, and media studies. Foss (2013) asserts that scholars in such visual disciplines have long been searching for a methodology which is inherently suited to the discussion of the visual, and even crafted

and identified specifically for this intent. Foss (2013) argues that the methodological model of visual rhetoric bridges disciplines as well as serves to combine several models in its tailoring to the analysis of visual texts. She also adds that this methodology is further removed from linguistics than is semiotics, and therefore more effectively focused on the visual text alone.

Defining Visual Rhetoric

As in semiotics, visual rhetoric was conceived from the discipline of language. Buchanan (cited in Schneller, 2010) asserts that the idea of rhetoric was born of the craft of persuasive argumentation practiced in Ancient Greece. In this way, rhetoric is rooted in the same history as early propaganda. Buchanan proposes visual rhetoric as a “design argument,” referring to the three elements of pathos, ethos and logos (cited in Schneller, 2010). Schneller (2010) summarises Buchanan’s definition as “different aspects of one piece of design.” She (2010) explains; “some features of design act on an emotional level (pathos), others draw on our moral convictions or values (ethos), and others try to influence us by providing information, rational arguments or mere functionality (logos).” These definitions, although partially orienting the visual researcher, are still ambiguous and the meaning of the phrase ‘visual rhetoric’ remains difficult to pin down with several authors adopting a varying definition to the next.

Definitive issues concerning the implementation of the methodology of visual rhetoric are illustrated by Helmers and Hill:

The phrase visual rhetoric was being used more frequently in journal articles, in textbooks, and especially in conference presentations. However, it seemed equally obvious that the phrase was being used in many different ways by different scholars. There seemed little agreement on what exactly scholars intended when they used the term, and no reliable way to distinguish the work being done under the rubric of “visual rhetoric” as a coherent category of study. (2004)

As apparent in this excerpt, the conceptual and practical models of visual rhetoric as a methodology have largely been broad and ineffective. Stafford, in turn, purports that an efficient cross-disciplinary model needed to be clearly articulated and workable:

It seems infeasible, either intellectually or financially, to sustain multiple, linear specializations [sic] in art, craft, graphic, industrial, film, video, or media production and their separate histories. Instead, we need to forge an imaging field focused on the transdisciplinary problems to which we bring a distinctive, irreducible, and highly visual expertise (cited in Helmers & Hill, 2004, p.19).

Due to these problematic definitions and practical applications of several models of visual rhetoric, I have chosen to relate to one clear model of this methodology, that articulated in Foss’s article “Theory of Visual Rhetoric”(2013). This model is outlined in detail in the methodology section in the next chapter, as well as the more easily defined practice-based research model.

SUMMARY

Throughout this review of the literature, I have traced the four main areas of study that are key to this research project. The debates between seminal texts on the nature of propaganda are apt in approaching the current political climate in Australia. This knowledge will help in framing comparisons between contemporary direct and indirect propaganda. The poster is the subject of analyses, as well as the vehicle for my practice-based research. Horror is the genre or theme of posters which I will critically dismember. I will focus predominantly on the signification of fear of the *other* and its representation as an unmistakably abject monstrosity. The chosen methodologies of visual rhetoric and practice-based research will best assist my discoveries on the intertextual relationships between

politics and horror, and will also help to clearly situate my research within design, and more broadly, the visual arts.

Dissecting the monster

There looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable.

Julia Kristeva

RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

The aim of this research is to identify key rhetorical links between the monsters of political propaganda and horror film advertisements. The main question, which will be considered throughout this project is; How is fear of the *other* signified through the metaphor of the monster in political and horror posters of the 20th Century? The *other* can be defined as one who is an outsider, culturally or ideologically. Sub-questions for contemplation are; What similarities and differences do the monsters of politics and horror present in their visual iconography and construction of the *other*? How will the application of analogue printing techniques affect my relationship to the monster and my engagement with the rhetoric created in my own poster works? And finally, In what way do monsters manifest in the political and cultural aspects of contemporary Australian society?

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Kristeva's theory of abjection

The monsters of politics and horror manifest in numerous forms and express a range of meanings. This research is primarily concerned with the construct of monster as *other*. A Kristevan

theoretical perspective will be employed to explore the monster as *other* and also the rhetorical connections between these monstrous *others*. Kristeva defines the *other* as “the one who does not belong to the group, who is not ‘one of them’” (1991, p. 95). To expand on this concept, Kristeva notes that her reference to ‘them’ signifies the “family, the clan, the tribe” (1991, p. 95). Throughout her work, Kristeva utilises the phrase “the other” to denote outsiders of race, religion, nationality, gender, and sexuality. In this thesis, I will particularly reference Kristeva’s works, *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1982), *Strangers to Ourselves* (1991), as well as a more recent interview with her conducted as a part of the Chicago Humanities Festival, entitled “On Julia Kristeva’s Couch” (2013) which discusses and contextualises her greater theoretical work and relates it to current events, such as the war in the middle east and the wide spread abjection of religious *others*. The adoption of a Kristevan perspective is appropriate in the exhumation of the monster’s visceral and dejected physicality as well as its social position as outcast. Utilising this perspective will allow me to dissect the metaphor of the monster, and deduce whether the monster was an uncanny representation of nationality, race, gender, and sexuality within political and horror posters. While this research is limited to four expressions of the monster, these are the specific categories of ‘foreigner’ or other addressed in Kristeva’s work.

Kristeva’s theory of abjection repeatedly references the visceral nature of physical and psychological dejection. It is this engagement with violence, bodily functions and the grotesque which I will apply to the examination of the monster within propaganda and film posters. These visual elements significant to the horror genre are also reflected in propaganda, particularly in the depiction of the enemy, and atrocities of war. Kristeva’s representation of the horror that is the human body perfectly summarises the threat imposed upon the viewer of such disturbing imagery. The internal, made external, and the vulnerability of the body, are key aspects of the horror genre and are relevant themes to propaganda works. I will

undertake my analytical studies of the abject monster using the methodological models of firstly, visual rhetoric and secondly, practice-based research.

METHODOLOGIES

Visual Rhetoric

The purpose of this research is to identify and respond to the rhetoric apparent within and between poster images, specifically concerning the cultivation of fear of the other through the metaphor of the monster. The specific methodological model I will be adopting is that outlined in Sonya Foss’s article ‘Theory of Visual Rhetoric’. Foss states that visual rhetoric can refer to both the communicative artifact and also the analytical perspective one may take in the evaluation of such artifacts (2013, pp. 141-152). Rhetoric, as a form of persuasion, is the ideal lens through which to explore and dissect the monster. Both horror and political posters are less concerned with the conveyance of information, and more accurately aligned with breeding irrational and, predominantly, exaggerated fears.

In her article, Foss refers to Ehninger’s definition of rhetoric “as the ways in which humans ‘may influence each other’s thinking and behaviour through the strategic use of symbols’” (2013, p. 141). As Foss outlines, for an artifact to qualify as visual rhetoric “[the] image must be symbolic, involve human intervention, and be presented to an audience for the purpose of communicating with that audience” (2013, p. 144). She also states that visual rhetoric can be a perspective “that involves the analysis of the symbolic or communicative aspects of visual rhetoric” (p. 145). When analysing the symbolic, Foss outlines three perspectives to consider; “nature of the image,” “function of the image,” and “evaluation of the image.” (2013, p. 146-47). The Swiss Design Network (an association of Swiss design academics and practitioners) articulates rhetoric as reflective of strict genre considerations. For example, pharmaceutical packaging shares a common aesthetic, one of science, efficiency, and

neutrality (Schneller, 2010). Similarly, there is a shared artillery of symbols which create a network of meanings in relation to political and horror posters. The commissioners and designers involved in the production of such posters worked to satisfy a specific visual rhetoric already established in their respective fields.

The particular approach to visual rhetoric delineated by Foss offers a comprehensive model for the analysis of image as data. Her description of this methodology encourages a process which is not limited by sign or particular elements of the image, but rather encapsulates the many and varied ways in which images not only communicate to their audience, but also create an active network of meanings within their genre. For Foss, visual rhetoric, as a relatively new addition to the field of rhetoric, is a response to the “emerging recognition that visual images provide access to a range of human experience not always available through the study of discourse” (2013, p.143). In Foss’s description, “colours, lines, textures, and rhythms in an image provide a basis for the viewer to infer the existence of images, emotions, and ideas” (2013, p.145). In this way visual rhetoric is a methodological model specifically designed for the study of visual artifacts – their conventions, functions, and meanings. The methods used to conduct this research vary slightly throughout each of my core chapters, in order to offer differing view points from which to examine the monster. These methods will be thoroughly outlined in the methods section of this chapter.

Practice as Research

I have deemed it beneficial to my research to undertake the printing of my own political and horror posters, following my findings on the nature of the monster. I will apply my knowledge and conclusions on the abject monster to the growing paranoia inherent in current Australian political and cultural rhetoric. A contemporary political rhetoric of reversion is transparent with the reintroduction of archaic Knight and Dame titles, as well as a propagandistic tone which resonates strongly with posters from World War I. This es-

tablished climate of fear, reversion, and monstrosity lends itself to being reimagined in print. In doing this, I will not only be creating new poster works steeped in rhetoric, but will also be learning some of the physical skills and analogue printmaking processes of poster design and production. This is important as digital means are now at the forefront of design practice. I understand this to be both a welcomed advancement as well as a loss, when considering the original practice from which these technologies stemmed. In the hand making of these design objects, I will be engaging the body and materials and, in a way, conversing with the monsters tangibly throughout their manufacture. My aim in creating these posters is to visually reveal contemporary political and social rhetoric, whilst also using satire to relate this current climate to historic war propaganda and the horror monsters of the silver screen. By using old-fashioned screen printing techniques, I will be physically mimicking this ideological reversion as well as making new design objects. Overall, this creative work will allow me to consolidate my learning on historical forms of abject monsters, and apply this to my own design practice. In doing so, I endeavour to suggest the power of the image is greater than that of the spoken word, and similarly that the significance and visual impact of the hand-made work is still recognisable against a sea of digital creations. In this way the making will be a process of discovery, but also one by which to communicate my own design argument. Along with these poster works, I have also designed this book in which the research project and exegesis are presented. The design process of this thesis is therefore also a significant aspect of my creative work.

In the text *Practice As Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (Barrett & Bolt, 2010) Barrett asserts, “[the] exploration of artistic research demonstrates that knowledge is derived from doing and from the senses” (p. 1). In this way, it is accepted that learning is inherent in doing. The process of approaching different skills and techniques, solving new problems, and developing original ways of seeing and doing is, in its own right, a process of research and

discovery. This process is then scrutinized and justified in the exegetical component of the work, in this case the final chapter of the book. Bolt suggests that “the task of the exegesis is not just to explain or contextualise practice, but rather to produce movement in thought itself. It is these ‘shocks to thought’ that constitute the work of art and, in conjunction with the artwork, it forms the material of creative arts research” (2010, p. 33). By Bolt’s demarcation, the exegesis should be about the process of thoughts and ideas, as much as it is about the physical process of making. My reasons and findings on making will be outlined in detail in the final chapter of this book.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

Rhetorical Analyses

Throughout the next four chapters, several research methods will be employed. As establishing four separate, yet connected, rhetorical analyses is a multi-latitudinal task, the processes employed are diverse and need further clarification. Selection criteria for the posters examined are based on era, iconography, symbols, and design elements. These will be discussed in this section, as well as the specific methods utilised for each analysis. Critical speculation on audience reaction and popular perception is also a key consideration of this research.

In the next chapter, on nationality, the main posters studied were selected specifically for the period of time they represent – that being the first part of the 20th Century, from The Great War to the era between the wars. Each poster studied contains a nationalistic monster. Detailed rhetorical analyses are then undertaken, by which each image is broken down into symbol, iconography, meaning, and, most importantly, intertextual communication. This chapter focuses heavily on semiology, as well as the visual rhetoric apparent within and between images.

The chapter on race follows with a similar approach to poster selection, era being a key element in discussion – this time relating posters from WWII up until the 1950s. The creatures discussed are those that represent race as monstrosity, de-evolved and hyper-evolved forms are the particular focus. Analysis in this chapter is less detailed per image, but the rhetorical analyses present spans a broader range of beasts and political and cultural contexts of abjection.

Gendered monsters are discussed in the following chapter, both male and female monsters being key to this enquiry. The analysis in this section first looks at masculinity and femininity generally within these types of posters, then turns to the dissection of gendered monsters within such works. The time period for the selection of visual data ranges from WWI to the 1980s, as my discussion and range broadens again to encompass a plethora of expressions of gender. Gender notably changes in monstrosity over time and this is a meaningful and multi-faceted evolution to examine.

Monsters of abject sexuality are the last to be wrestled with. Here, my scope spans from WWI until the 1990s. The monster of sexuality is quite unique in its symbolism and execution. A range of images are examined based on iconography and the taboo, and hidden, nature of the sexual monster. Again, the rhetoric changes quite dramatically throughout the eras and this change is discussed.

Printmaking

As earlier discussed in the section on practice-based research, the final chapter is the culmination of findings on the monster, and also the exegetical component of my creative work. Using screen printing as my practice, the exegesis will be a record of process and product, but also an important discussion on how and what was learnt through the making of these design objects. The conceptual side of the poster designs is also articulated.

Book Design

As the creative work within this project extends to the design of this thesis, discussion of the processes and product of this text are also included in the exegetical chapter. Design ideas, considerations, problems, and solutions will be expressed, as well as what I have learned throughout this endeavour.

MAKING THE FIRST INCISION

Throughout this chapter, I have articulated the aim, research questions, theoretical perspective, methodologies, and methods that have been employed throughout this research project. Utilising a Kristevan scalpel, I will be dissecting the abject monsters of nationality, race, gender, and sexuality across horror and political poster works. Methodologies most suited to this exploration are visual rhetoric and practice-based research. I will recruit the methods of rhetorical analyses and printmaking in my studies of what the monster represents in relation to the signification of fear of the *other*.

