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Lower than Low? Domesticating the Aesthetics of Horror in Childish Remakes

The aesthetics of horror

Casper's Scare School introduces the Frankengymteacher mask as a media franchise on boomerangtv.com.au; skulls appear on baby wear; pre-school children play zombies, and the sinister hero of Gotham City stars in Lego form in a children's computer game. Horror, it can be said, has become an everyday part of popular culture. So much so that it has reached children's culture - although one could also argue that it has been there from the beginning in fairy tales about child-eating witches and the like.¹ But does horror in children's culture have the grotesquely sublime artistic merits of the genre classics, or is it a kind of domesticated horror, horror turned into kitsch? And what does it mean for the artistic aspirations of the horror genre to have spread so far into the population that it becomes part of children's culture?

As seen in the examples above, horror is dedicated to matters of life and death, and especially to investigating the border between the two. For example, skulls and bones depict what physically remains of a living being after death, while ghosts, machines brought to life and zombies portray liminal, fictive figures inhabiting the area between life and death. By dealing with this transitional phase from the world as we know it to the ultimately unknown, horror allows us to play with fear, using the unlimited power of imagination. In genre terms, it is often defined by pointing towards the appearance of evil, supernatural or otherwise monstrous figures and by the elicitation of dread, visceral disgust, fear or shock in the reader or spectator.² Genre classics include well-known monsters like Frankenstein, Count Dracula and a range of disturbed serial killers from Norman Bates to Hannibal Lecter; but horrific atmospheres and reactions of visceral disgust can also be created through expressive means such as spooky environments and violent events or through descriptions of evil. If, having said that, we leave aside the debates about genre limits and focus on the usage of the aesthetics of horror alone, we can include a much wider variety of cultural products in our discussion and focus on horror in children's literature. Hereafter, whenever I talk about "horror," it is in an aesthetic sense, if not further clarified.

But first, let me specify what I mean by the aesthetics of horror. If horror, or art horror, following Noël Carroll, can be described as something that arouses feelings of fear and disgust, fear being related to danger and disgust being caused by category violations or the impure;³ and if aesthetics, for our purposes, is quickly defined as a symbolic expression of the human experience, then an aesthetics of horror could be described as a symbolic expression of the human feelings of fear and disgust. Understood in this way, horror is established not only in contemporary film, but in the entire history of literature and representational art from Dante to Goya.⁴ It is to be found in content as well as in style. Quoting Picasso, "if someone wished to express war it might be more elegant and literary to make a bow and arrow, because that is more esthetic, but for me, if I want to express war, I'll use a machine gun."⁵ In a similar vein, skulls are often seen as more sophisticated symbols of death than rotting flesh, while this immediately begs the question of why it should be so. One reason might be that the afterlife of bones is longer than that of flesh, sending the message that

they transport more durable. Another reason might be that besides their durability bones are seen as “cleaner” because they are more distanced from the messy process of death.

Admittedly, not all depictions that plug into the tradition of symbolically expressing feelings of fear and disgust are in themselves frightening or disgusting. This is especially true for some of the horror in children’s culture. Sometimes the “horror” depicted in children’s books is so far distanced from the messy process of death that it might not count as horrific at all. As an iconized, everyday acquaintance, it might not induce ideas of liminality or the unknown at first sight. But then again, it is hard to determine what is truly horrific. Some people are more sensitive and more easily scared or disgusted than others. Besides, the power of a sign also changes according to the situation in which one experiences it. A poster with a skull on it might not be frightening in broad daylight, but it might take on more meaning at night. Furthermore, children are usually thought to be frightened by things that adults do not find frightening at all, while adults may be disgusted by something that children find interesting.

To be able to move away from the problem caused by different aesthetic sensibilities, I would like to approach the horror prevalent in contemporary children’s culture through the concept of referentiality – a concept which underlines the fact that even the cute, the funny and the iconic-to-the-point-of-being-boring horror elements may have a connection to the truly horrific. Following the idea of referential horror, skulls on clothing can be used to communicate membership in a relatively “rough” subculture such as the heavy metal scene. In some cases, skulls and other horrific signs are used to highlight the daring or gloomy nature of a subculture. Their appearance on children’s clothing might likewise be seen as a way to be alternative or cool, but in a performative sense, their effect might be also turn out different – amusing rather than frightening. The symbolic power of the portrayal of skulls on children’s clothing thus rests on the assumptions that we retain of skulls as signs and of childhood. What the concept of referential horror does, then, is to mark even the not-so-horrible members of the horror family as belonging to the same aesthetic scale as the truly horrific ones. They might just be situated on the other, less powerful end.

Aesthetically communicating experiences of horror is obviously related to value judgments. One can evaluate the symbolically communicated experience and the ways of expression used in the process positively and negatively. Some might say that the means used in a story are shocking, but the outcome is sublime. Others might say that both the means used to express something horrific and the experience that ensues are unsettling to the point of being disturbing or disgusting. And still others might complain that there is nothing new and exciting in the expression, that it is canonized to the point of being boring, while the horror experience itself can be desirable in an intellectual or otherwise pleasurable way - as affective play,⁶ or as providing a cathartic experience. According to Harvey Roy Greenberg, the horror genre is especially adept at exploiting the “latent eeriness residing in prosaic locales and objects,”⁷ a capacity that connects the aesthetics of horror with everyday experiences and makes it a powerful tool in making us see things differently – a quality often connected to high art. Then again, horror may also be seen “as republican as a banker in a three-piece-suit,”⁸ serving only the predictable and commercially easily exploitable tastes of the masses.⁹

In the following section, I will discuss the aesthetic value of the possibly subversive, possibly canonical or kitsch qualities of horror by focusing on its appearance in children's literature. First, I argue that something changes when horrific subjects are discussed in children's literature, noting that the changes are related to current ideas about children and childhood. Second, I note that both the emphasizing of grotesque humour and the cutification of characters that comes close to being kitsch, maintain references to the world-ordering and existentialist uses of horror. After this, I discuss these "domesticating moves" through Richard Shusterman's ideas on entertainment as a marker of the high culture/low culture distinction. My main argument rests on the idea that the entertaining, corporeal and social pleasures of horror are valuable because they are an important part of our aesthetic life, balancing ideas of unambiguous and disinterested beauty. Evaluating horror in general and anything directed at children as something low, may be seen as a form of social control and of colonialist, adult elitism, but it is a widespread practise.

