



THE GOTHIC AND NATIONAL DOMESTICITY

AN INTERVIEW WITH KEVIN CORSTORPHINE

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Sofía Martinicorena: The overarching theme for this interview is the idea of the Gothic national domestic, so, for our first question, I wanted to mention Amy Kaplan’s notion of “manifest domesticity.” She uses it to discuss nineteenth-century literature and it allows her to play with the idea of Manifest Destiny. Although she does not, in any way, engage with the Gothic in her text, her proposal is relevant for our purposes today in that it explains how the nation is construed as “a domestic space imbued with a sense of at-homeness” (111). This homely sense is always considered in opposition to an alien, threatening outside world, tying in with your own definition of the Gothic as “something foreign and threatening as well as a destroyer of civilized values” (Corstorphine 2). Words like “foreign” or “civilization” immediately take us to the realm of citizenship, nationhood and belonging. Considering that you have written that “horror is everywhere” (1), I wanted to ask you about the specificity of the US Gothic. How has the gothic genre helped either to create or to debunk ideologies of the domestic versus the foreign?

Kevin Corstorphine: That's a very interesting question and one I have been trying to pin down. In terms of the US as "home" versus "the foreign," what we've seen a lot in political discourse lately is the demonization of a couple of specific foreign groups. First, with Mexico, it's about the anxieties around the border wall, which is such a blatant symbol of defining "us against them" and almost laughably obvious as a physical symbol. Second, anxieties over immigration from Islamic countries with Trump's famous "Muslim ban." Both of these are linked to discourses of "savagery" versus "civilization" and to the symbolic threat of the figure of the terrorist. Trump's famous decrying of immigrants as murderers and rapists coming either from Mexico or through Mexico from South America plays into this narrative, where you have this construction of the home territory, the domestic versus the invader. This is set up in a highly oxymoronic way, even contradictory when contrasting it to the founding of the US, because we're dealing with an immigrant nation, we're dealing with a melting pot of different cultures. Thinking about your question, I keep coming back to the idea of the Native American. Even though in this case we'd be talking about the Other within the borders, the western (the cowboy versus the Indian) is *the* narrative that the US has given the world, and it's a very flattening and simplifying narrative but still a very powerful one. It gives us this conflict between the strong, stoic frontiersmen and these forces of "savagery."

Thinking about domesticity and the home, drawing back to those ideas of how early American culture deals with the legacy of displacing, killing, and stealing land from Native peoples, brings up certain anxieties. It's so foregrounded in American Gothic that we keep coming back to the trope of the "old Indian burial ground." It's one of those classic motifs that are (and this is what I love about popular gothic) almost so obvious that they don't seem to bear analysis. But then, the more you do it, the more that comes out about what's actually going on there. We have this typical story of someone moving into a property and investing all their hopes into it. In *The Amityville Horror* (1979), they literally call the house "High Hopes," then, they discover this horrific past linked to its former ownership by Native Americans and they become haunted by spirits and events from the past. That initial guilt is essentially how American Gothic is often defined. I'm thinking about the work of critics like Teresa Goddu's *Gothic America* (1997) and Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960). Fiedler's famous idea is that American literature is "bewilderingly and embarrassingly a gothic fiction," (Fiedler 29), which is resting on these twin anxieties about the injustices of slavery and injustices of the appropriation of Native land. How does all this tie into the question of foreigners? It's about the construction of a mainstream dominant culture defined against something else, something "savage," something "uncivilized," and how this opposition tends to reveal more about that culture than it is intended to.

To illustrate this, we might think of Stephen King's *Pet Sematary* (1983). In this novel, there's a line that I love where they're talking about the land and the wife, Rachel, says "Honey, do we own this?" and the neighbour, Jud, says "It's part of the property, oh yes" and the husband, Louis, has this thought: "Which wasn't quite the same thing" (29). So, who owns

land and who has the right to build and work on the land is absolutely foundational to the American project and to its fiction. I'm thinking as well about John Locke's theory that private property is land mixed with labour, which justified land grabs in the colonial period. That's a haunting quality, that if you put your labour into a space or a place, it becomes somehow yours, but then, that's actually a contested property, and that's the doctrine used to take land from Native peoples. It's bound up with the kind of fear coming from guilt over history and this is also projected onto borders. It's all in a stew that builds up this idea of the home as civilization and a specifically American kind of civilization.

SM: You have touched on many themes that I hope we have the chance to unpack later, and I agree with everything that you said about the binary "civilization versus savagery" that articulates so many expressions of the Gothic. I would like to move to a more general level and ask you how you feel about the triangulated relationship between pop culture, the Gothic and the nation. What happens when we add the element of popular culture to this formula?