Nationality Calamity

Political othering and the ethnic abject

I felt doubts and fears crowding upon me. What sort of place had I come to, and among what kind of people?

Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

The most prominent of monsters, to broach both the stages of politics and horror in the 20th Century, was that of the ethnic *other*. Nationality, country of origin, and in turn the taints of political affiliation, were depicted through the use of legendary beasts, cultural caricatures, and stereotypical mythologies. In the earliest part of the century, folklore prevailed in lending the imagery by which to visually express the *other*, predominantly signifying the enemy. Later it seems this form of monster evolved to become increasingly closer to a representation of physical features stereotypical to a people. The visual data, the posters themselves, suggest that the monstrous manifestation of the *other* nationality emerged first in propaganda posters and then permeated into popular culture. An insidious infiltration of nationalistic monsters surged onto the screens in horror arguably to influence, if not reinforce, audience ideologies.

Throughout my analytical research, I will be applying visual rhetoric to the images via deductive analyses. That is, by Foss's distinction "using the visual imagery to illustrate, explain, or investigate rhetorical constructs and theories formulated from the study of discourse" (2013, p. 147). In this way, I will be applying a Kristevan perspective in order to explore the images I study. Although I

am not creating new theory on visual rhetoric, my approach also is relative to an inductive strategy, in that I have started from viewing the images and then looked to which theory was best applied to the visual rhetoric occurring within these design works. In approaching the images first, I found an established visual rhetoric, which then affected the lens I chose by which to view them. By focusing on visual symbols and iconography within images, and their inherent connotations, this visual rhetoric will be revealed. Firstly, I will look at political posters from the First World War.

Portrayals of the German enemy as the 'Hun' in print propaganda of the First World War are possibly the most recognisable and repeated of the nationalistic monsters. The 'Hun' monster is present in many American, British, and Australian propaganda posters. The two examples shown are Australian and American posters. In the Australian print (see image 1, p. 51.), a large, hairy, ape-like beast emerges from the right of the image, wearing a pickelhaube as he looms over the whole earth. His arms are outstretched, fingers gnarled and taloned, grasping at the earth. Blood covers his hands and forearms, up past the elbows, dripping all over Europe and threatening to cascade from his fingers onto the map of Australia. The expression on his face is that of anger, baring his monstrous teeth, his eyes fixed in a glare of green as he charges forward. The dominating colours in the poster are yellow and green, colours of national significance to Australia. Red also features as blood, splashing on the purity of the green and gold hues. A question mark to his left in a white circle is suggestive of a slogan akin to "do you want this to happen to Australia?" There are no words or directions printed on the image, which contrasts with the very clear message on the American poster to "Destroy this mad brute" and "Enlist."

In the American example (see image 2, p. 51.), the ape has possibly emerged from the depths of water behind it and is standing firmly on American soil, leaving in its wake the ruins of European cities, featured as a faint silhouette in the background. He grasps Lady

Liberty in one arm. In the other arm, the monster wields a bloody and battered club with the word "kultur" printed on it. Both of his hands are covered in blood. Again the ape creature wears a pickelhaube, this time with "militarism" clearly printed on it. He bears his teeth, salivating over the land he deems to conquer. The typography, colour and composition of the poster are an indication that this is a militaristic call to action and implies that if you were an American citizen at the time, and ignored this communication, America was doomed. There is also a very faintly printed enlistment address, which blends into the background grey tones of the poster.



1. Norman Lindsay. The Hun (1914-18.) 2. H. R. Hopps. Enlist (c. 1917)

The beasts in each of these posters are similar, crudely accentuating a stereotypical image of the Bavarian-featured male. It is important to view such characterisations through a Kristevan perspective. To separate the physical appearance of another from your own, you can distance the *self* from the *other*, particularly in this case where the *other* represents the enemy. Kristeva asserts that this distinction of difference is vital in the process of othering in her statement that "the face that is so *other* bears the mark of a crossed threshold that irremediably imprints itself as peacefulness or anxiety" (1991, p.

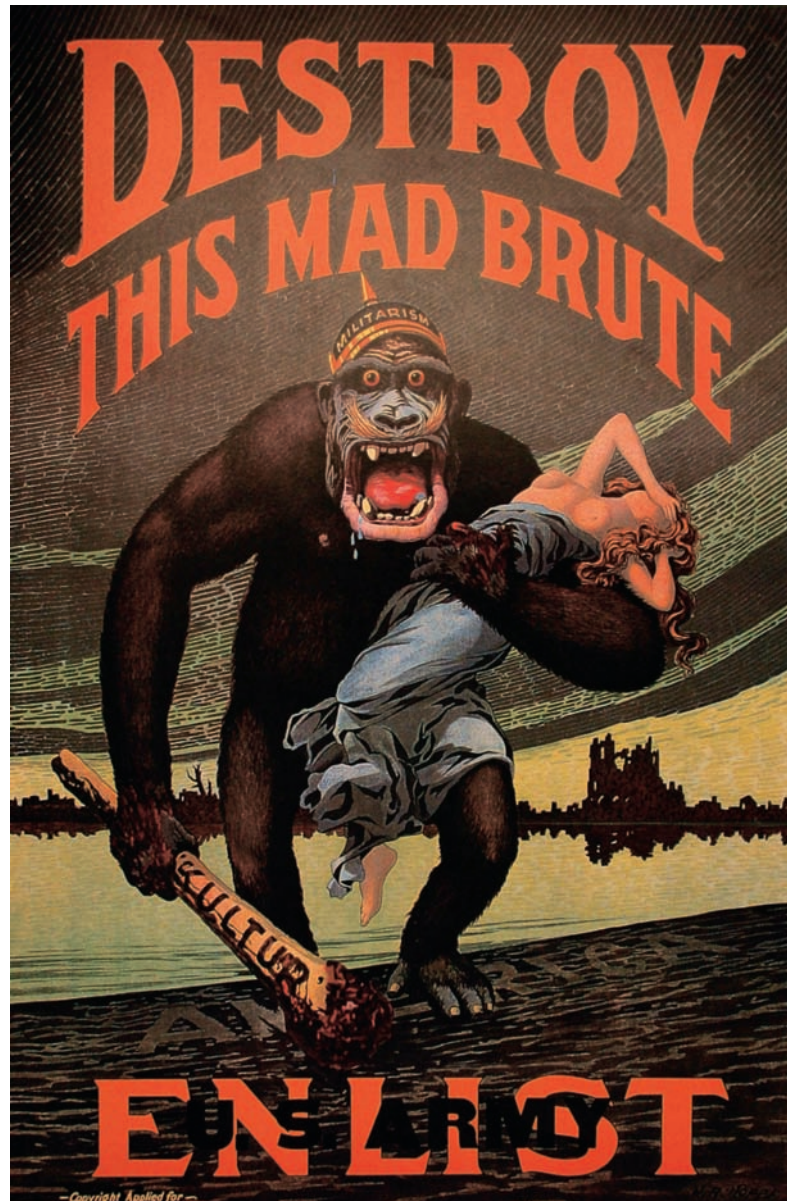
4). Within the war context from which these works originate, such depictions of *othering* served a purpose. These representations dehumanised the enemy, rendering them more beast than man. By positioning the enemy as a monster – not like us – the foe would surely become easier to slay. Both of these posters would have been circulated through the years 1914 to 1918 in their respective countries. However, something quite striking occurs when the American example is juxtaposed with a later horror film poster, that of the 1933 epic, *King Kong* (refer to images 3 & 4, pp. 54-55). There are undoubtable parallels between the visual representations of Kong and the ‘Hun.’ Both are in environments to which they do not belong, one threatens a country, the other, perched atop the then tallest building, the Empire State, threatens the then largest city in the world, New York. Each has a woman in its left arm, the women are in similarly submissive poses and both have long, golden hair. Whilst the ‘Hun’ brandishes his club, Kong’s violence is set into action as he rips a biplane out of the sky. A man with a parachute plunges from the aircraft. The large apes are very similar in facial features, huge mouths baring menacing incisors, eyes glowing red with anger and a look of demented purpose in their faces.

When considering the mere fifteen years between these posters, it is quite plausible that the film’s audience could remember the propagandistic material featuring the ape-like ‘Hun.’ Germany was again seen as unfavourable to many countries as they witnessed the rise of the Nazi Party, and 1933 was the year in which Hitler came to power (Lee, 1998, p.5). Consider the excitement that such an image may have stirred in one who walked past the poster in a theatre window, to see the monstrous ‘Hun’ in live action! It is critical, at this point, to note that the rhetoric of the film is quite different to that of the poster, the viewer of the film is positioned to eventually feel sympathy for the beast. However, the design of the poster advertisement is what would have drawn an audience to behold the spectacle initially. The image of the gigantic ape as *other* reflects a deep-seated fear of that which is threatening and unknown. On the

surface it is a monstrosity of huge proportions, an adversary and enemy. Upon deeper consideration, the ape itself is a foreigner, not simply a monster, as it hails from far-away lands and sits outside the social order, parallel to that which is expected, and separate to that which is ordinary. It is a violent threat to the city and its inhabitants, and a visual commentary on whom should be feared – those not like us.

Another clear example of the rhetorical parallels between the nationalistic monsters of politics and those of horror films is that of a German anti-Bolshevik propaganda poster (1918), and that of the film poster for *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* (1922) (refer to images 5 & 6, pp. 56-57). German anti-Bolshevism is most apparent in poster art examples of World War II, however, these same political sentiments were expressed much earlier, prior even to the formation of the Nazi Party in 1920 (Lee, 1998, p. 5). The Bolsheviks were the defining group responsible for the Russian Revolution, and the political precursor to the formation of Russia’s Communist Party, which later founded, and ruled, the Soviet Union. Towards the end of WWI, widespread propaganda condemning Bolshevism first appeared (Paret, 1992). The poster I will refer to is Engelhard’s 1918 political print, which states “Bolshevism brings war, unemployment and famine.”

This German poster depicts a large, hairy, towering beast, with hunched shoulders and unnaturally long arms, baring two protruding incisors, its eyes glowing white and wild, holding a fierce grip on a knife with one hand and a smoking red bomb in the other. The poster appears to be a screen print with a yellow background and stark block text, also pictured in red, the quintessential communist colour. The large, dark, shadowy ape-like creature is heavily defined in two shades of brown with shadowing in black. The rough, long strokes which depict the beast are reminiscent of other German Expressionist works, particularly those of printmaker and painter



3. H. R. Hopps. Enlist (c. 1917)



4. S. Barret McCormick & Bob Sisk. King Kong (1933)



5. Julius Ussy Engelhard. Bolshevism brings war, unemployment, famine (1918)



6. Artist Unknown. Eine Symphonie Des Grauns (Nosferatu the Vampire) (1922)

Conrad Felixmüller and designer Rudi Feld, who also worked in creating political propaganda.

This poster represents a visual demonisation of Bolshevik culture: the designer makes the Bolshevik monstrous to exaggerate the fascist ideologies of the State. The danger this monster threatened was that of a varying political view, one which would disrupt the integrity and authenticity of the German nation. The way in which German propaganda depicted the Bolsheviks was eerily similar to the way in which the US and Britain depicted the German as the ape-like 'Hun' prior to and during WWI, as previously discussed in this chapter. Again, this monster represents all that is frightening, overpowering; a social and political other.

The film poster I will analyse, in context of the political example, is that promoting Murnau's 1922 German Expressionist cinematic work, *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror*. This film was an unauthorised reimagining of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and arguably the most recognisable and influential film of the silent era. The similarities in story between the novel and film texts are clearly apparent, a few name and location changes the only differences. The particular poster I will be referring to is the 1922 Czech version pictured (image 6, p. 57.), which has a distinctive German Expressionistic design.

This *Nosferatu* poster depicts the vampire, tall, slender and ghoulish. The dark spectre steps out of a coffin, rats scurrying as he slowly creeps out into the night. His threatening silhouette has long arms and gnarled talon-like fingers extended, his eyes and two sharp pointed teeth glowing. He appears more animal than human, his tall form, hunched shoulders, hollowed cheeks and unnaturally pointed ears signify that he is on the edge between human and beast. The background is coloured in gold and blue with a crescent moon located just below the vampire, signalling that he is on high ground, or perhaps more poetically, that he is in between this world and the

next. The poster seems to be executed using block printing technology. Scratchy, dark and heavy marks form the shape of *Nosferatu*. Curved text in white stretches across the poster, the typography mirroring the markings of the monster, giving much movement and vibration to the title.

To gaze upon this design considering a Kristevan reading of the work, one could allude to Stoker's original *Dracula* text, which has been exposed by several scholars as particularly xenophobic in the portrayal of the Count (Khader, 2012; Otto, 2007; Hughes, 2009), and even anti-Semitic (Davison, 2004; Thomson, 2009). Count Orlok's depiction in the film poster for *Nosferatu*, is parallel to Stoker's portrayal of Count *Dracula*. *Nosferatu* is indefinitely a foreigner (stereotypical Eastern European features are exaggerated), strange and mysterious not only in appearance, but also in practices. Independently of the film and Stoker's novel, the Czech version of the poster sits well within Todorov's definition of the fantastic uncanny, describing something which is supernatural (1973, p. 42). The creature looks like that which comes not only from European folklore but also the stuff of nightmares. In this poster, *Nosferatu* is certainly, to quote Kristeva, one who is "radically separate, loathsome...on the edge of existence and hallucination" (1982, p.2). Most significantly, the *Dracula* monster shifts between alive and dead, or exists within the undead realm. In the case of the poster, which clearly features his rat-like incisors, he also shifts between human and animal.

To the viewer of this poster, the creature would be easily identifiable as an *other* due to the representation of the monster's nationality and, more importantly, foreignness. Audiences of the poster, would probably have been exposed to other historical representations of the Bolshevik, or the Jew. The *Nosferatu* creature is strongly characterised as other. He is alone, he resides with rats (inherently filthy and vile creatures, particularly following their link to the Plague), he steps from a coffin (a reference to death and the uncanny undead), he

bared his fangs, his eyes appear dead, he embodies all that is unclean and unholy (Kristeva, 1982). He threatens the goodness and purity of human normalcy by his physique, his stance, his hands outreaching, but for what to take? This creature is portrayed as something to be feared, unsettling both in its appearance and the visual motifs which surround it.