Horror as a problem in children's culture

As implied in the beginning, horror has deep roots in children's culture. It has been used in children's stories (that is stories *for* children, which have survived better than stories by children) since the beginning.

Children's literature was born in the wake of Rousseau's romantic ideas, at a time when the rationalism of the Enlightenment was challenged by a return to the mystical in the arts, and when the linear, future-oriented views of modernity were just starting to take shape. It is no wonder that in this atmosphere of seeing the light of intellectualism as surrounded by the darkness of the unknown, the child became a metaphor for both development and the future as well as an uncannily familiar, but forgotten and obscured, undeveloped past. In aesthetic terms, development came to concern the development of taste and the restraining of the (wilful) will. Illustrative of this is the fact that when Heinrich Hoffmann's *Struwwelpeter* stories, arguably the first true picture book for children, were first published in 1845, critics were not so concerned with the impact of the horrific content (children in pain, dying, or gone missing in a storm), but with the naïve style¹⁰ which, it was feared would distort the aesthetic tastes of children.

In today's children's culture, horror elements are also discussed passionately, with the discussion reaching into content as well as form. Since the century of the child triggered the request for child-friendly and child-centred approaches, protecting children from physical and mental damage has become top priority among parents, educators and institutions dealing with children.¹¹ In the case of the aesthetics of horror, this has meant worrying about active, exciting and possibly dangerous practices of loud rough and tumble play with weapons¹² (inspired by adventurous fighting scenes) as well as possibly morally damaging or traumatizing imagery.¹³ While general horror hierarchy places suggestive horror on a higher level than gory bloodshed, a protective stance to childhood might condemn both in children's culture.

To give you an example, in 2008, the Finnish publishing company Tammi published a picture book titled *The Boxing School of Veikko Miinala* written by Hannele Huovi and illustrated by Jukka Lemmetty. It tells the story of a mouse boy called Henri who takes up boxing because he is worried about his father, an aging boxer past his days of glory, who must face the king of boxing, Crab Basher, in a big match.¹⁴ The story is loosely based on the illustrator's childhood experiences, and besides having been influenced by real

happenings and real places in Finland, it bears intertextual references to other children's books, like the German *Struwwelpeter* – a notion which might be of importance in discussing the place of children's literature within the structure of high and low or popular culture.

The aesthetics of horror are used in the book to tell a story about overcoming fear. The size and fearfulness of the mouse boy are emphasized in pictures that show him running away, dreaming of a huge boxing glove, or peering in through the door of the boxing school. His respect for the power of boxing, in turn, is portrayed in his idolization of Crab Basher, whose pictures decorate the boxing school walls, and in his admiration of a boxer girl, Hillevi, whose straight right hand is so strong that it is metaphorically shown as blowing up the training hall. In addition, there are uncanny black shadows on almost every page. And as if size, physical power and shadows were not enough, there is a yet a further element that can be seen as contributing to the transmission of a horrifying experience. Pain, or the fear of physical harm, is shown in two pictures that are formally very similar but appear in different parts of the story. In one of the first pictures, Barber Scissors is lifting Henri up by his ear, threatening to cut it off if the boys do not stop ringing the bell of his shop to tease him. And in the big match, the high point of the story, Crab Basher does the same to Henri's father, lifting him up by the ear using his scissor hands.

Consequently, one might argue that there are indeed some frightening, exciting and horrifying elements in the story. And yet, it would not be correct to label this book a horror story. Crab Basher definitely has something monstrous about him, being bigger than anyone, and armed with two huge scissors next to his hands, but he is not univocally a bad guy. Although he does not fight according to the rules, the mouse children still honour him as a "fierce scissor fighter." His monstrousness is also undermined by the fact that he is defeated by one blow in the ring. Pictures showing him being taken away make him look vulnerable and confused like a beetle that has landed on its back.

In light of these notions, it is surprising that this book was actually seen as unsuitable for children by a librarian, who demanded that it be censored. Her argument was built on a comparison of the Boxing School book with another book that told the story of a mushroom picking trip. While the "good" book was calm and focused on the protagonists' team work, the "bad" Boxing School book used gratuitous special effects and portrayed all kinds of horrible things from an exploding house to a tank, blood and a dead doll.¹⁵ Whether or not the things this critic saw are really there in the book does not matter. The point is that something about the book triggered the critic's wish to censor it. Maybe it was the style and the content in general. Or maybe it was the fact that the style and content of the book did not match the librarian's ideas about what children need. The history of moral panic shows that the reason to worry about the media's impact on children is not only to be located in the shock or revulsion that the horrific elements within the dreaded media cause in children, but in their feared impact or effect on people's behaviour in general. The aesthetics of horror, it can be said, thus take shape in the minds of the condemners as much as in the cultural products themselves. One just has to note how horrifyingly lyrical the language of a moral panic can be to see that it is making use of the aesthetics of horror just as much as any horror story. The result of the worry, however, is that horror elements in children's culture are modified in order to be less offensive to the current images held of childhood.

Domesticating horror for a reason (the subversive and world-ordering uses of horror)

Since the trope of childhood innocence and the will to protect children is so strong in our society, it is quite understandable that horror elements in products aimed at mostly child audiences are composed somewhat differently than they would be in products for adults. First of all, one would be less likely to find blood on the pages of a picture book or a cartoon aimed at young children than in a regular horror movie aimed at an adult audience. Second, one would be less likely to witness violent death. But what is most interesting is that in general, the style of horror is often less scary and disgusting. Monstrous figures in picture books might seem more human and have funny traits that undermine their scariness. If we go back to the actual horror elements in the *Boxing School* book, the “monster” is not only a scary, large, intimidatingly armed opponent, but also a sportsman and idol, well known from posters on the training hall wall, and part of a crab species. During the story, Crab Basher is ridiculed in one of the shadows, which pairs him with a passive punching bag. And in the end he is shown entangled in a spider web in a drawing made by the mouse children. Moves which pair scariness with something everyday, making it controllable through boxing or drawing and by providing an organized environment to balance the fear of chaos, are what I would call domesticating moves.