KC: Many of these texts that we've talked about have been very popular and interesting through that lens of pop culture scholarship. I mentioned as an example *The Amityville Horror*, and I've also been thinking a lot lately about where this intersects with thrillers as well. I just saw a new thriller movie called *Run* (2020) about a wheelchair user who is trapped in the home. It's sort of a version of *Rear Window* (1954) and it explores the suspicion that there's something horrible lurking below the surface. This is not a movie specific to weird gothic fans or a little off-beat, it is completely mainstream as are some of the themes that we're speaking about. I do keep asking myself these questions. In gothic studies, we talk very freely about anxiety and cultural anxiety, just as we do in lots of pop culture scholarship, but we don't often put that under the microscope quite enough, and there's a worry that we might talk too generally. How can we all be suffering all this anxiety all of the time?

To illustrate this, for instance, we've seen a lot of controversy over statues in the US of confederate soldiers and white supremacists. We can see what's the problem with them and where the hurt is coming from but, where it gets more interesting is when we trace this back to Christopher Columbus and the European discovery of the US. In this light, Columbus is someone who is a criminal sailing out to conduct his own ventures, and who is guilty of the death and displacement of millions of people. The thing is that all of this is true and, even though most of us are aware, we turn a collective blind eye to it, we become comfortable with the colonialist myth even though it's horrific from the point of view of the colonized. We are living in the bad timeline, so to speak, in the one where the bad guys have won and we've essentially built up a civilization out of this. All of these debates are very healthy to reassess our past and consider the stories that we're telling ourselves. My point is, in regards to the Gothic, that to think of the past in this way, particularly of the foundations of America, is both deeply gothic and deeply mainstream.

SM: I separated those three terms in my question (the Gothic, the nation and pop culture) but I really do not think that you can consider the Gothic without the popular culture element. It is part of the whole thing. We have been talking about the nation in general terms, following the metaphor “nation as home,” and now I’d like to focus on the inside of this home and talk about the regional Gothic, which is one of the most pervasive ways in which the Gothic is manifested in the United States. Dominant US culture has tended to identify the national identity with certain regions or certain landscapes like the West, for instance, in the 19th century, or the suburban landscape more recently (especially since the post-war era). So, of course, these issues—probably because they relate to very exclusionary processes of nation building—have been treated in gothic terms. You mentioned Teresa Goddu before, who has argued that “the American gothic is most recognizable as a regional form” (3). Thinking of the many iterations that the regional Gothic has in the US, such as the New England Gothic, Southern Gothic, or even Frontier Gothic, how do you think the Gothic relates to questions of space, region and landscape in the US?

KC: When I talk to people who haven’t studied the Gothic, perhaps broader literary specialists, the first thing that has sprung to mind for many years is the Southern Gothic. That is the quintessential and established version of what the Gothic *is* in the US, and it works so well for that, it’s like the Freudian Id, the dark secrets and so on. Those themes of the past obviously play into this. We’re dealing again with the legacy of slavery, with poverty and inequality and with family secrets. This is manifested even in respected mainstream literature like *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947), where Blanche DuBois has her hidden past that she tries to gloss over and, then, her secrets are exposed, resulting in madness. So, with the Southern Gothic, it’s no wonder that it has elicited scholarly attention. However, there’s been a rise of more and more studies in the Gothic lately. We’ve seen, for instance, the New England circle of writers brought to the fore and other exciting explorations of things like Californian Gothic and Texan Gothic, so this trend has very specific regional elements to it, but not necessarily always the Deep South.

Coming back to Southern Gothic though—and I mentioned Mexico earlier—, this idea of Othering is somehow baked into the Gothic from the start. With those original gothic novels, the classic criticism has always associated them with a protestant Britain demonizing Catholic Europe, for instance, Italy and Spain are full of mad monks. Europe is represented as this place of darkness and superstition that is associated with the past. In American literature, the South has absolutely worked like that in the eyes of the North. Flannery O’Connor talked about this. There’s a sense that Southern Gothic writers have had to play up to that image for Northerners who are reading their books. It’s a specifically identifiable and appealing genre of writing and I think that perspective works very well. There’s this novel by Nick Cave, *And the Ass Saw the Angel* (2003), that, despite being Australian, it’s utterly American Southern Gothic in its mood and tone, and I think that shows that it’s a mode that can be transposed to

all kinds of other countries and places. Locally, the US has also managed to establish genres, tropes and gothic modes that go beyond those regions themselves.

SM: Absolutely. I think the West is the most obvious example for this because of its transnational projection. People are talking about the global post-west, and how this region has expanded to a planetary dimension.