To place these two examples of political propaganda and horror film poster side by side is to see a rhetorical relationship emerge. The monsters are different, yet so similar. The teeth and the eyes are focal points, two incisors bared towards the audience, eyes glowing and inhuman. The figure of each monster is large and foreboding, the feeling that nothing good can come of such a silhouette may certainly be a logical extraction by an audience. They are both violent, or threaten violence, they are both dark. Each represents a cultural, physical and nationalistic *other*. These posters seem to communicate to their audience in a manner encouraging the xenophobic attitudes of the time. Whether the film poster was designed to reflect an anti-Semitic monster can not be accurately determined, but in a world at the end of a war it is not too far to extrapolate a strong relationship between the fears of nightmares and the fears instilled in a country threatened by a political and social *other*.

Nosferatu and King Kong are monstrous *others* of different nationality. They are both from foreign lands and both stand out in their monstrous physical appearance. Although, there is a shift between the image of Nosferatu and that of King Kong, in that Kong's depiction as a caricature of a gorilla raises further questions for an audience, questions about where Kong hails from. Within the context of the film, this beast represents an animal native to "Skull Island," a wild and untamed Pacific land, full of mysterious and prehistoric creatures. Certainly, in terms of this argument, King Kong was a reflection of an outsider, a threat, the 'Hun', within the poster at least. However, when standing alone, Kong is certainly deemed a racial *other*, without the ability to communicate with those around

him, and alien to his new environment. In this chapter's discussion on nationality, it is revealed that there is a blurred line between country of origin, and race. This will be furthered investigated in the next chapter.

Race in Outer Space

Dichotomies of primitivism and hyper-intelligence in the discussion of alien abjection

*Look, you fools.
You're in danger.
Can't you see?
They're after you.
They're after all of us.
Our wives, our children, everyone.
They're here already.
You're next!*

Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1957)

In the previous chapter ethnicity was discussed and whilst the ethnic monster was demonised vigorously, the monster of race struck a more complex chord in relation to the depiction of hatred and fear of the unknown. When looking at representations of race in political and horror posters there are two types of monsters that rear their ugly heads. The first type of beast is a crude depiction of race that places emphasis on the portrayal of stereotypical physical features. Often, these creatures relate to the de-evolution of the human form, referencing both sub-human animals, as well as alien creatures that existed prior to civilised humankind. Such monsters may be rendered as alien based on their appearance, strange customs, and unfamiliar environments from which they originate. The second type of monster is a much more subtle and

metaphorical manifestation of race. This category of creature acts as a subtle vehicle by which to discuss race and fear of the other on a societal level. These monsters may masquerade as mythical entities, imaginary beasts, and aliens from far away galaxies in order to allow conversations on the subject of race, which would typically be deemed as sensitive and taboo. Throughout this chapter I will explore these two categorical depictions of racial monstrosity using poster examples to illustrate the establishment of a rhetorical relationship which bridges both politics and horror. These monsters will be analysed through the presence of important symbols in the posters, and also the emotional persuasion encompassed in these images, to align with Foss's distinction of visual rhetoric as methodology (2013). The terms 'racial' and 'alien' will be used interchangeably to situate a culture as abject and monstrous within these poster images. I use the term 'alien' to signify creatures that are other-worldly and inhuman, as well as humans who are foreign to a country, excluded, culturally different, abject.

Perhaps the most commonly portrayed racial *other* across political and horror posters, is that of the primordial, animalistic, or devolved man-beast. Particularly in WWI and II propaganda, the enemy is depicted as a degenerate being. As discussed in the previous chapter, images of the German enemy were largely based on ape-like, sub-human embodiments of evil, violence and unrelenting hatred, certainly designed to instil fear in their audience. Although this imagery crafted the demonisation of the German people, undoubtedly, this depiction of the German enemy remained strong and terrifying in its monstrosity, a force to be reckoned with and a threatening adversary. Contrary to this depiction of the German, anti-Japanese propaganda from WWII focused on the deprecation of race, predominantly accentuating the small, weak and deceptive nature of the Japanese enemy. Often pictured as a rat or mouse (lowly animals), the Japanese enemy was a fumbling and intentionally comical caricature, featuring enormous bucked teeth in an open mouth, squinting eyes and glasses, usually with a bright yellow com-

plexion. Unlike the German enemy, the Japanese cartoon characters seem, in representation, harmless, amusing, and easy to defeat. Upon viewing a variety of posters, it is evident that his type of racial ridicule of the Japanese was evident across propagandistic materials of the US, Britain and Australia.



7. Artist Unknown. Jap Trap (1941-45)



8. Artist Unknown. Beat the Promise (1941-45)

Another devolved animal form of monster was that of the demonic Jew in German propaganda. The Jew was often depicted as a rat, snake, or an elderly goblin-like form; equipped with a gigantic nose, pointed face and, at times, a stereotypical Rabbi beard. The expression on the Jew's face is that of a sinister, evil glare, his eyes small and fixed in a stare to meet the gaze of the viewer. Many of the images illustrate the creature on piles of money whilst surrounding Germans go hungry. Thus the images of Jewish and Japanese enemies, from opposing perspectives, were monstrous as degenerate man-animal forms. Such images transferred across to cinema and similar human-animal hybrid monsters became a threatening metaphor for race relations, particularly in the United States.

Although more subtle in execution than simultaneous propagandistic works, the horror film poster brought to life monsters of race, more specifically xenophobic representations of the 'African American' population. The earlier discussed, King Kong was one

such example, coming from a far-away land, a gorilla-like being not yet privy to evolved civilisation (Tobing-Rony, 1996, p. 166). Another de-evolved alien monster is that of the *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. The original US poster for the 1954 film (see image 9, p. 68) depicts an underwater gilled part man part fish creature, green and scaly, he has captured his victim, a beautiful woman in a white bathing suit, and holds her in his taloned, webbed hands. In the distance, human divers with harpoons follow in pursuit to kill the beast and release the innocent victim of the beast's terror. This man-fish monster can be viewed as a reference to evolution theory, a creature which is pre-historic, pre-man, an alien being who has crawled from the primordial sludge and has come to be in man's environment. In the film itself, the monster is primitive, without human understanding - a sad, unintelligent and uncivilised beast.

It is important to note that upon viewing the films in discussion, the viewer can certainly relate to and sympathise with the Creature from the Black Lagoon, as with Kong. Whilst it is impossible to divorce the advertising posters from their related cinematic works, it is imperative to this argument that we are concerned with the film posters and what they appear to communicate. After all, the posters were a means of luring an audience, and making sensational visual statements reflective of widespread xenophobic views was a sure-fire way of sparking interest at the box office.

Many commentators on film have related the *Creature from the Black Lagoon* to African race relations in America (Gonder, 2004; Tobing-Rony, 1996). Firstly, and most obviously, the colour of the lagoon itself is an indicator. Black is not only the colour of evil, terror and the unknown, but also the skin colour label given to 'African Americans' during this time. The creature is from the Amazon, a mysterious and far-away environment and its de-evolved form goes further to represent "living evidence of a biological progression" (Tobing-Rony, 1996, p. 194), this stated in reference to civilised, white society. Sequels to this film were *Revenge of the*

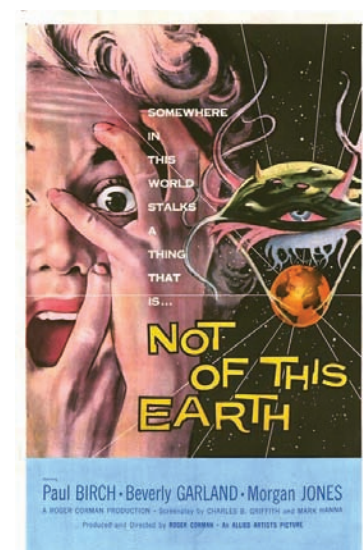
Creature (1955), in which the poster presents the monster in chains (see image 10, p. 69) with a similar plot line to that of *King Kong* – the beast being taken from its natural habitat and displayed for the world to observe its primitive state. In this poster, again a woman in white lays helpless to the monster's power.

The final instalment to this trilogy is *The Creature Walks Among Us* (1956). The poster for this final film (see image 11, p. 69) presents a seemingly emancipated beast, now wearing pants, straddling the Golden Gate Bridge. Onlookers gasp in terror as the beast holds a regular looking white man in casual dress over his head. This poster is possibly the most obvious in its racial commentary, pointing to the fact that the creature is now becoming civilised – as indicated by his wearing of pants, and threatens not the helpless, innocent woman, but this time the manliest of men, in a blue shirt and brown trousers. If Gonder and Tobing-Rony are correct in their assertions, then this image can certainly be viewed as argumentative rhetoric that white man was now threatened in position and masculinity, by his black neighbour. An assimilated, insidious, lurking monster which was once his captive and was still a symbol of evolutionary digression in comparison with polite society, was marking his place in society. Other horror films with de-evolution themed racial creatures featured on the poster art include *Neanderthal Man*, *Bride of the Gorilla*, *Monster on Campus*, and *I Married a Monster from Outer Space*.

The sci-fi horror with outer space settings and monsters was largely exploited throughout the 1950s. The threat of nuclear war with or invasion by Russia was very real in the fears of suburban-ite Americans, as they now lived with the knowledge of what was possible in regards to nuclear warfare, as a result of the American attacks on Japan in WWII. The Cold War brought about some terrifying horror monsters, meant to signify communism and its ability to jeopardise the holistic consumer and family values of everyday Americans. Posters to films such as *Forbidden Planet* (see image 12,



9. Reynold Brown. Creature from the Black Lagoon (1954)



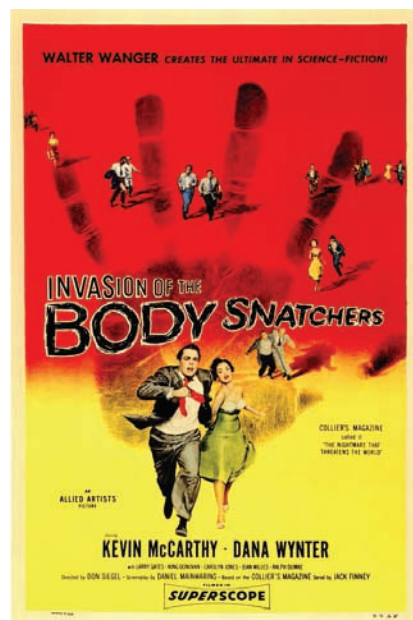
10. Top Left. Reynold Brown (1955)

11. Top Right. R. Brown (1956)

12. Left. Artist Unknown (1956)

13. Above. Artist Unknown (1957)

p. 69), *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *War of the Worlds*, *The Thing*, *Not of This Earth* (see image 13, p. 69), *The Man From Planet X*, and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (see image 14 below), are all examples of the pictorial articulation of this fear. These films mostly portrayed an alien race that was usually malevolent, scientifically advanced and prone to trickery. These aliens represent the other end of the spectrum to the de-evolved beasts, that which will outsmart us, take over, and make us their slaves; sentiments that weren't too far from America's political and social stance against Russia and communism. It is worth mentioning here that the threat posed by the Russians, was predominantly to do with them being of the same race as Americans. Their alienness and difference in culture and political ideology rendered them as removed from American society as the racial *other*. They were positioned as more threatening than the racial *other*, as they were not physically marked as different and therefore could infiltrate American society without detection. Their sameness was depicted as a mere mask, a purely superficial



14. Artist Unknown (1956)

similarity, compared with what was hidden under the surface. This rhetoric was apparent in films such as *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Thus they were subjected to xenophobic treatment on a political and social level, particularly throughout the 1950s. Both film and propaganda warned of the Russians' inherent power, nuclear weaponry and advancements in technology, as well as their evil belief systems that threatened to take over the western world.

It seems the metaphor of alien invasion and technology was not a new one to surface mid 20th Century. The 1917 French poster (refer to image 15, p. 72) which states 'L'Heure has discovered the machine to end the war' depicts a machine reminiscent of those described in H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* (1898). The scene illustrated is that of a large flying robot-like machine, hovering above an earth strewn with hundreds of dead bodies of soldiers, as well as those running to take cover from the unstoppable mechanism. The machine has a vacuum-like appendage which casts a spotlight on the ground, highlighting the destruction. The machine appears to have a face with two domed red lights acting as eyes and a triangular hatch as a mouth. Aulich asserts that this poster "acknowledged the scale of destruction that resulted from modern industrialised conflict, and offered hope for victory through new technology" (2007, p. 67). Exploring this argument further is to accept that the solution to the problem is also the origin of the problem. This poster may hint at new technology and development as a critical advancement in warfare (as was seen in the tanks being used contemporarily), yet also depicts the range of devastation such advancements can cause, in a race to have the best and most sophisticated machines in order to outsmart and destroy one's enemy. The aesthetics of this poster's design are striking and an early indication of the Art Deco era in its geometric and detailed attention to the machine, as well as the colour contrasts in blue and red with shades of pink, reflective of the French national flag. The image presents a powerful and advanced France, successfully defeating its enemy.



15. Henri Montassier. L'Heure has discovered the machine to end the war (1917)



16. Artist Unknown. The War of the Worlds (1953)

Aesthetically, a visual rhetoric exists between this poster and the 1953 British design for the American release, War of the Worlds (see image 16 above). Because both images are based on the H.G. Wells' novel, they are quite similar in their depiction of the monster. They share a visual rhetoric in design alone, their colour, form, and composition very similar. Both make monsters of the machines present, as if to give them life-like qualities. These posters are from very different eras and therefore do not communicate the same message to the viewer, however, both deal with technological advancement and the dangers which come with it. The 1953 film poster encompasses the story of an alien threat, destructively bearing down on earth, whereas the WWI political poster represents a victorious French machine defeating their *other* or 'alien' enemies, the German army as denoted by the bottom left depiction of a soldier in a pick-

elhaube. The film poster, given its release in the US and its era could definitively be attributed to the xenophobic fear of Russian invasion, and spread of communism, presenting the machine as a monster of cultural difference. The mechanical monster itself presents a valuable metaphor on how America viewed Russia, as a large and unyielding machine, cold and calculating in its strategies and ideologies.