Harvey Roy Greenberg writes about this practice of domestication under the heading “heimlich maneuvers,” interrogating the “intriguing reversal” by which movie monsters are turned into funny figures, friends and protectors, figures in need of protection, or saviours of mankind. To Greenberg, remakes that modify famous monster characters such as Frankenstein’s monster, Dracula and Godzilla serve commercial aims, but also contribute to the rehabilitation of the monsters. One of the ways to do this is through humour. Greenberg distinguishes between generic excessiveness, which lends an innate humorous capability to monsters (which he defines as liminal, ambivalent, rebellious creatures of social oppression) and the image of a monster turned into an object of ridicule, evoking empathy rather than fear. While the first has the power to transcend social constraints through a kind of anarchism, a Rabelaisian spirit of playfulness, the second might just depict the monster’s defeat as neutralizing without altering its sinister destructive intent.¹⁶

In picture books, these ways of domesticating horror through humour and empathy become visible if one compares the *Boxing School* book to the *Little Monster* books of writer Suna Vuori and illustrator Katri Kirkkopelto. In the *Boxing School*, the monster is an imagined opponent whose looming presence is seen in non-living objects like shadows and punching bags that wear his skull sign, the “sign of the crook.”¹⁷ One might say that dread-filled anticipation is the most powerful thread of horror in the *Boxing School* book, but that it is held in place by everyday life going on as usual. Fear might be there, represented in the skull signs, but a well-aimed punch can put the signs in their place as “just signs.” When Henri has a bad dream about the upcoming match, he climbs into bed with his parents. And when the big match is over, he washes the signs of the crook off the gloves of his opponent, turning the excitement of the battle into the symbolic but everyday practice of washing and cleaning. But despite the domesticating moves, the grotesque excessiveness of horror is there, in the juxtapositions of the everyday and the imagined threat, spiced up with humour.

In the *Little Monster* books, in turn, the monsters themselves are the everyday element of the story. They may be monsters with fur and sharp teeth, but they are above all feeling creatures that exist in a family constellation of a mother, a father and a child. In children's books, childlike animal characters are often used as a way to make identification easier for young readers. In the *Little Monster* books they are simply monsters instead of wolves or teddy bears, because monsters are said not to exist, which is the main worry of the little monster in the first book. There is very little of the anarchistic, free-because-outlawed quality of the monster¹⁸ in these cute and sympathetic figures, and the humorous possibilities of a creature that might not exist worrying that it might not exist are not used. Instead there are many references to the readers of the book who might get bored and close it, or destroy a picture that they have drawn of a monster, making it disappear.¹⁹ Unlike the intimidating but ridiculed opponent in the *Boxing School* book, the monsters of the little monster books do not represent any threat. They are neutralized into cute figures from the start and the story points to the horror of existence and non-existence only as an idea that can be shut out as easily as one can close a book.

But what, then, is actually rehabilitated, to use Greenberg's term, in these domesticated horror stories? What are the merits of the genre whose appearance one could try to trace in these childish modifications which secure a protective home next to the fears of being hurt or forgotten?

Next to its most obvious power to scare and disgust, one feature of horror lies in its capacity to challenge everyday perception and existing power relations, as already noted. In the *Boxing School* book, the small mouse boy manages to defeat the horrible Crab Basher because he continues to act in spite of his fears. In a discussion of the aesthetic and epistemological value of horror, Philip J. Nickel claims that in this way horror provides us with a perspective on common sense. Humans can imagine much more than they can effectively deal with, which is why ambivalence is often either denied or flattened to suit one's interpretation – or pushed to the area of horror fiction. One can find similar ideas in Mary Douglas's treatment of purity and danger.²⁰ According to Douglas, one could claim that experiences which do not fit into the known or cannot be otherwise controlled are pushed into the realm of the sacred and the taboo, or as in the case of secular horror, the realm of fantastic belief, so that members of the community may continue their lives as usual. Horror thus points out that we can continue to act in the presence of fear and move forward despite the absence of perfect certainty.²¹ Connected to practices built around dirt and purity, one could claim to see the part that the power of horror plays in the communal tabooing practices that protect the agreed-upon sense of order.

Horror can then be used to point out the chaos held in place by our beliefs in ways that may be stylistically serious and amazing or extravagantly entertaining. In the first *Little Monster* book, *Hirveä, parkaisi hirviö* the subject of fear, is the nature of existence and the style remains close to serious contemplation. In the *Boxing School* book, the protagonist's fears take a more palpable form and the emphasis is rather on action and entertainment. Entertaining exaggeration and serious contemplation do not have to be mutually exclusive, however. Susan Cokal, writing about the grotesque and the sublime in Patrick Süskind's story *The Perfume*, notes that the grotesque and the sublime are related through excess. Both transgress boundaries, whether through an exaggeration of the body or a surplus of beauty. Both bring us in contact with something beyond our ordinary experience²² while at the same time pointing out the limits of our understanding and the need to trust the world to be the way we believe it to be²³. What the crab-shaped shadows that lurk on the pages of *Boxing School* book or the fearful observations of the little monster

actually do is point out the way in which we can imagine meaning and message in the most normal things, as soon as we start wondering whether there is something out of the ordinary about them.

In addition to its usefulness in treating the intellectual uncertainty and fear that one faces on the border between the known and the unknown, horror can be used for reasons of empowerment and the fortification of peer cultures. The possibly subversive effects of carnivalesque laughter have been discussed by Bahtin in his treatment of medieval and renaissance laughter in Rabelais' work. Bahtin points out that the subversive humour of the carnivalesque gives the subdued classes the chance to give vent to their frustrations in the form of excess and laughter, the reversing of existing social hierarchies and norms. The subversiveness of carnivalesque laughter is, however, limited to a certain time of year, in the end serving the maintenance of the existing status quo.²⁴ When carnival time is over, the usual order of things returns. Some researchers have taken this (however limited) overthrow of existing power relations as their starting point when arguing for the empowering features of horror. They focus on grotesque exaggeration as something funny and liberating. Others have questioned this subversiveness by pointing out that in the end the carnivalesque just serves to maintain existing inequalities.²⁵ Reading the *Boxing School* book through a Bahtinian or Rabelaisian lens, one cannot fail to note that the huge boxing glove and the exploding house are, in their exaggeration, very good depictions of power fantasies. Sure, they only offer a fantasy whose power is limited to the imagination and the reading of a book, but does this mean that they have no real subversive effect of *any* kind? The way in which Crab Basher is ridiculed in some of the shadows, is a further example that lends itself to a Bahtinian interpretation.

But since children's culture is full of exaggerated, fantastic animal bodies portraying different human characteristics and since the picture book as a medium is literally meant to be "handled" differently than movies or art experiences, allowing animistic practices of ripping, drawing-over and throwing away,²⁶ one could ask if there can be anything really sublimely haunting or ontologically perplexing in a picture book. And if horror is used to protect an agreed-upon sense of order, with the excessiveness of the grotesque kept in place by domesticating moves, does the connection to eye-opening, respected horror become too far-fetched to be valued for the above mentioned reasons? Relating the domesticating moves discussed above to the high-low distinction in cultural evaluating practices, I am now venturing an attempt to discuss the changes in the aesthetic quality of horror in "childish" modifications in terms of the grotesque and kitsch.

The lesser aesthetic value of childish remakes

The changes in value brought about by the domesticating moves in the treatment of horror in children's culture can be discussed through the pairing of notions about what it means to be childish as well as through a discussion of entertainment. To Richard Shusterman, ideas about entertainment are at the core of our high art low art distinctions. Usually, entertainment is contrasted with art, but distinctions like this are not rigid. Every value judgement or classifying act depends on what the object at hand is being contrasted with. In newspapers, for example, art and entertainment are often paired, making them seem compatible with each other. Another example would be the fact that in everyday practice, entertainment is often contrasted with work. Based on etymological definitions of entertainment, Shusterman concludes that the word

entertainment is used to point towards something that occupies one's mind in an agreeable way and to portray something as a distraction, as something less important. According to him, the etymology thus shows that entertainment incorporates a productive dialectic of attention–diversion, concentration–distraction and serious maintenance–playful amusement, revealing that entertainment is needed “[t]o sustain, refresh, and even deepen concentration” so that concentration is not get “fatigued and dulled through monotony.”²⁷

Applying these ideas to children's culture, one could first note that the cultural objects that are contrasted with works of children's culture usually arise from within adult culture. In the field of literature, even works that are considered classics in children's literature do not get officially evaluated in the same category with adult books because the categories of adult and children's literature are seen as inherently different. Perry Nodelman argues that children's literature is defined by the fact that it always relates to the cultural ideas of childhood as different from adulthood.²⁸ Emily Ravenwood deals with the same idea in her treatment of the vulgarity of the Southpark series by arguing that vulgarity is what gave the series its glamour and artistic merit among upper class audiences. However, when the show penetrated to the masses and became popular among children, it seemed to lose some of its subversive power. The idea that vulgarity loses its subversiveness when used by the lower classes rests on the assumption that vulgarity is a defining feature of the uneducated masses, and thus is nothing out of the ordinary when used by children.²⁹ Thus, the practice of contrasting children's culture with adult culture has profound consequences: it prevents the rise of objects of children's culture to the category of “high” art, but also threatens high art with the possibility of being appropriated by the masses, of which children are an apt example.

In her book “Aesthetic Approaches to Children's Literature,” Maria Nikolajeva repeatedly notes that the most prejudicial critics of children's fiction see it as simple, action-oriented, optimistic, repetitive, and didactic.³⁰ Although increasing research in the field has shown that children's literature can be very complex, featuring sophisticated intertextual references and ideologically subversive content, most people would probably define children's literature as somewhat simpler and thus intellectually “lower” than adult literature.

Second, by taking the common practice of contrasting entertainment with work, according to contemporary views, childhood is seen as a time or phase in a person's life that should be free from physical labour and responsibility. Accounts of the changing attitudes towards horror elements in children's culture reveal that while the educational use of horror has come to be viewed as more and more inappropriate with the development of modern ideas of childhood as something to be nurtured and protected and not just forcefully moulded, its use as entertainment has continued as popular practice.³¹ Just as children's exclusion from the area of work has contributed to their societal value changing from economic to sentimental, cultural products for children have moved from being “hard” and educational to being soft and amusing. “Childish” can hence be seen as a pejorative term, pointing towards something entertaining and light. Ashis Nandy, who applies a post-colonial view of the constructions of childhood in his book *Traditions Tyranny and Utopia*, claims that the politics of childhood begin with the valuing of adulthood and growth. When gaining respect is connected to physical and mental growth, the child is negatively evaluated as less than the adult. Building on the modern world's paradoxical view of children, Nandy notes that while child-likeness is seen as a positive thing, connected to loveliness, spontaneity and sensitivity, childishness is seen as a negative trait – even in children.³² Childish monsters may then be seen as mostly amusing, turning all higher aspirations of the genre into “mere” entertainment.

Although it may be inappropriate to talk about books such as the *Boxing School* as remakes (they do not actually retell an existing story), I am bringing in the term to highlight the fact that horrifying features thought up by an adult producer often go through a process of re-evaluation and possible censorship when directed at children.³³ Remakes do not have a good name in the art world or the field of cultural evaluation, but they might be lucrative in an economic sense. In the field of horror studies, there are critics who claim that American horror cinema has produced nothing worth mentioning since the 1970's because it is preoccupied with producing remakes of genre classics.³⁴ Steffen Hantke sums up the debate, stating that remakes of classics may be successful with large audiences, but to fans and critics “fetishized serial-killers” and “clinically gruesome effects” are just signs of violence becoming arbitrary and more refined film techniques. Writing about remakes of remakes that refer to nearly nothing in the original, Hantke concludes “As the boundary between original and remake vanishes, all concepts of originality, genealogy, or history go out the window as well.”³⁵ Since children's literature is a considerable economic branch, like the horror industry, one would not be totally mistaken in taking into account the economic reasons for re-using successful formulas, even in the domestication of horror. One might even argue that the field of children's literature production is nurturing canonization instead of innovation, just as Hantke claims that the American horror industry does.