Through their depiction of both primitive and highly intelligent monsters, the poster designs explored uncover and reinforce a number of societal fears about the invasion of creatures that are seen as other. These monsters converse across the borders of politics and film, specifically in the discussion of African assimilation and Russian invasion. Many film posters of the 1950s reflect held xenophobic views established throughout WWII and the increasing tension of the Cold War. Some posters converse on an ideological plain, whilst others are most similar in subject and aesthetic. In relation to abjection of the racial *other*, Kristeva asserts that physical difference is a constant reminder of their experience of *otherness*:

whether perturbed or joyful, the foreigner's appearance signals that he is 'in addition'...the insistent presence of a lining – good or evil, pleasing or death-bearing – disrupts the never regular image of his face and imprints upon it the ambiguous mark of a scar – his very own well-being (1991 p. 4).

Gender Dismembered

Examining the anatomy of abject male and female

Darling. Light, of my life. I'm not gonna hurt ya. You didn't let me finish my sentence. I said, I'm not gonna hurt ya. I'm just gonna bash your brains in.

The Shining (1980)

The representation of masculinity and femininity across political and horror monsters is certainly a rhetoric deeply entrenched in cultural gender stereotypes and societal power structures. Kristeva explains the abjection of the female as being a complex psycho-analytical and social issue. Firstly, she uses Lacan's distinction of the Pre-Mirror Stage to illustrate that the rejection of the mother is necessary to the formation of the self. Secondly, in relation to societal power structures, she illustrates the power struggle between the sexes as an:

attempt to share out society. One of them – the masculine, apparently victorious, confesses through its very relentlessness against the other, the feminine, that it is threatened by an asymmetrical, irrational, wily, uncontrollable power (1982, p. 70).

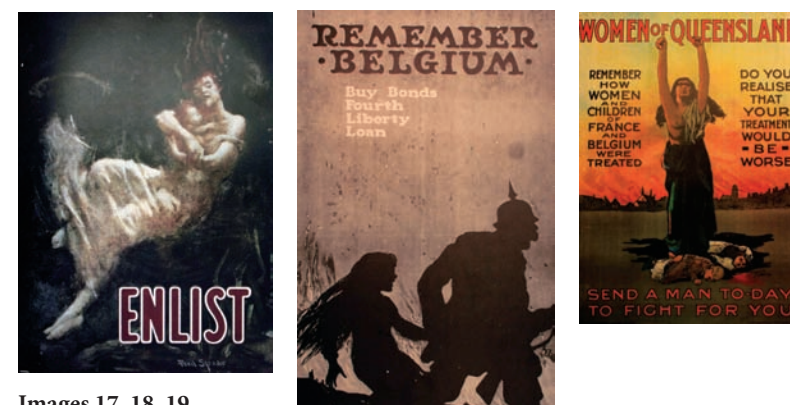
Furthermore, Kristeva states that the “other sex, the feminine, becomes synonymous with a radical evil that is to be suppressed” (1982, p. 70).

In relation to posters, the male monster is predominantly depicted as strong, violent and destructive, whereas the female depiction of the monstrous is usually a hidden, deceptive, or two-faced beast. The gender of the monster is clearly articulated in both the posters of politics and horror. Strong visual similarities exist between these distinctly male and female monsters. In this chapter I will use Foss's theory of visual rhetoric, coupled with a Kristevan perspective to explore the monsters of masculinity and femininity. Before I can effectively dissect the gendered monster, I will need to articulate what it is to be man or woman as a non-monster across these two print media. Therefore, I will begin by looking at how the average man and woman are represented in political and horror posters.

Firstly, I will analyse male identities in political posters. The man is often portrayed as physically strong, handsome, an upstanding and committed citizen, protector of his country, and willing to do whatever it takes to defeat the enemy. He is presented as the embodiment of an undoubtedly brave hero. This representation is clearly illustrated in propaganda posters such as the German poster *Join Us* (1920-1923), the British poster *Lend your strong right arm to your country. Enlist now* (1914), the French print *Subscribe to the fourth national loan* (1918), and the Australian example depicting a stern-faced, muscular man rolling up his sleeves in readiness to work (Lindsay, 1939-1945) (refer to images on page 78.) This strong, masculine image was also promoted in the advertisement of goods, a prime example being that of the British Dunlop poster of 1914. There are other instances in which political posters imply that only weak or inferior men would not want to serve their country at war. This direct attack on one's masculinity would have been an effective tool in coercing its male audience to enlist, if only for fear of not living up to the role of a 'real' man. Examples include the famous British poster which states *Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?* (Lumley, 1914-1918), the Canadian poster *You are no exception, join now*, and the Australian poster *It is nice in the surf, but what about the men in the trenches, go and help* (Souter, 1914-1918)

(refer to images on page 79). The examples shown explicitly mark what was expected of men in times of conflict – strength, pride, fellowship, and unwavering courage.

On the contrary, the depiction of the female in propaganda is predominantly that of a secondary helper to men, one with conscience, gentleness, nurturing, empathy, and purity. Illustrations of delicate femininity are clearly drawn in nursing recruitment posters *The greatest mother in the world* (Foringer, 1918, USA), *Help Red Cross continue to work for mercy* (Northfield, 1939-45, Australia); food stocks and provisions examples *Oh boy! That's the girl! The Salvation Army Lassie* (1914-18, USA), and *The kitchen is the key to victory, eat less bread* (1914-18, Britain) and as self-sacrificing mothers, wives and children in *Women of Britain say "GO"* (Kealy, 1914-18), and *Women! Help Australia's sons win the war, buy war loan bonds* (1914-18) (refer to images on page 80.) As well as these wholesome and emotional depictions of femininity, women are simultaneously presented as the victims of the violent crimes of war, in political propaganda (as pictured below). Themselves and their children are helpless, vulnerable, and in need of rescuing. Such examples of this depiction can be seen in *Enlist* (Spear, 1915, USA), *Remember Belgium* (Young, 1914-18, USA) and *Women of Queensland* (Watkins, 1914-18, Australia).



Images 17, 18, 19.



20. Top Left. L. Hohlwein. Join Us (1920) 21. Top right. Norman Lindsay (1939)
 22. Middle Left. Artist Unknown (1914) 23. Middle Right. Unknown (1917)
 24. Bottom. Jules Abel Faivre. Subscribe to the fourth national loan (1918)

25. Top Right. S. Lumley 1914-18
 26. Above. Souter (1914)
 27. Right. Unknown (1914)



In order reading left to right, top to bottom: 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33



- 34. Top Left. For the flag. For Victory
- 35. Top Middle. We shall have our revenge
- 36. Top Right. German women, work for victory
- 37. Above. Women doing their bit
- 38. Middle Right. Yes Sir - I am here!
- 39. Right. Gee!! I wish I were a man

There are a few other representations of women in political posters that are worth some fleeting attention. These categories of woman include; the Joan of Ark, Liberty, or justice persona exhibited in *For the flag. For victory* (Scott, 1917, France) and *We shall have our revenge* (Rabichev, 1941, Russia/USSR); the strength of the female minus her femininity image, apparent in depictions of munitions factory workers and women in defence jobs in *These women are doing their bit. Learn to make munitions* (Scott, c. 1917, Britain), *German women, work for victory* (Horrmeier, 1918, Germany), and *Yes sir – I am here* (Penfield, c. 1918, USA); and finally the ‘hello boys’ recruitment seductresses evident in such prints as *Gee, I wish I were a man. I’d join the navy* (Christy, 1917, USA) Refer to images on page 81.) The political seductress will be further explored in the next chapter on sexuality. The ‘Rosie the Riveter’ persona, the masculine female, asserts that for a woman to be helpful or strong, she must adopt male characteristics and abandon her stereotypically feminine traits. Interestingly enough, as depicted in many examples, she must still retain her perceived womanly beauty, as this is one characteristic that seems non-negotiable in the realm of the poster.

Political propaganda and horror film advertising portray similar depictions of masculinity and femininity. Non-monstrous images of gender align harmoniously with those of political posters. The man as hero, saviour, and protagonist is articulated in the posters for *The Uninvited* (1944, USA) (see image 40, p. 83) and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (displayed in the previous chapter p. 70). Man as predator and woman as helpless, victim, and prey is certainly evident in the posters for *Black Sunday* (1960, Italy) (see image 41, p. 83), *The Evil Dead* (1981, USA), and *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984, USA) (refer to images 42 & 43 page 84). The woman as hero, although rare in horror posters, again is reflective of the ‘Rosie the Riveter’ image, a woman minus her femininity, the transformed masculine female. This figure is evident in the poster for *Aliens* (Lamb, 1986, USA) (refer to image 44, p. 84). The female protagonist strikes a heroic and typically masculine pose as she is depicted with short hair, strong

physique, and holds a large gun. The only hint to her femininity is her strong physical connection to the child she holds protectively. Thus images of male and female resonate strongly across political and horror designs, each reinforcing the gender stereotypes of the other. Now we have mapped the numerous representations of the male and female as ‘normal’ or non-monster, we can begin to delve into how the genders become monstrous.

The key to examining the monsters of gender is to discover which specific characteristics show the masculine and feminine as monstrous, and whether these features are similar or different between the representations of each. The articulation of masculinity of the monster is quite similarly developed across politics and horror. In political posters, male creatures are mostly depicted as strong, muscular monstrosities, who threaten via their immense physical stature as well as their apparent, illustrated lack of remorse for their brutal, war-mongering ways. In posters such as *They wash themselves* (1919, Hungary)(see image 45, p. 85), the monster is clearly male, not only in physicality alone, but in the obvious power that he



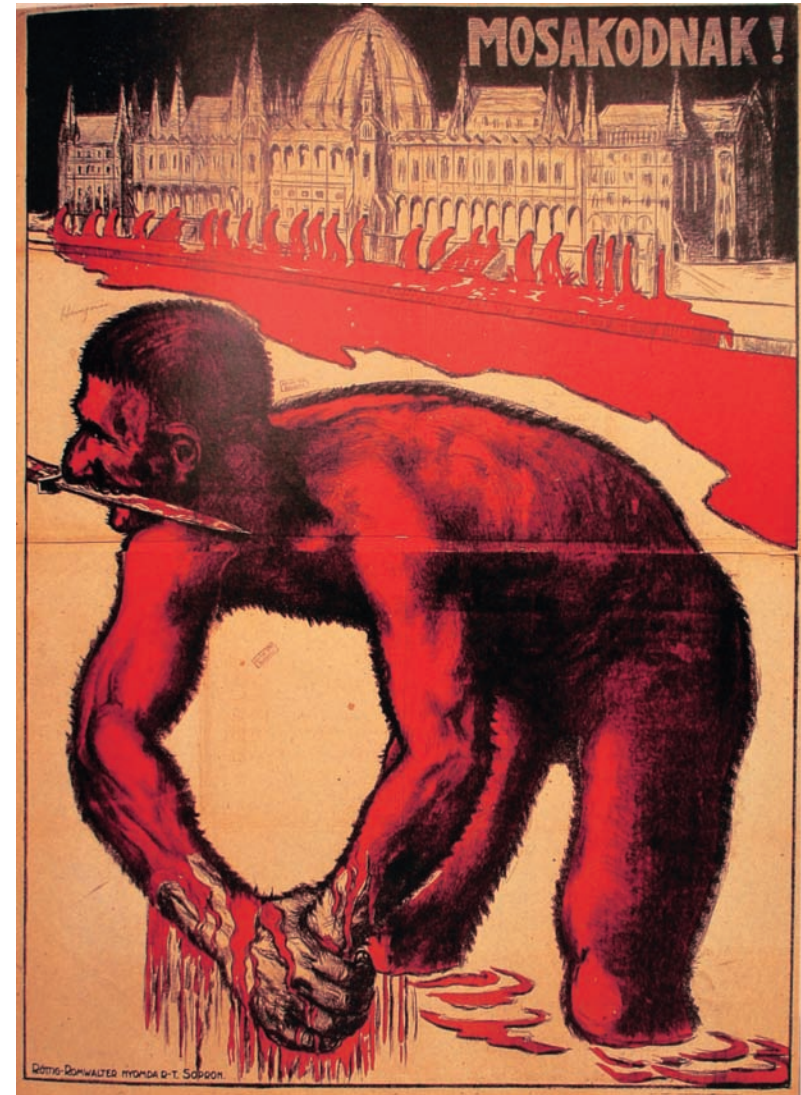
40. The Uninvited (1944)



41. La Maschera Del Demonio
(Black Sunday) (1960)



- 42. Above Left
- 43. Above Right
- 44. Left



- 45. They wash themselves.

possesses. At times, the male monster of war is pictured threatening women or children, as in posters such as *Remember Belgium*, again reinforcing the power of the masculine over such weaker and more vulnerable beings, in both the physical and emotional sense.

This propagandistic portrayal of monstrous masculinity is similar to that presented in horror film posters. In horror advertising, the male monster is again depicted as threatening, more frequently towards women, such as depicted in the Italian poster for *Black Sunday* and the undead male arm grabbing the throat for the female victim in *The Evil Dead*. Monstrous male characters in horror posters can be supernatural or human beasts. Such tropes as the Freudian *Psycho*, the disturbed slasher, the wayward traveller, and the male grotesque, illustrate the many ways in which men can be monsters.