Kitsch and grotesque domesticating moves and the referential power of remakes

In his treatise on evil, Terry Eagleton notes that contemporary culture, having lost the shock value of sexuality, turns to evil, not noticing that maniacal laughter, demonic children, bleeding wallpaper and other similarly horrific things are actually not evil, but just plain nasty.³⁶ If horror is used only for its shock effect, or the cheap thrills that it gives in order to appeal to audiences in ways that they know what to expect, it can indeed be seen as a mere commodity, or kitsch.³⁷ Kitsch is usually defined as insincere sentimentality, a diversion that does not demand anything except perhaps our money. By becoming formulaic, and by losing its anarchistic power to overthrow existing power relations, horror too may be used to support our most basic sentiments and beliefs while not disturbing or questioning them. The little monster books are a good example of this. They seem to say that young and small beings are cute and need protection even if they are formally monsters. Losing even its possibly disturbing nastiness in movies that turn monsters into cute, misunderstood and fantastic animals, “horror” here adopts a patronising stance. And sure enough, it sells. The *Little Monster* book has grown into a series of books that include a book that describes what happens when the little monster goes to school as well as an abc and an activity book.

Some claim that the culture industry has a better idea of what children really appreciate than educators and researchers. Others argue that the culture industry is simply feeding off the basest and most unrefined tastes in order to gain access to the economic power of the masses. One of the forceful opponents of commercialization within the field of children's literature studies is Jack Zipes, whose views are heavily influenced by the work of Theodor Adorno and the Frankfurt school. Zipes promotes a view according to which the spectacles produced by the contemporary fantasy industry are violating and draining imagination and glorifying social power relations, while fetishizing the magical. According to him, we have always

sought to make sense of the world through fantasy, but now fantasy has become so common, so instrumentalized to serve the culture industry's economic aims, that we consume it like "harmless junk food" to find "quick fixes" and consolation. Instead of seeking the uncanny, the bizarre and the incongruous, it seems to Zipes that we now turn to it for diversion, to "take our minds off reality" and to "enjoy a moment of calm estrangement or titillation."³⁸ Perry Nodelman's treatment of the *Goosebumps* series by R. L. Stine also cites the economic motives of offering this kind of estrangement and titillation. Noting that best-selling fiction is almost by definition that which readers like to hear and what they know already, Nodelman writes that popular works are likely to be inherently conservative, working to preserve the status quo instead of challenging it.³⁹

But what about the Rabelaisian spirit of playfulness and the claim that entertainment plays an important role in refreshing and deepening our concentration? Is kitsch horror somehow of lesser value than its grotesque, possibly subversive or more adult siblings? Is it not refreshing to have a *Little Monster* action book, or baby wear with skulls on it?

In terms of the aesthetic impact of grotesque humour and cutification, the above-mentioned *Struwwelpeter* book and its remakes are a good example of how style and content can be renegotiated while re-writing the original. In the established version, the book consists of ten short, didactic stories, whose aim seems to be to provide child-readers with the insight that bad behaviour will be punished. The horror of the stories is obvious when one considers how the child protagonists get accidentally burned, humiliated, hurt or blown away by the wind. This children's classic has been both praised and criticized, and due to this attention it has sprouted many followers. In Hoffmann's original one can trace the presence of the grotesque. For example, The Story of Little Suck-a-Thumb is about a boy whose thumbs are cut off because he keeps sucking them despite his mother's admonitions. The English translation of the original lines portrays the happening as follows:

The door flew open, in he ran,

The great, long, red-legged scissor-man.

Oh! children, see! the tailor's come

And caught out little Suck-a-Thumb.

Snip! Snap! Snip! the scissors go;

And Conrad cries out "Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Snip! Snap! Snip! They go so fast,

That both his thumbs are off at last.⁴⁰

The New Oxford American Dictionary defines the grotesque as something comically or repulsively ugly or distorted, and as incongruous and or inappropriate to a shocking degree.⁴¹ In light of this definition, one can

say that there is, indeed, something incongruous about the matching of the style and content of Hoffmann's Thumb-Sucker story. The story is quite shocking in its straightforwardness yet the lightness of the rhymes does not seem to match the horror of the content. Furthermore, the tailor's energetic pose in the pictures does not match the precision needed to cut off thumbs, and the scissors are far too big to be really handy. But exactly what makes these exaggerations humorous?

Noël Carroll explains the possible combination of horror and humour by pairing his theory of horror as caused by impurity with the incongruity theory of humour. Although horror and humour might at first glance seem like opposite mental states (one associated with heaviness, pressure and claustrophobia and the other with lightness and expansion), there are multiple examples of cultural products, which, like the *Struwwelpeter* stories, successfully combine the horrific with the humorous. Clowns are a good example. Abject features, such as feces, spittle or a cut off hand running around on its own, are others. As Carroll writes: "The impurities of horror can serve as the incongruities of humour, just as, in certain circumstances, mere references to the feces, mucus or spittle we were taught to revile was enough to make us the class wit in second grade."⁴²

Despite its grotesque humour, the *Struwwelpeter* story has also been seen as not funny but rather as oppressive towards children. As a result, child-friendly remakes like the *So ein Struwwelpeter* by the East-German authors Hansgeorg Stengel and Karl Schrader, published in 1970, have sought to alter the most horrific parts. In this version, the thumbs, instead of being cut off, just decide to leave. The thumb-sucker (a girl this time), does not cry, but seems as dumbstruck as the teddy bear and monkey on her bed. In the end, this is an unexpected and somewhat fantastic way to honour the grotesque humour of the original story while softening its violence.⁴³ In the case of this domestication of the Thumb-Sucker story, one could claim that by retelling the story, although in a less horrible and more obviously humorous way, the remake preserves the fear of losing one's thumbs. The readers of the remake may also be familiar with the original story, and while reading the remake they might be reminded of the original in which blood drips from the stumps where the thumbs used to be.

I believe that this is an important part of the power of remakes: the aesthetic experience of horror which they communicate can also be based on intertextual references. Thus, a ghost in a children's story might be friendly, but still bear reference to ghosts in general in an exiting or an even frightening way, linking even the cutest ghost to the above described merits of horror as a world-ordering practise. Incidentally, knowledge about intertextual references is defined as a source of pleasure in horror fandom by Matt Hills.⁴⁴ This might be one way in which even domesticated horror can maintain the double meaning of play and serious maintenance that Shusterman ascribes to entertainment.

A link to a more cruel or shocking reference point may however also become so far-fetched that its horrifying power diminishes, leaving only an intertextual value which many readers may not even notice. This may be the case with Saint Nicolas dipping (mouse) boys into an ink glass in a picture hanging on the wall of the mouse family's bedroom in the *Boxing School* book. It is a reference to the Story of the Inky Boys of Hoffmann's *Struwwelpeter*. The punishing character of Saint Nicolas may be seen as analogous to Barber Scissors, who the mouse children tease in the *Boxing School* story and who consequently punishes

Henri by lifting him up by his ear, but I am more inclined to see the reference as a comment on the history of children's literature altogether, and particularly the didactic aims of frightening children. Read this way, the reference seems to be emphasizing that we have come a long way since the days of *Struwwelpeter* in terms of child friendly pedagogy, while also maintaining the connection to this classic story as a way of saying, "or have we?" The reference can, therefore, be seen as a way to note continuities beyond the changing surfaces of children's literature. One notable continuity would be the fact that children's literature still has a didactic and possibly oppressing bent despite its cuteness.

Lower than low?

What then, can be concluded about the domesticated aesthetics of horror in relation to the high culture/low culture divide? Can domesticated horror plug into the sublime power of genre classics only through more or less far-fetched references, or is there still something left of the intellectually challenging traits of horror in the domesticated forms of grotesquely humorous and kitsch horror? Is children's culture really by definition intellectually lower than adult mainstream culture? And where is the horror genre itself situated on the high-low scale of art and culture? These are all questions that may help us to answer the implications for the artistic aspirations of the horror genre whose features are reproduced in domesticated forms. A thorough treatment of all of these questions would be impossible in a paper of this length, but I hope that the discussion of the horror elements in the picture books in this paper has opened some of them for closer inspection.

To sum up, when thinking of "childish" monsters such as the cute *Little Monster* of Vuori and Kirkkopelto, it is easy to agree that horror loses something essential to its aesthetics in such childish portrayals that have little more than the term "monster" to relate it to horror. By adopting a commercial and paternalizing stance, kitsch horror might indeed be accused of fortifying existing generational power relations and politically infantilising its audience. The term "infantilising" can be used to point out a power relation in which the infantilised consumer is not expected to talk back but to surrender unquestioningly to the care and superior knowledge of others.⁴⁵ But as David MacGregor Johnston notes in his treatment of kitsch and camp horror, there is not a large gap between over sentimentalised cuteness and the "revenge of camp," a playfulness and exaggeration that takes pleasure in the artificial while remaining conscious of the fact that it is just a construct with motives to serve.⁴⁶ It thus seems like camp might have the power to redeem even the most naively kitsch practices by re-introducing a performatively engaged subject to take the place of the infantile citizen. But whether child readers have the performative power to turn figures like the Little Monster into camp is questionable.

However, when it comes to the power of grotesque, humorous exaggeration, children are masters. The power of violent play and vulgar language when used by children stems at least partly from the same idea of childhood innocence that makes kitsch so powerless in their hands. If a vulgar word uttered by a child makes adults worry, or laugh in surprise, it has already slightly shifted the existing power relations in favour of the child who otherwise has to deal with being controlled as a less able member of society. This is part of the subversive potential of the carnivalesque. It might thus be argued that one cannot understand the relation of domesticated horror and the fear of the horror genre "ceasing to matter"⁴⁷ without acknowledging the fact

that domesticating something could make it more childish and without paying attention to why childish is actually a discrediting term. In many societies, the high classes associate themselves with emotional control.⁴⁸ This is visible in the idea that restraining one's natural impulses and fashioning one's will is a virtue.⁴⁹ It is obvious that a culture that appreciates restraint and emotional control does not value the corporeal, grotesque or kitsch branches of horror. As long as there are class distinctions that allow an older and more educated part of society to determine what is to be respected as high culture, and as long as these educated elders do it by respecting the tradition of disinterested contemplation, less educated, sensational and hands-on approaches will be devalued as lower cultural forms. A book that is meant to be used for more than educative reading and which is more likely to be ripped, chewed on or hidden in fear than Kant's *Critique of Judgement* will not make it into the high class in this cultural climate.

So children's culture cannot be high culture, and the horror genre, the value of which numerous academics and fans have defended for decades, might not be flattered by the childish remakes discussed above. With highly educated adults speaking of its subversive powers and socio-historically cogent implications, one could say that horror has become more established, and situated, if not within high culture, then at least higher than children's culture. Valuing originality and innovation in this branch also results from the fact that horror academics have used the evaluation criteria of modernist art as one base on which to build the value of horror. From these notions, it is then easy to see why horror turned to canonicity might be seen as a "slump" in cultural production, and why canonized childish modifications might be seen as not improving the status of this "adult" genre. But the feared decline of the aesthetic impact of horror with the flow of mass produced, popularized, familiarized horror is just one side of the story. It represents a point of view that is somewhat elitist, lifting some representatives of the genre to the domain of "high art" while leaving other works in the domain of the less valued, popular.

Another view on the aesthetic power of horror is put forward by parents and educators who worry about the impact of the spreading of the content and stylistics of the horror genre because they see the genre in general as a low cultural form. The impact to be feared, according to these views, is also present in domesticated forms, and it is largely negative, as we saw in our discussion of the criticism that the *Boxing School* book received. For these critics, the problem is not that the banality of horror deprives the genre of inventiveness, but that it allows its dissemination to proceed unnoticed, and to touch more and more members of society - even the ones whose tastes are not yet developed. In this view, the "touch" of horror is still seen as powerful, usually in a filthy, stigmatising way.

First of all, changing horror into more child-friendly or childish forms through domestication may maintain a connection to the more appreciated, existentialist uses of horror. Second, it seems obvious that products of children's culture are not valued on their own merits, but in relation to an idea of children and childhood held by the culture within which the evaluation takes place. Third, observations made in this paper may be used to point out how value judgements are constructed performatively, that is, in order to achieve a certain goal, like building up one's identity as a member of a certain group, or in order to gain or maintain a certain position in society. In relation to this, it also seems clear that a person's power to use horror performatively changes according to his/her status. And fourth, I would suggest that the way in which horror trickles "down" to children's culture may be seen as stigmatising or bad, by both educators and people who want to see horror as (high) art. All these points can be brought in to discuss the need for and the presumably (or

relatively) lesser value of childish horror in comparison with its more convincingly horrific adult counterparts.