The male grotesque is important to a Kristevan perspective as this creature crosses the borders of gender and psychological commentary. The grotesque male, sometimes human but often supernatural, is stronger and more threatening than his normative counterparts in that he is a reminder of death in appearance alone, a representation of horror external, and within. Such an example of the grotesque male would be the Italian poster for *Zombie* (1979) (refer to image 46, p. 87). This grotesque male is a supernatural undead being, presented in graphic detail, the visceral interior details of the human body leaking out and on show. The animated corpse exhibits the decay of their once human face, a confronting image with a strong gesture to our own mortality. Kristeva argues that:

the corpse (or cadaver: *cadere*, to fall), that which has irremediably come a cropper, is cesspool, and death; it upsets even more violently the one who confronts it as fragile and fallacious chance....refuse and corpses *show me* what I permanently thrust aside in order to live (1982, p. 3).

Kristeva also discusses the physical reaction we have to visual horrors in everyday life, such as seeing spoiled food or maggots. This can

result in the violent dejection of the stomach's fluids, vomiting. She describes this event,:

The body's inside, in that case, shows up in order to compensate for the collapse of the border between inside and outside. It is as if the skin, a fragile container, no longer guaranteed the integrity of one's "own clean self" but, scraped or transparent, invisible or taut, gave way before the dejection of its contents (1982, p. 53)



46. *Zombie*. (1979)

This description of what happens physically when we confront that which is vile, or grotesque, can be applied to viewing horror poster images such as that on the previous page. King (1982) describes this reaction to horror as the “gross out” aspect. The grotesque monster, itself threatens through its physical presence alone. This monster of bodily revulsion is male, the female grotesque will be discussed later in this chapter. In summarising the male monster, the manifest creature of masculinity is, as in political depictions, strong of body and mind, threatening through his sheer size and physicality, as well as his masculine lust for violence.

However, when feminine monsters in politics and horror are examined, something of a multi-faceted beast emerges. On the one hand, the female can be a grotesque two-sided beast, a metamorphosis usually present between the beautiful female and the malevolent creature. On the other hand, a woman can become monstrous simply by possessing the traits of a stereotypical woman and even her reproductive functions. One last inception is that of the female who acts monstrously, being outside the characteristics of her consigned gender.

To offer examples, in further illustrating this dialogue between the feminine monsters of politics and horror, I first categorise a few recurring incarnations of female monsters. The witch is a staple image of the evil and monstrous female. This monster exhibits her underlying nature through her external ugliness, her physique, pointed shoes and facial features (particularly the nose and chin), along with her menacing grin, or, sometimes, stern face, with evil entrancing eyes are indicative of her malevolence. One example of the witch in propaganda is that of the British *Red Cross or Iron Cross?* poster from WWI (Wilson, 1914-18) (see image 47 p. 89). This poster depicts a German nurse grinning menacingly as she pours a glass of water onto the ground. She wears pointed shoes and is slender with a protruding nose and chin. The caption reads

“Wounded and a prisoner our soldier cries for water. The German ‘sister’ pours it on the ground before his eyes. There is no woman in Britain who would do it. There is no woman in Britain who will forget it.” The witch figure is not only evil based on appearance and action, but rather because her nature goes against every stereotype of the nurturing, and empathetic female sex. In horror, a similar image in familiar dress can be seen in the poster for *Haxan* (1922) (see image 48 below), again the pointed features and veiled, mysterious persona stir imaginings of evil and the malicious female. Both posters feature a woman in a nun’s or medical sister’s dress. As nuns and nurses are generally seen as kind and nurturing female characters, the depiction of this kind of female transforming into an evil monster has a greater visual and metaphorical impact. This metamorphosis signifies that the beast is hidden — a wolf in sheep’s clothing, as it were — a comment on the female monster as a concealed danger.



47. D. Wilson. (1914-18)



48. Haxan (1922)

The next monstrous female image I will address is that of the two-faced or deceptive feminine creature. This manifestation of

the feminine monster is that of a hidden beast; behind a beautiful exterior lies a grotesque creature. Often in political propaganda this monster is metaphorical, whereas in horror it is depicted as a literal monster, the internal personality made external. An example of the malicious female in propaganda is that of the spy, the one who listens patiently, poises herself secretly ready to pounce, a demon in the midst of honest men totally oblivious to her evil plot. A prime example of this type of feminine monster is the *Keep Mum She's Not So Dumb* poster (1939-45, Britain) which depicts a woman gazing out seductively into the eyes of the viewer, she is dressed in a gown and is positioned as a high society lady, surrounded by high society military gentlemen presumably discussing the tactics of war (see image 50, p. 91). This woman is not only monstrous as a hidden and insidious mole in the ranks, but also becomes monstrous due to her stereotypically dangerous female nature of not being able to keep her mouth shut. This view is synonymous with the biblical reference to Eve, the first untrustworthy woman and the perpetrator of original sin. In this way, women are responsible for men's demise. In horror this type of betrayal on the part of the female is illustrated more literally. Poster examples such as *The She Creature* (1957), and *Body Snatchers* (1994) (see images 51 & 52, p. 91), reveal the inherent nature of the woman as beautiful on the exterior, yet hiding a deeply disturbing grotesque monster just under the surface.



49. Artist Unknown (1939-42)



50. Keep Mum (1939-45)



51. She-Creature (1957)

52. Body Snatchers
(1994)



The last feminine monster I will explore in this chapter is that of the woman's emotional and physical characteristics. In politics the best example of the woman becoming monstrous accidentally, simply by being herself, is that of the poster *She Talked...this happened* (1939-42, Britain) (refer to image 49, p. 90). The image of the woman is demonised again for being an inherent gossip, as is inferred as natural for the female sex. With her seemingly biological urge to talk, she has now brought danger and death upon men through her thoughtless actions. The underlying message in such propagandistic materials is that women are emotionally weak and should not be trusted with sensitive information.

In horror, the woman is most often rendered monstrous, not only for her emotional characteristics, but also for her bodily functions which separate her from the male, namely reproductive qualities. Horror posters such as that of *Carrie*, *Alien*, and *The Exorcist* relate directly to female bodily functions and feminine sexuality. This will be further explored in the following chapter, where I will delve into sexuality and its relation to the monstrous grotesque.

Lust and Disgust

Representations of abject sexuality

And God made Eve from the rib of Adam. And Eve was weak and loosed the raven on the world. And the raven was called sin. Say it, the raven was called sin.

Carrie (1985)

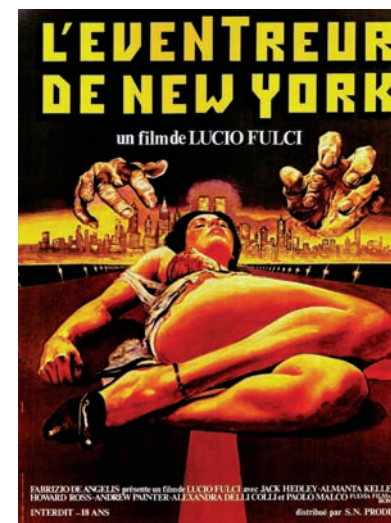
When considering the horror genre and more specifically, its numerous subtexts, it's hard to ignore the issue of sexuality. More broadly, the monster became a construct of the demonisation of sexuality, often as an immoral, evil and degenerate part of the human condition. Both heterosexuality and homosexuality are thrust into the spotlight as discourse on the abject body, its sexual desires and practices were exhumed in a way no other genre could satisfy. Horror was seen as an inherently perverse, voyeuristic and low-brow form of entertainment (Gelder, 2000) and therefore was the perfect arena to broach such taboo subjects. The internal made external in horror does not merely refer to the grotesqueness of blood, injury and human bodily functions, but also the sexual organs, that which is meant to be hidden, private, and forbidden. That which essentially separates man from woman.

To look first into the narrative of film posters which include male monsters, would be to see the lust attraction, desire, or arguably, love, certain male creatures have for their female victims. This is evident in *Dracula* (1958) and *Frankenstein* (1931), as primary examples of such tensely psychosexual relationships. The male monster seems to exert his power over the female object of desire via his raging and unstoppable masculine sexuality. Delving deeper, it is established that

male monsters across political and horror posters are largely represented as sexual predators. This masculine sexuality of violence and entitlement is the predominant image of male monstrosity. Political imagery such as that expressed in the poster *Remember Belgium* (Young, 1914-18, USA) (image 18, p. 77) in which the silhouette of a young girl is led away forcibly by the 'Hun', and the Egyptian poster of Hitler and Mussolini staring at a woman in states of undress tied to a tree (1939-45) (see image 53 below), are images which depict the threat of the male monster's sexual violence towards women, and the female's political position of innocent victim. The female victim is also reflective of the innocent victims of war in the broader society, those predominantly being women and children. The male monsters, perpetrators of these brutal crimes, are very similar to that represented in horror. Images such as the French print for Lucio Fulci's *The New York Ripper* (1982) (image 54, p. 95), and much earlier the design for *Dementia 13* (1963) (image 55, p. 95), show the distinctly male hands of the hidden monster bearing down over and grabbing the female, again in a sexually vulnerable position in a



53. Artist Unknown
(1939-42)



54. The New York Ripper (1982)



55. Dementia 13. (1963)

state of undress. The male monster is strong and conquering in his sexuality.

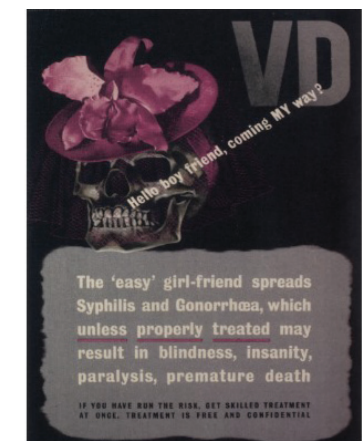
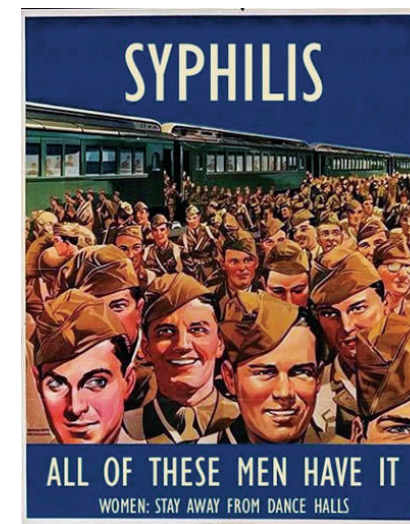
In horror, there are examples where the tables turn and the female sexual victim becomes both the heroine and the monster – the revenge horror. A highly controversial and horrifically gratuitous sub-genre, the most famous example is the 1978 film *I Spit on Your Grave* (see image 56, p. 96). The film itself is about a woman who is brutally raped by five men, then exacts her revenge by plotting to kill them in the most disturbingly painful ways possible. This ends in hanging, genital dismemberment, and disembowelment via outboard motor. In this case, the context of the film is important to the analysis of the poster. In this film, woman is all three; victim, monster, and heroine. The poster itself depicts a woman, clothes torn, walking through the forest with a large pointed stake in her right hand. This image of the woman is one of a corrupted body and sexuality. The response to this defilement of the body, is to exact similar pain on the perpetrators. Although this film is arguably gratuitous in subject matter and imagery, the poster communicates



56. Artist Unknown. I Spit on Your Grave (1978)

another monster with which we can sympathise, that of the vengeful victim.

Generally, the female body is given much attention in both propaganda and horror posters. The 'normal' female is depicted as having a vulnerable body. She is beautiful, delicate, with soft skin and flowing hair. The monstrous female body is a grotesque abject. The feminine body itself is a monster, capable of heinous crimes against humanity, and more importantly, men. In political posters, female sexuality was positioned as a threat. Posters such as *Keep Mum She's Not So Dumb* (as discussed in the last chapter), present an overtly sexual being in the woman, one who lures men in with her lusty wiles, only to turn into a deceitful monster. As well as this underlying malevolent creature, political posters also presented women as sexually immoral, their bodies crippled with disease.



57. Top Left

58. Top Right

59. Left

60. Above

When researching into these health information posters, I could only find one poster image that warns women of male disease (see image 59 above), whereas there are many warning men of womens' grotesque, diseased sexuality, but also of their immoral ways of passing this hidden and most heinous disease to men by the dozens (refer to images 57, 58 & 59 above).