If we look at the use of horror in children's literature, or picture books, we see that symbolically communicating experiences of horror to children is not simply a matter of domestication, but a rather difficult balancing act in which the conflicting ideas of children and childhood meet the not-so clear distinctions between high culture, low culture and popular culture, visible in our ambivalent stance towards the possibly eye-opening, possibly stigmatising quality of horror. There are many interesting questions to be addressed in relation to the domestication of horror. An approach focused on the high-low aspects may be used to open some of them for closer inspection. Combining new childhood studies with inquisitive tools of the discipline of aesthetics is another possibility.

¹ The Frankengymteacher mask at Boomerang tv <http://www.boomerangtv.com.au/shows/caspers-scare-school/activities/frankenstein-mask>, Bestsellers on the My Baby Rocks -site <http://www.punkbabyclothes.net/>, Lego videogames Batman 2 <http://videogames.lego.com/nl-nl/lego-batman-2-dc-super-heroes/about/screenshots/xbox-360/>, all visited 14.2.2013. The Zombie game I observed while doing my own field research in a daycare center in Central Finland in 2011. Here, children's culture refers mostly to the cultural products produced for children by adults, although the zombie-game reflects the cultural practises of children themselves.

² Philip J. Nickel, "Horror and the Idea of Everyday Life on Skeptical Threats in Psycho and The Birds" in *Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), pp.14-32; ref. on p.15.

³ Noël Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror of Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York, London: Routledge, 1990).

⁴ Philip J. Nickel, “Horror and the Idea of Everyday Life on Skeptical Threats in Psycho and The Birds” in *Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), pp.14-32; ref. on p. 15.

⁵ Cited in Matthew Kieran, “Aesthetic value: beauty, ugliness and incoherence”, *Philosophy* 72, 281 (1997), 383 – 399; ref. on p. 390.

⁶ Matt Hills, “Fan Cultures between ‘Fantasy’ and ‘Reality’” in *Cultural Studies. An Anthology*. ed. Michael Ryan (Malden USA, Oxford UK, Carlton, Victoria AUSTRALIA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), pp. 1140 - 1165.

⁷ Greenberg mentions the huge carnivorous ants in *Them!*, the homicidal roadster in *Christine*, and the demonically possessed doll Chucky in the *Child’s play* films. Harvey Roy Greenberg, “Heimlich Maneuvers: On a Certain Tendency of Horror and Spectacular Cinema” in *Horror Film and Psychoanalysis. Freud’s Worst Nightmare*, ed. Stephen Jay Schneider (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press) pp. 122-141, ref. on p.123.

⁸ Stephen King, quoted in Perry Nodelman’s “Ordinary Monstrosity: The World of Goosebumps” in *The Children’s Literature Association Quarterly* 22, 3 (1997) Published by The John Hopkins University Press, pp. 118-125; ref. on p. 121.

⁹ The term "masses" does not imply a homogenous group, but points towards a minimum of shared abilities in a large group of people. One such shared ability might be the capacity to focus on an entertaining story for a short while. The term might be a bit outdated, but I think that it can be used to point towards a large number of people as long as one keeps in mind that the group itself may be heterogeneous. "Uneducated" here refers to the fact that education plays no role in connecting this large number of people. As Noël Carroll writes in his treatment of mass art, mass art provides accessibility with minimal effort, for large numbers of relatively untutored audiences. Noël Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art* (New York, Oxford, 1998) ref, on p. 196.

¹⁰ Heinrich Hoffmann, letter to the *Die Gartenlaube* –magazine 3.11.1892. Published in *Die Gartenlaube* 1893. Reprinted in *Struwelpeter-Hoffmann*. ed. G. H. Herzog & Helmut Siefert (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Heinrich-Hoffmann-Museum, 1978), pp. 11-17.

¹¹ Leena Alanen, “Johdatus lapsuudentutkimukseen” in *Lapsuus, lapsuuden instituutiot ja lasten toiminta*, ed. Leena Alanen (Tampere: Vastapaino, 2009), pp. 9-30; ref. on p. 14.

¹² Gerard Jones, *Killing Monsters. Why Children Need Fantasy, Super-Heroes, and Make-Believe Violence* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), p. 45-63.

¹³ Piia Korhonen, *Lasten TV-ohjelmiin liittyvät pelot, painajaisunet ja pelonhallinta* (Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2008); John Springhall, *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics. From Penny Gaffs to Gangsta-Rap, 1830-1996*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, London: MacMillan Press Ltd. 1998).

¹⁴ “Crab Basher” is my own translation from the Finnish “Rapu Rusikka.” Hannele Huovi & Jukka Lemmetty, *Miinalan Veikon nyrkkeilykoulu* (Helsinki: Tammi, 2008).

¹⁵ Pseudonym “Hapero,” October 2, 2008, <http://www.kirjastot.fi/fi-fi/foorumit/thread.aspx?threadId=9c614367-ec5e-4ab3-ae29-4311c55e50d5>, visited 29.1.2013.

¹⁶ Harvey Roy Greenberg, “Heimlich Maneuvers: On a Certain Tendency of Horror and Spectacular Cinema” in *Horror Film and Psychoanalysis. Freud’s Worst Nightmare*, ed. Stephen Jay Schneider (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press) pp. 122-141, ref. on p. 124-136.

¹⁷ “Sign of the crook” is my own translation from the Finnish “roiston merkki”. Hannele Huovi & Jukka Lemmetty, *Miinalan Veikon nyrkkeilykoulu* (Helsinki: Tammi, 2008).

¹⁸ “Monster” in some ancient thought meant, among other things, a creature that was wholly independent of others.” Terry Eagleton, *On Evil* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 12. Foucault defines the monster in the framework of law as a kind of an outlaw. Michel

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Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France 1974-1975* (New York; Picador, 1999/2003), p. 55-57.

¹⁹ Suna Vuori & Katri Kirkkopelto, *Hirveää, parkaisi hirviö* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2005).

²⁰ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London etc: Routledge, 1966, Published in Routledge classics in 2002).

²¹ Philip J. Nickel, "Horror and the Idea of Everyday Life on Skeptical Threats in Psycho and The Birds" in *Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), pp.14-32; ref, on p. 17, 29.

²² Susann Cokal, "Hot with Rapture and Cold with Fear": Grotesque, Sublime, and Postmodern Transformations in Patrick Süskind's *Perfume*" in *Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), pp. 179-198; ref. on p. 182.

²³ Philip J. Nickel, "Horror and the Idea of Everyday Life on Skeptical Threats in Psycho and The Birds" in *Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), pp.14-32.

²⁴ Mihail Bahtin, *François Rabelais: keskiajan ja renessanssin nauru*, suom. Tapani Laine & Paula Nieminen (Helsinki: Like, 2002).

²⁵ Maria Lassén-Seger, *Adventures into Otherness: Child Metamorphs in Late Twentieth-Century Children's Literature* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi University Press, 2006), pp. 144-147.

²⁶ The idea that a picture book is a book to be "handled" differently than other books was already expressed by Hoffmann who wanted to publish his *Struwelpeter* book in booklet-form in order for it to be easily torn into pieces if needed. Closing the book to get rid of the story, as described in the *Little Monster* book, follows the same animistic practice. And, third, the same practice is insinuated the *Boxing School* book, where dotted lines on the pages give the impression that one would be allowed to take a pair of scissors and cut through the book's pages.

²⁷ Richard Shusterman, "Entertainment: A Question for Aesthetics," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 43, 3 (British Society of Aesthetics, 2003), 289-290, 293.

²⁸ Perry Nodelman, *The Hidden Adult. Defining Children's Literature* (Baltimore: the John Hopkins University Press, 2008).

²⁹ [Emily Ravenwood, "The Innocence of Children: Effects of Vulgarly in South Park" CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 1.2 \(Purdue University, 1999\).](#)

³⁰ Maria Nikolajeva, *Aesthetic Approaches to Children's Literature. An Introduction* (Lanham, Maryland, Toronto, Oxford: The Scarcrow Press Inc., 2005), p. 49-50.

³¹ Katherine E. Shryock Hood, *On Beyond Boo! Horror Literature for Children* (Proquest Dissertations and Theses: Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 2008).

³² Ashis Nandy, *Traditions, Tyranny and Utopias. Essays on the Politics of Awareness*. (Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras: Oxford University Press, 1987/1992) p. 56-57.

³³ Niklas Bengtsson, *Sex and Violence in Fairy Tales for Children* in *Bookbird* (IBBY 2009, 47, 3. pp. 15-21).

³⁴ Robin Wood, Foreword: "What Lies Beneath?" in *Horror Film and Psychoanalysis. Freud's Worst Nightmare*, ed. Stephen Jay Schneider (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press) pp.xiii-xviii; ref. on p. xviii.

³⁵ Steffen Hantke, "Academic Film Criticism, The Rhetoric of Crisis, and the Current State of American Horror Cinema: Thoughts on Canonicity and Academic Anxiety", *College Literature* (Published by West Chester University, 2007) pp. 191-202; ref on p. 192.

³⁶ Terry Eagleton, *On Evil* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 122.

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- ³⁷ David MacGregor Johnston, *Kitsch and Camp and Things That Go Bump in the Night; or Sontag and Adorno at the (Horror) Movies in Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010) pp. 229-243.
- ³⁸ Jack Zipes, "Why Fantasy Matters Too Much", *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 43, 2 (University of Illinois, 2009) pp. 77-91.
- ³⁹ Perry Nodelman, *Ordinary Monstrosity: The World of Goosebumps (Children's Literature Association Quarterly, Vol 22, Nr 3, 1997)*, pp.118-125; ref on p.124.
- ⁴⁰ This English translation of Heinrich Hoffman's *Struwwelpeter* can be found online as a Project Gutenberg EBook: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/12116/12116-h/12116-h.htm#The Story of Little Suck-a-Thumb](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/12116/12116-h/12116-h.htm#The_Story_of_Little_Suck-a-Thumb), visited 7.11.2013.
- ⁴¹ "Grotesque". *New Oxford American Dictionary* 2nd edition © 2005, Oxford University Press, Inc. <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/grotesque?q=grotesque>, 30.1.2013.
- ⁴² Noël Carroll, "Horror and Humor", *The Journal of Aesthetics of Art Criticism* 57, 2 (Wiley, New Jersey USA: The American Society for Aesthetics, 1999), pp. 145-160; ref on p. 145, 156-157.
- ⁴³ Hansgeorg Stengel & Karl Schrader, *So ein Struwwelpeter. Lustige Geschichten und drollige Bilder für Kinder von 3 bis 6 Jahren* (Berlin, DDR: Der Kinderbuchverlag Berlin, 1970), 12th print 1981.
- ⁴⁴ Matt Hills, *The Pleasures of Horror* (London, New York: Continuum, 2005).
- ⁴⁵ The concept of infantile citizenship is discussed by Lauren Berlant in her book, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham&London: Duke University Press, 1997) and it is applied to children's literature by Kenneth Kidd in his article "'A' is for Auschwitz: Psychoanalysis, Trauma and the 'Children's Literature of Atrocity'" *Children's Literature*, vol 33 (The John Hopkins University Press, 2005), pp. 120-149.
- ⁴⁶ David MacGregor Johnston, *Kitsch and Camp and Things That Go Bump in the Night; or Sontag and Adorno at the (Horror) Movies in Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010) pp. 229-243.
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- ⁴⁸ David MacGregor Johnston, *Kitsch and Camp and Things That Go Bump in the Night; or Sontag and Adorno at the (Horror) Movies in Philosophy of Popular Culture: Philosophy of Horror*, ed. Thomas Fahy (Lexington, KY, USA: University Press of Kentucky, 2010) pp. 229-243; fer. on p. 236.
- ⁴⁹ Sarah Ahmed, *Willfull Parts: Problem Characters or the Problem of Characters* (*New Literary History*, 42, 2011) pp. 231-253; ref. on p. 234.