Although sexually transmitted infections were a real concern in war times, due to a rise in prostitution and dance hall 'pick ups', such poster information was directed as a warning for men about the dangers of women. In horror, the abject female body is a product not only of female sexuality, but of the female sexual organs themselves. Themes of the toothed vagina (vagina dentata) and the male fear of female sexuality haunt the horror genre. The mystery of the feminine body can be attributed to castration theory. Psychoanalytically, this fear is the intrinsic belief that a woman is a male who's penis has been cut off, castrated. Creed (1993, p. 5) refers to Freud's assertion that the Medusa's head is a representation of the female genitals, frightening in appearance. She suggests that the reason for this interpretation is based in the phallogentric problem of sexual difference, and therefore the male fear of castration. Kristeva (1982) and Creed (1993) argue that this fear is key to the reason why females are seen as untrustworthy and can turn in monstrous beasts, without reason or warning. Women are, psychoanalytically, the violent transmutation of a man. Images of the grotesque feminine body in horror posters are inclusive of the woman's reproductive functions, menstruation (*Carrie*, 1976), birth (*Alien*, 1979) and also decay of the innocent female body in adolescence (*The Exorcist*, 1973) (see images 61, 62 & 63 below). This corruption of the body, where internal (or more correctly, hidden) things are made external, poses a threat not only



61. Carrie (1973)



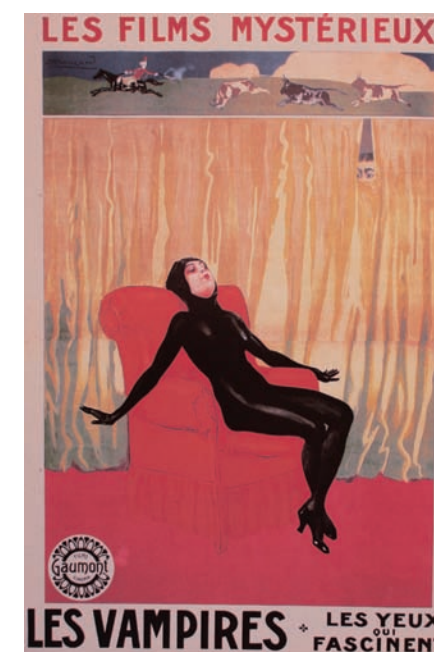
62. Alien (1979)



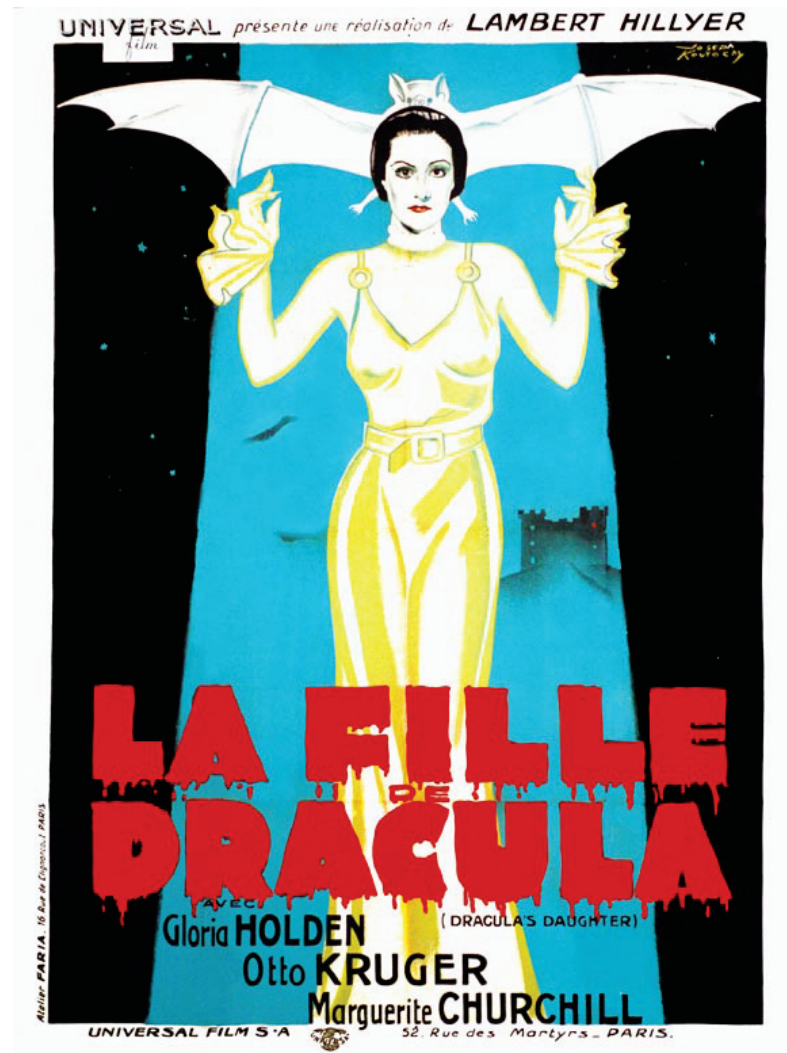
63. The Exorcist (1973)

to male sexuality but also provides a metaphor for the destruction of all that is sacred and pure (Kristeva, 1982).

As well as the monstrous body, female creatures can experience a metamorphosis, changing from a beautiful seductress to an unworldly creature. One of the greatest character motifs of this in the horror poster is that of the female vampire. The vampire is a sexual entity, whose appearance promises the temptation of tasting the forbidden fruit. The vampire is presented as possessing an unholy and abnormal desire for sex. The feminine vampire not only lures men to their death or changes men to be in her control, but is also, more often than not depicted as a lesbian (Creed, 1993), a sexuality which defies and rejects man. Posters such as the 1916 print for *Les Vampires* (see image 64 below), depict the lesbian vampire as strong and seductive using a typical dominatrix image. In this example, she reclines on the armchair in a full, shiny body-suit with pointed heels. Female homosexuality is indeed presented as a counter force to the natural view of heterosexuality, and is depicted as demonic



64. Les Vampires, 1916



65.



66.

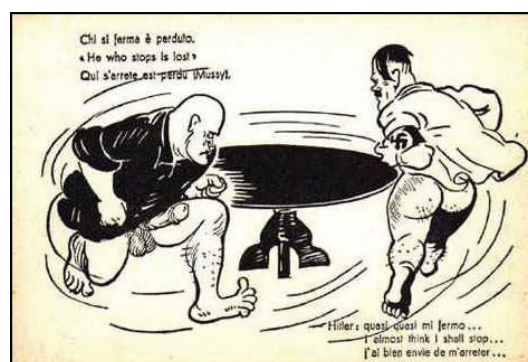


67.

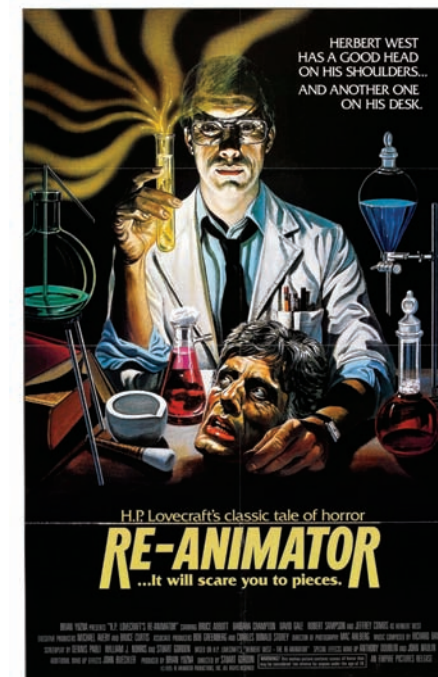
and defiant. Other pictorial expressions of the lesbian vampire can be found in the horror posters above. Male homosexuality is presented in a very different light.

In political propaganda it is easy to argue that much of the militaristic imagery is slightly homoerotic (see images 68 & 69 p. 102). These images appear to celebrate the camaraderie of men and their thriving and powerful masculine sexualities. One instance in which homosexuality is demonised in propaganda is that of the infamous Italian postcards (see images 70 & 71 p. 102). Not much is known about these propagandistic materials, just that they were circulated from Naples during WWII and were pornographic illustrations. Many of them illustrate Hitler and Mussolini engaging in homosexual intercourse or the threat there of. This could certainly be viewed as a metaphor, but also a direct attack on male homosexuality which was highly demonised in Italy at the time.

As much as it is demonised, homosexuality in the male is also celebrated, particularly in horror. Posters such as *Reanimator* (see image



68. 69. 70. 71



72. 73.

72, p. 103), are illustrative of the reproduction of man, by man alone. This is the ultimate homosexual fantasy, to not need women for reproduction. This was also a comment on the fantastic power of man over his environment, scientific discovery, and even his own biology. With this concept of the male creator, also comes another manifestation of homosexuality in horror, that of the hidden identity and sexuality of the male.

The Jekyll and Hyde characters are a reflection of the hidden monster, the monster within, that which must not be seen or revealed – often attributed to the internal struggle of homosexuality (Benshoff, 1997). One particularly strong depiction which could be interpreted as a representation of this type of monster is the Italian poster for *El Extrano Caso Del Hombre Y La Bestia* (*The Man and the Beast / Il Dottor Jekyll*, Ballester, 1952) (see image 73, p. 103). This poster features a calm and mysterious looking gentleman, peering into what appears to be a conical flask used in scientific experiments. Through the bubbling liquid in the flask, the real creature is revealed. A maniacal, green, wrinkled monster appears, his mouth open showing his sharp teeth. The colours representing Dr Jekyll are dark purple and pink tones, which contrast strikingly with the green and yellow pigments of the beastly Mr Hyde lurking within. The monster's face appears alarmed, as if the viewer is discovering his dark secret, one not meant to be revealed, but continuously concealed in the darkness of the image's background. This poster could certainly be referencing a hidden second side to a man, a masked monster disguising a terrifying and difficult double life. Homosexuality was particularly demonised throughout the western world in the 1950s, individuals forced to largely live a lie rather than reveal their monstrous sexuality.

Throughout this chapter, I have revealed several views of monstrous sexuality. The perpetrator and victim of sexual crimes, the vengeful victim-monster, woman as a sexual threat to men by means of her seduction, woman as a sexual threat to men by means of her

diseased and corrupted body, demonised and celebrated homosexualities, the female homosexual and her threat to men, and the homosexual man as both a masked monster and an ultimate creator. These expressions of sexuality within political and horror posters are reflective of the contemporary rhetoric surrounding monstrosity in sexuality, particularly the demonisation of female sexuality and homosexuality.

Stitching the parts back together

'Hateful day when I received life!' I exclaimed in agony. 'Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust? God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him; but I am solitary and abhorred.'

Frankenstein's Monster, Mary Shelley

What did I learn about the monster?

Before proceeding to the exegetical component of this thesis, I want to briefly summarise my findings on the monster, thus far. Through my application of Foss's theory of visual rhetoric (2013) to the study of poster images, I have discovered that the monster embodies our deepest fears, real and imagined. Furthermore, Kristeva asserts that ultimately the abjection of the *other* is representative of the abjection of the self (1982, 1991, 2012). The monster is an abject being which is *other* in both its improper appearance and its ability to "[disturb] identity, system, order" (Kristeva, 1982 p. 4). The abject beast "lies there, quite close but it cannot [sic] be assimilated. It beseeches, worries, and fascinates desire...Apprehensive, desire turns aside; sickened, it rejects" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 1).

According to my examination of the monsters of political and horror posters, I have learned:

- a) Monsters are inherently similar and communicate parallel ideologies crossing the borders between cultural content and societal perspectives.
- b) They can be a representation of that which is too sensitive or taboo to bring to the forefront of polite conversation. Eg. Sexuality, racism, or any form of political incorrectness.
- c) Monsters can both frighten and titillate in a peculiar dichotomy of emotions, particularly in reference to the fear/enjoyment of terror's anticipation. This is a well-practiced art form of the horror genre.
- d) Finally, the monster drives us to an emotional response, sometimes an ideological position bereft of reason or logic. It is a vehicle for the release of our deep-seated fear and loathing towards not only others, but also of that which is buried deep within ourselves.

EXEGESIS

Introduction

The concept for this project came about upon the consideration that the “new propaganda” (Edelstein, 1997) present in today's Australian media is not that far removed from the archaic propaganda posters of the First and Second World Wars. The reason for studying the posters of the 20th Century, prior to engaging in my creative work, was to ensure I had a grounded understanding of the *others* depicted in political and horror posters. Only then could I successfully apply this new-found knowledge of abject monsters to the less recognisable propagandistic rhetoric of contemporary Australian

society. Throughout this chapter, my creative process is discussed, in relation to my final print works and the design of this book.

Why make monsters?

I am not really creating monsters, as such, but rather letting them be revealed visually. The monsters I am unearthing are monsters which already metaphorically haunt our social and political forums. In the unveiling of these creatures, I hope to bring to light the monsters that are heavily ingrained in our recent and historic culture. Being critical of these monsters is vital to understanding much about the views we cultivate on a societal level. It is important that these monsters are exhumed, in order to have the viewer pay attention to, and question these attitudes. In my opinion, visual means of communication are much more exciting and commanding than those of the written word. In a society bombarded by news articles and journalistic photography, social media, and small format smart phone applications, something hand made and aesthetically audacious fractures the viewer's expectation and commands the momentary captivation of its audience. The physicality of making is another reason for my immersion in creating these design works. This physical connection will be more thoroughly articulated in the printmaking section of this chapter.

Ideas and Conceptualisation

Upon considering the monsters raised by current Australian politicians and a vast number of their supporters in the broader community, I found there to be several repeated forms of monster in the political and social sphere. There are many groups of people who are currently targeted by today's political rhetoric. These would arguably include those who are homeless or living in poverty; the unemployed; those who are elderly pensioners; students; environmentalists; blue collar workers; small business owners; academics; educators; educational bodies, and investigative journalists, to name a few. Then, there are those who are threatened by direct attacks of xenophobia as a result of the cultivation of contemporary political

discourse against them. The monsters of our society that are easiest to identify are those made abject through race, religion, and culture. These monsters are positioned not only to threaten us as individuals, but also our broader society, and most importantly, our Australian way of life.

These abject monsters, particularly those of nationality, race, gender, and sexuality are designed to instill fear on a political and social level. To name these monsters explicitly, they are boat people; Australian residents and citizens of the Islamic faith (particularly Muslim women who wear the hijab or niqab); immigrants, especially those not of European descent; and the homosexual rights and womens' rights communities (Shalailah, 2014). Evidences of the depiction of these peoples as monstrous *others* exist in media statements made predominantly by the current government, as well as individual reactions to this political rhetoric.

In his official campaign speech on the 25th of August 2013 (video and transcript cited via the Sydney Morning Herald website), Tony Abbott, then running for position as Prime Minister, asked "who do you trust to stop the boats?" The "stop the boats" slogan was a popular one leading up to the election, which seemingly gained public support as evidenced by the Liberal National Party winning the federal election. In the same speech, he campaigned for increasing military spending significantly, to twice that of the future projected budget surplus. Military spending is cited as being in aid of establishing the "Operation Sovereign Borders" campaign to turn back the boats, but no other justification for this spending is given in this initial speech. He further asserts his personal view on immigration:

When I look at skilled migrants coming to Australia to work and pay taxes from day one, I don't see people who are stealing Aussie jobs but people who are building our country; and who have come here to join us, not to change us.

He states that the government would not be one to pitch "Australian against Australian on the basis of class, gender, or where people were born." Both of these statements seem to contrast problematically with to the previously stated view on boat people, or more correctly asylum seekers. The speech ends with an appeal to the voting public that is reminiscent of the slogans on propaganda posters of World War I, "For your family's sake, for our country; Join us."

Further to the statements made in the Coalition's campaign speech (as cited above), in February 2014, Abbott, now head of the new Australian Government spoke about the censorship within the media of information on boat arrivals. He said "if we were at war, we wouldn't be giving out information that is of use to the enemy just because we might have an idle curiosity about it ourselves" (ABC News, February 4, 2014). While he qualified the statement with the word 'if', the illustration of asylum seekers as an "enemy" which we are seemingly at "war" with is hyperbolic in its rhetoric and again resonates with historic examples of war time propaganda. Visual propaganda campaigns have been employed in attempts to promote a firm image to dissuade people from coming here via "illegal" boats. A graphic novel aimed at Afghani refugees (see image 75 p. 112) and a banner poster (see image 74 below) for the Department of Immigration have been instituted to this end (Laughland, 2014).





75.

Parallel to these governmental views on asylum seekers, and also fuelled by widespread fears regarding the current Islamic State extremist group, an increasingly negative societal attitude has emerged in regards to immigration. The underlying social rhetoric that people are coming here to threaten our culture and transform our way of life is evident in the steep rise of hate groups, especially in social media; public abuse perpetrated against individuals, especially women wearing traditional Islamic dress (Aston, 2014; Bucci, 2014; Caldwell, 2014); attacks on places of worship (Aston, 2014; Dunn, 2014); and general racism exhibited in the wider community via stickers on vehicles and racist rants on public transport (Bevan, 2014). The view that *others* must assimilate and not mark themselves as different is widely apparent. Coupled with this rhetoric, is a fear that the *other*, through their difference, presents themselves as a hidden threat, a terrorist threat. Australian society has become fearful of this concealed enemy, which has become a threatening attitude towards every woman in a niqab. This type of fear and the hatred it breeds has even been defended in statements like the Attorney General, George Brandis' remark to the Senate that "people do have a right to be bigots you know" (cited in Griffiths, 2014).

In my creative work I will utilise the themes of fear of the racial other, and the hidden invader, and will reference the key terms, "stop the boats," and "enemy." I chose these subjects for their relevance to the monsters of politics and horror which I have discovered throughout my analytical research. The works I will create will be an 'outing' or revelation of sorts, for the monsters already present in our political midst. There are still other abject monsters, which are highlighted by current social and political rhetoric, namely the homosexual (Cowie, 2013) and women's rights communities (Gordon, 2014), and although important to acknowledge in the context of this thesis, these *others* will not be the subject of my creative work. In the next part of this chapter, the design process for the posters is explained.

Print design process

As I was looking at both political and horror posters, I found it imperative to create one of each, which shared a visual and ideological rhetoric. I wanted the posters to communicate not only with an audience, but also with each other. The propaganda work was the first I designed. I kept returning to the aesthetic of the American 'Hun' poster, which harked "Destroy this mad brute. Enlist." As politically there are strong parallels between the current Australian rhetoric and propaganda from World War I, I thought it appropriate to manipulate this image to create new propaganda for the current government. But what type of monster was I to use?

As the slogan "stop the boats" was burned into my mind, I wanted this monster of propaganda to represent asylum seekers coming to Australia. I then thought that creating a water-dwelling creature would be appropriate for this illustration. As I pondered this point I experienced sudden inspiration – my monster already existed, it was the Creature from the Black Lagoon. Through my research I had discovered that this monster was not only a racial *other* but also a de-evolved and uncultured beast. Therefore, this monster would be perfect in portraying contemporary political attitudes towards asylum seekers (Whyte, 2014). I mentally placed this creature in the

landscape of the 'Hun' poster, simply removing the ape and visualizing the replacement. I started sketching my idea with pencil on paper. I came up with the slogan "Enemy invasion. Stop the boats" mimicking the font of the original poster. When I had completed this rough draft, I changed the colour scheme to match that of the creature, but also a highly idealised representation of the Australian coastline and the Australian flag. Through this poster, I aimed to create a satirical comment on the current political rhetoric of today. As the image was close to finished, I saw that in its creation it provided a bold and amusing version of this largely perpetuated political attitude. I finally traced the image so I could scan it and work on creating colour separations from it. This process will be explained in the next section on printmaking. Images of my design drawings are presented on page 116.

My second poster design, the horror work, was inspired by the hand drawn aesthetic of the film posters by Hungarian artist Dekany, and, independently, Polish artist Jerzy Flisak, for the 1974 film *Young Frankenstein*. Many films had several poster versions by different designers for release in their respective countries. I also drew inspiration from the block colouring and screen printed appearance of the Romanian poster for *Psycho* (1960) for its striking purple and green contrast and attention to shape. Another poster, which resonated loudly with my subject was that of the US 1994 design for *Body Snatchers*. This poster effectively references the hidden monster, and to delve deeper to a Kristevan perspective, psycho-analytically, the monster within. I began working on the concept for my design, visualising a woman, one who, through my research, I had learned presents as harmless and seductive yet is a deceptive and untrustworthy creature. This beautiful stereotypical depiction of a white female was unzipping her skin, to reveal underneath an ant-like alien. The peeling off of the skin to reveal a hidden beast is a concept revisited several times in horror, the most recent example being Jonathan Glazer's art house sci-fi horror, *Under the Skin* (2013). The image of the ant-like alien is intended to be an effective

contrast to the de-evolved alien of the Creature from the Black Lagoon, instead an evolved and hyper-intelligent monster. The ant-alien is a concealed monster, one who infiltrates the ranks of society without anyone suspecting, an insidious and colonizing race from outer space. The ant-alien can be related to the hidden enemy, and more appropriately in recent times, the terrorist. I named my faux horror film "Colony" and added the traditional film slogan towards the bottom of the work, which stated "The most frightening enemy is that which we can not see." The next section outlines the preparation of the images and the printmaking process.

Printmaking Process

As I have never screen printed before, this process was both a challenging and educational one. This section will outline the steps, hurdles and compromises of this journey, as well as what was learned through undertaking this creative work. I have found that a large part of printmaking practice is in one's precision and attention to detail in the preparation stages. The outcome is largely a welcomed surprise as, unlike a painting, it is not as controlled in the output, but rather instead in the preliminary processes and readying of the screens for printing. Having established this, it is the imperfections and hints to the rawness of the process of hand making, visible in the resulting works which connect me as the designer/producer to these works. The significance of utilising old technologies in this project will be discussed further on in this chapter, as well as the inherent physicality of this medium.

Preparing the screens

Cleaning

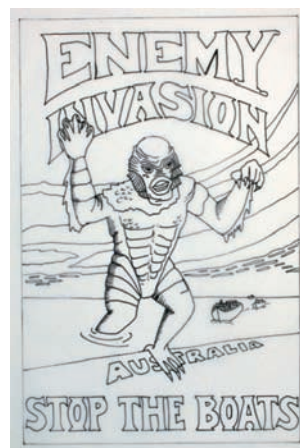
Cleaning the screens down before use is a very important stage in the preparation process. Usually there are images which may have been there for some time. These are difficult and require rigor to remove, but the cleaner the screen surface the better the result. Through this process, I gained at least some insight into the technical difficulty



Inspiration for
propaganda
design



Design drawings
for propaganda
print



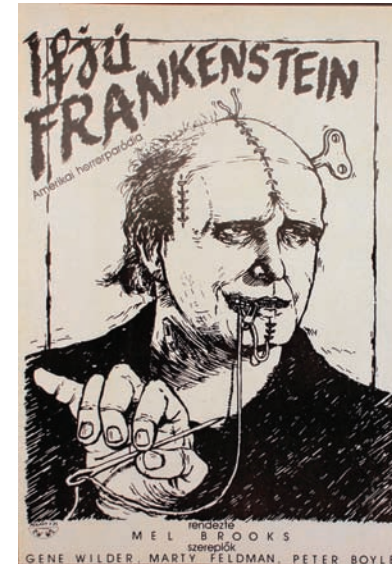
Design inspirations for horror poster

76. Top left. Dekany (1974)

77. Top right. Jerzy Flisak (1974)

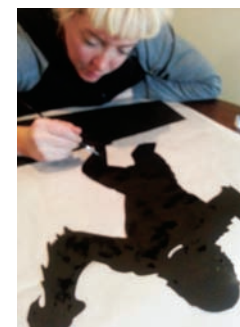
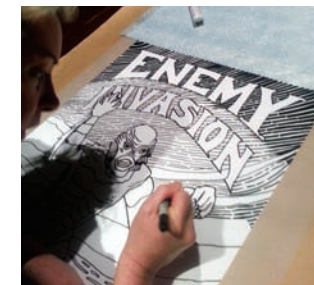
78. Bottom left. Romanian poster (1960)

79. Bottom right. Bryan & Biro (1994)

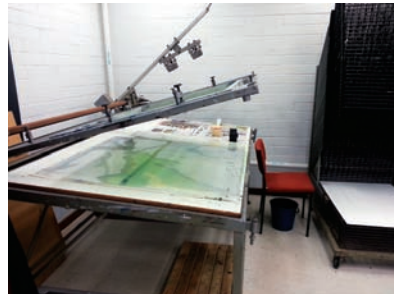




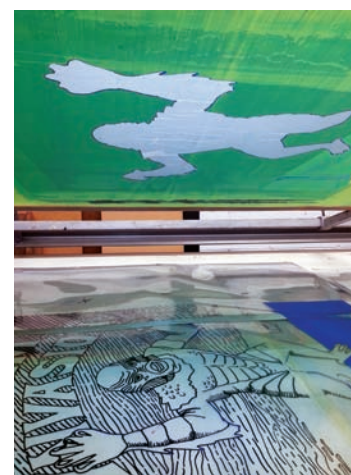
Design sketches for horror poster



Process photos showing colour separations, mask cut-outs drawing in line work, hand inking stencil film, and finished stencils.



Process photos showing emulsion coating screens, stencils on screens, table set up, and printing process.



and physicality which would have been demanded of commissioned printmakers who created original film and propaganda posters. I was working with very large screens which proved to be logistically difficult to handle and store.. As harmful chemicals are used in this process as are pressured hoses, protective gear is needed. This stage should be conducted outside in a well-ventilated area. I will explain the preparation process in point form for ease of reading.

- Step 1: Suit up. An apron, face and hearing protection, and long gloves must be worn.
- Step 2: Rinse the screens down with a low-pressure hose to wet them thoroughly.
- Step 3: Apply the Fotochem cleaner in small circular motions with a screen brush to both sides of each screen to clean the previous images off, which is set in the hardened emulsion.
- Step 4: Rinse off both sides of each screen thoroughly with the low pressure hose.
- Step 5: Pour a small amount of haze remover into a bucket. Apply the haze remover to both sides of each screen using small circular motions and a separate screen brush to remove any ghosting of the previous images.
- Step 6: Spray both sides of each screen with screen wash, over the top of the haze remover.
- Step 7: Leave the screens outside to dry for approximately forty five minutes.
- Step 8: Spray the dry screens on both sides with the low-pressure hose.

Step 9: Spray the screens again with the high-pressure hose removing any remaining emulsion until the screen appears to be clear.

Step 10: Spray liquid detergent onto both sides of each screen and spray with the low-pressure hose to degrease, then leave to dry.

Applying and setting the emulsion

The emulsion is a substance applied to the screen which hardens and sets, and is then used in attaching the stencil to the screen via exposure to UV light. When applying the emulsion one needs to be in a dark room with only yellow light, as to avoid any accidental UV exposure. The emulsion I used needed to be applied two coats to the front of the screen and one to the back. The way in which it is applied is that it is poured into a long tray and held up to the bottom of the screen at a forty-five degree angle. As the emulsion touches the screen at all points along the tray, you gently run the tray up the length of the screen, coating it a fine film. After repeating this process twice on the front and once on the back, I got an empty tray and ran it up the screen on both sides, as I had to originally coat it. This process catches the excess emulsion so only a thin and even coating remains and no drips occur. The screens are then placed in horizontal racks and covered with black skirting to set for around twenty-four hours. See process images page 120.

Making colour separation stencils

I first transferred the designs onto tracing paper, manually using an artline pen and my original sketched images. I scanned in the black outlined image then resized it to 950mm by 65mm to fit in with the scale of many original propaganda and film posters. I then worked out, colour by colour, my separations using Photoshop. The process for this is colouring black into all the areas of the image you wish the UV light to expose. For example, working on my yellow plate, the parts of the image I wanted to be yellow I coloured in black,

digitally then removed all other parts of the image which would not be yellow. Once the colour separations were produced, they were printed onto film. When transferred onto film, and exposed onto each screen, the black areas are burnt through the emulsion, then washed out thus leaving a stencil for the printing pigment to pass through.

Applying stencils to the screens

After the emulsion had set, which is an overnight process, the film positives that the images were printed onto were applied to the screens. Images are mounted with invisible tape to the front of the screen, printed side of the film down to meet the emulsion. This needed to be done in the room with yellow lights also, to avoid UV exposure. The screen with the image applied is then mounted into the UV unit which uses a vacuum to pull taut the image to the screen. The curtain is then closed, safety glasses applied then the UV exposure is processed for around five minutes. When the UV exposure has finished, which automatically clicks off on the unit, it is time to wash the screen out. Screens are usually exposed one by one when working on this scale.

Washing out the emulsion

Firstly, I needed to make sure the curtains were drawn around the washing station to avoid further UV exposure, which may damage the emulsion and therefore the stencil. Once this was done, I took a screen outside and began washing it out. It is important to make sure that all the emulsion is cleaned out of the stencil so the print will come through properly. Once the screen has been washed out and the image is clear, it is left preferably in the sun for the emulsion to set and become hard.

Table set up

As the scale of my work was quite large I needed to use a screen printing table with a frame which lifts so the screen is secured into place throughout the process. To set up the table, I secured down a

thick layer of butchers paper sheets in order to cushion the paper while printing, using masking tape. I then layered acetate sheets over the top of the paper, for ease of registration of each image. I made sure it was masked around the edge with one side free to slide paper under the acetate for registration. I had newspaper laid down on the side where I would rest the paint container and squeegee, and a bucket and sponge near by for cleaning up efficiently. I also had a sharpie, which would be useful in marking out my registration.

Working with acrylic paint

Before commencing printing I would mix each colour, 50:50 acrylic paint to print paste. The addition of the paste to the paint gives a creamy viscosity to the pigment and allows ease of movement with the squeegee, as well as preventing the paint from drying into the screen too quickly. To print from a screen it is first lowered in the frame, with stoppers applied underneath so it's not quite hitting the table. First I would flood the screen by putting paint across the top of the screen and using the squeegee to pull it down towards my body, the squeegee angled at about forty-five degrees. The screen needs to be flooded with paint before the first print can be taken. I found that in working at such a large scale, I had to constantly flood the screen each time I needed to lift the frame, to prevent the paint from drying into the screen and ruining the printed image. I learnt this after a few failed attempts.

Registration

After flooding the screen, the stoppers would be removed and the frame was place down against the table resting on the acetate. Each time I went to print from a screen, I would need to first print onto the acetate to register the image. The reason for doing this is to slide the paper you will print onto underneath the acetate, then mark out where the paper needs to be positioned when printing onto it. By marking the edges and corners of the paper onto the acetate sheeting, it is easy to later reposition the paper so the orientation is aligned with the print. After registering the paper in relation to

the image, the paper can be removed and the image on the acetate cleaned off with the sponge and bucket of water.

Printing onto paper

Selecting a paper appropriate to the job was important for me. I trialed several types of paper but found the best for my posters was Fabriano Rosapina. Not only was it one of the only large papers I had access to in Perth, it is a thick 100% rag paper. It is mostly cotton and therefore absorbs moisture very well. It is quite flat with only a slightly textured surface so is perfect for screen printing. Once I established a rhythm it was a long and physical process, yet a very rewarding one. To see colour upon colour printing onto each poster as I worked was both surprising and satisfying. Again, the product of my print was always somewhat a mystery, until it was printed.

Problems and challenges

Logistical issues, mistakes and technical misfortunes plagued me throughout the printing process. Although my images for the first plates were all sized the same in Photoshop, for some reason the industrial printer would not print them to scale. I am not a printer genius and couldn't fix this problem. This was a recurring error which resulted in me hand inking two of my film plates something I wish never to do again. At first I was using a very fine printing ink to begin with, and was completely inexperienced at printmaking, especially screen printing which I had never attempted, I thought that I could use one plate layered over the next to mix colours, as a digital printer would. I was incorrect. The ink was too thin and didn't stretch far enough per container to even produce one print. Originally, I had thought that if I printed the yellow plate, then the blue plate, I would get areas of green. I did, but the green was too dark and murky which rendered the creature less of a focal point and more of a background object. To solve this problem I used a masking technique.

I traced the part of the image I wanted green onto butcher's paper using a light table, then repeated this process for the parts of the image I wanted to remain blue. I cut these masks out using an art scalpel and registered my print onto the acetate, placing my lined transparency under the acetate for guidance. I first masked out the blue area using my butcher's paper stencil. The process for this is cleaning off the acetate after registration, placing the mask down on the image underneath, flooding the screen again, pulling down and printing again onto the acetate. The paper mask attaches to the screen and then allowed me to print the green part only. I repeated this process, with a reversed mask for the blue separation. If I were to do it again, I would certainly create five plates. Masking was a lengthy and difficult process, but a good one to learn. The problems I encountered and found solutions to while producing the first poster, helped me in having very few issues with the printing of the second.

The finished works

The final products of this creative process are two poster images, their 950mm by 650mm scale is reflective of old propaganda and horror posters. I chose to use this scale in an attempt to avoid the modern standard of A sized paper formats and relate my work to pre-metric media, which wasn't constrained to a strict pre-determined template. I also took a black only print, and a colour only print of each to see how these images would appear if economically printed in a newspaper, instead of in full colour. The two finished works in full colour engage with each other in a visual and cultural rhetoric, as well as with their audience.

The physicality of printmaking

The physical process of screen printing on this scale was quite rigorous and, at times, exhausting. It is a visceral, messy, time consuming, and methodical process. Once I was in the rhythm of it, I found I could print for hours upon hours. The sheer scale of my work meant at certain times the large squeegee felt like it weighed 20kg, and my arms became fatigued. I don't see this as a negative

aspect of printmaking but rather one that I simply observed along the way. Printmaking, particularly screen printing, involves the whole body, arguably a lot more than even a large scale painting does, in my personal experience. It is this engagement of the body with the creative work, which makes it a sensuous process. As the monsters were revealed, I felt a great sense of physical and emotional accomplishment. That I invested what felt like blood, sweat and tears into the physical construction of these, finally tangible, beasts. I had built them lovingly, from the ground up, and now they stood as huge Godzillas towering above me. The beasts were more incredible than I had imagined in my tiny sketch, I didn't just print a design but felt like I was bringing something to life, or resurrecting it from the dead.

The countless times I washed down surfaces, cleaned acetate, then hands, then squeegees, then palette knives, then hands – the motions became ritualistic, methodical and carefully ordered. I joked to a friend that I felt like Lady Macbeth, the amount of times I had washed my hands to facilitate handling my paper to print onto, with somewhat clean-ish hands; the countless times I dragged a squeegee over the screen, sometimes with wonderful outcomes and sometimes with disastrous results – at times, abject.

I don't think my engagement with the monsters I created would be as strong if I were to colour a digital image in Photoshop and print it to a large format. The designed output and the experience of making would be very different if I hadn't screen printed the works. Even the vivid colours (as opposed to dull CMYK print colouring) and slight imperfections in the printing of the works, I think add to their handmade charm and authenticity as design objects. No print is exactly alike. They all have their own individual signature.

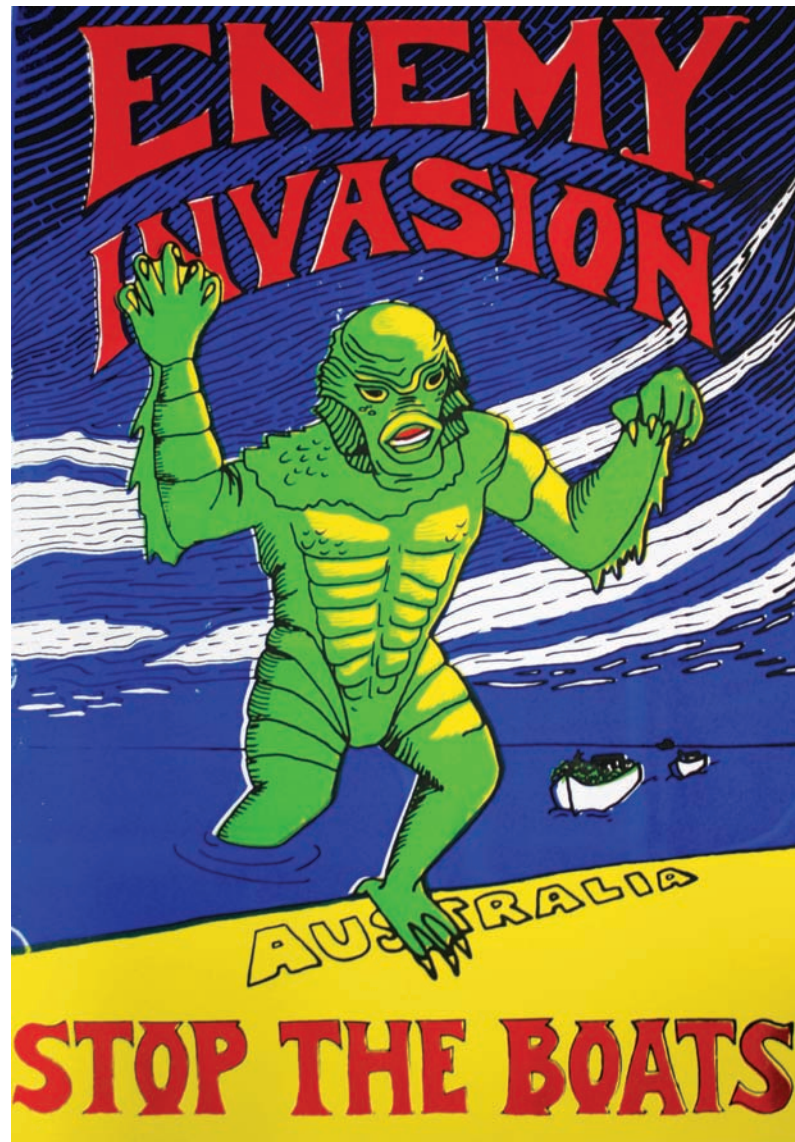
Overall, I feel that the physical printing processes I engaged in to produce these works further enlightened and cemented my findings on the monster. The monster is to be reckoned with, but also em-



Photographs showing printing process by colour separation.

Right: Black and white versions of the finished works.





pathised with. Positioning the monster is a struggle, but once it is pinned down it can be used to reveal varying perspectives, attitudes, and even truths. Its dejected physicality is but a barrier to discovering its inherent and unforeseen beauty.

Book Design Process

I think the following quote from Jacques Derrida's *Paper Machine* best sums up my position on the written text, "I believe in the value of the book, which keeps something irreplaceable, and in the necessity of fighting to secure its respect." From the inception of this research project, I had envisaged designing the book through which to present my thesis. As this is a design thesis, it is important that the object itself possesses a visual rhetoric of its own. As this research deals with subject matter broaching both the historical and the contemporary, I wished to make my book appear as an old text, from the early part of the 20th Century. There is an inherent nostalgia for me in physical things, old things, things which have a history, and a story, and a life of their own. This nostalgia, I realise, is a double-edged sword, particularly in reference to current Australian political rhetoric. It is comforting to hark back to days of old when considering design objects, however, in order to move forward we must refrain from looking to the past for ideological guidance, which is what is seemingly occurring in government. An example of this would be Brandis's comparison of metadata retention with an address written on an envelope, an appeal to the populace's desire for certainty and concreteness. The new is largely incomparable to the old and we need to find and develop contemporary ways of understanding (in relation to technology and ideology alike), instead of persevering with incorrect oversimplifications of our current, advanced society.

The external tactility of a book is very exciting for me. I wanted this book to be something the reader would like to pick up and hold, something interesting visually and to the touch. The exterior appearance of this book was heavily influenced by two texts I have in the bookshelf, Rian Hughes' *CULT-URE* (2002), and Australian author,

Hannah Kent's novel, *Burial Rights* (2013). The aesthetic of Hughes' design bible, which is exactly what it appears to be, literally, is that of authority, importance. This book has a cracked vinyl cover, marked with gold lettering all in capitals, a marking ribbon, and gilded page edges. Upon opening the front page to this visual manifesto, one sees that the pages mimic an old marbled page with a library borrowing slip in the front. I think the ornate and bible-like appearance of this book sets up an expectation for the reader, which in the case of this text, is quickly dashed. When I first picked up Hannah Kent's novel, *Burial Rights*, I was surprised that this hardcover appeared to be well designed. I personally, have picked books off the shelf before which had well considered cover designs, but not the attention to detail that this text exhibits.



Book design inspirations

The cover illustration and colouring, along with the dark purple gilding of the page edges, the font, layout and even the colour and texture of the paper all seem to be carefully considered design decisions.

I decided that before making any brash design decisions I would go into a few printers' and binders' offices to see what was on offer. I had vague stipulations in my mind of the size and style of the book: that I wanted it section sewn so it would lay flat for ease of reading and also its traditional aesthetic value; and that I wanted a plain cover with a rounded spine. I had the idea that I wanted off-white or cream paper for the pages, but could not seem to find it anywhere in Perth in the stock I needed. After much deliberation and a few trips to various printing and binding professionals I had more of an idea of what was humanly possible and came to terms with the fact that some of my design ideas were quite impossible, logistically speaking.

I wanted the internal and external aesthetic of this text to reflect not only that it is an academic work, but also the subject matter which it discusses. The visceral and monstrous content of this text would surely need to be signified in some way by the appearance of the book object. Since I had laboured over the analyses and creative work, I thought it inappropriate to not expend as much attention on what the words and images of this project are housed in. The dimensions of the book are 150mm by 230mm, a size derived from a pentangle, which seemed exceedingly appropriate to the horror subject matter it contains. I chose a deep red cover, the colour of dried blood, on a tactile, glistening vinyl surface, the end sheets (an actual stock called Devil Red) and gilding as close to matching the colour as possible. The pages are a cream paper, which I spent some time hunting down, called Neenah which is 148gsm recycled stock; nicely weighted but still able to be section sewn. The weight of the paper also means that there will be minimal show-through of what is printed on the other side of the page. This is a most important con-

sideration, given the number of images contained in this book. The font I chose is Minion Pro, a font which appears as an old book style. I used large chapter titles and drop caps to reinforce the antique aesthetic of the work. Even page numbering was an important consideration within this project, the thesis officially beginning on page 13. I wanted the text to be elegant and simple in design, while still remaining true to its academic purpose.

Conclusion

Throughout my analytical and creative work I have discovered much about the metaphor of the monster. The physical similarities between the monsters of politics and horror are many, as are the similarities between what these beasts represent. Fear of the *other* is often constructed and perpetuated by such monsters. In taking a Kristevan theoretical perspective in relation to my rhetorical studies of poster monsters, I have developed an area of research which I would like to further explore. The psychoanalytical aspects of the monster and how the viewer of a poster approaches such imagery is such a rich and textured subject, that I would like to continue my work in this area to extend to several monsters not tackled in this thesis. Such monsters include monsters of religion, invisible monsters, masked monsters, the human monster, and the monster within. Some of these monsters were touched on briefly, but without the depth required for sufficient consideration and understanding. This study was also very western/Eurocentric, so I would like to delve into the poster monsters of other countries to find out whether monsters vary between cultures. This research project has been both a creative and theoretical journey, as well as a valuable learning experience on all fronts. I hope to further extend this topic in future research projects I undertake.

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