KC: I just thought it's really interesting to consider the revisionist Western, which has that specific outlook, like Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* (1985). It is such a gothic novel in so many ways in its worldview that everything is bleak, nothing means anything. This comes back to what I was saying about the Western frontier and this Western narrative being exported to the rest of the world. I have no doubt that we're becoming quite Americanized in terms of these stories, but we also see regional resistance (and that's a whole other topic).

SM: I would like to ponder about the slippage that exists between the dominant culture and its identification with certain emblematic spaces, and other cultures or identities that are erased from these spaces. In your view, how does the Gothic intervene upon this problematic identification between spaces and a national identity that is construed along specific and restrictive gender, racial and class lines?

KC: We're back to this classic discussion over whether the Gothic is progressive in its politics or whether it simply demonizes the Other and it is reactionary and a demonization of social change. I don't want to duck out of that or sit on the bench, but I think that it does both of those things in different texts, or sometimes even in the same one. Space and geography in terms of race, class and gender are so utterly fascinating in the way that they're inscribed. I've been thinking a lot about how in America for example you hear a lot about "bad neighborhoods" or the phrase "sketchy" neighborhoods. We are aware that these refer to black neighborhoods, and that they are racist classifications. The ways in which space is being carved up in those racialized terms has always been gothicized. We might think here about one of those quintessentially racist, albeit important, films: *Birth of a Nation* (1915), and how it characterizes African Americans as a dangerous force. But, lately, the Gothic has really been revising this in fascinating ways. I'm thinking most obviously of *The Ballad of Black Tom* (2016) by Victor LaValle, which rewrites H.P. Lovecraft's fiction. In particular, "The Horror at Red Hook" (1925), has an African American character who is a jazz musician and moves through different areas of New York, but it is in Harlem where he feels safe. From the white mainstream culture perspective, Harlem could be seen as a dangerous place to be, but this African American character is comfortably at home. As he moves out towards the suburbs into very white areas, suddenly, the space becomes threatening and dangerous. What's so fascinating about it is that it really turns on its head the prejudice about non-white spaces as being threatening and dangerous. We can see this assumption in Lovecraft very clearly, and LaValle shows this other perspective through an act of creative storytelling revising the story. Matt Ruff's *Lovecraft*

Country (2016) does something very similar as well. Ultimately, the Gothic can demonize but it can also be a great vehicle to explore those very same themes from the opposite perspective, and there's a lot of writing being done in that vein at the moment.

SM: That kind of taps into my next question about Imperial Gothic and the interrogation of whether the Gothic is actually progressive or conservative. As Stephen King said, "Monstrosity fascinates us because it appeals to the conservative Republican in a three-piece suit who resides within all of us" (*Danse Macabre* 55). Now that we have looked at the inside of the "nation as home," the question remains of how the US as a nation sees its "threatening" outside. Here, I'd like to turn to the Imperial Gothic as a term, which Johan Höglund has defined as an engine of horror (328). He takes his cue from Patrick Brantlinger who popularized this term to talk about British fears during the 19th century about the crumbling empire. I was wondering if you could talk about whether you see a correlation between this reality in nineteenth-century Great Britain and the current imperial situation in the US, or the situation of the US within the world as a global power. I am thinking especially of the mainstream film industry, which is quite prone to imperialist narratives, so, what are the fixations and obsessions of the US Imperial Gothic according to you?

KC: Yes, I don't want to oversimplify in conflating these things but I think you're right that the Gothic brings together certain parallels. This idea that there's a certain responsibility and that the US sees itself as the world's policeman as Britain did in the 19th century. Kipling famously called it "the white man's burden" to civilize the world in that often criticized quotation from a poem of the same name. But this has some other parallels, for instance, the film version of *American Sniper* (2015), the autobiography of Chris Kyle, the most prolific US sniper in military history through his service in Iraq. It begins with this powerful sounding and very interesting quotation to dissect where he says that "there are people in the world who are sheep, there are people in the world who are wolves, and there are people in the world who are sheepdogs." This wasn't actually from Chris Kyle to begin with, it was from a US military strategist. Essentially, the idea is that some of us are just docile citizens going about our business, some of us are wolves (terrorists, criminals, etc.) and some of us are brave enough to take on this role of protector. This "sheepdog" needs to have the capacity for violence but to also buy into the values of civilization, which often suppress violence when appropriate. I think this analogy works very well to start the film with. There's so much going on to unpack in there as to how you define what constitutes this view of civilization. For one thing, it's quite a bleak view of civilization that we're all sheep and we've kind of domesticated ourselves. Another thing is that this shows how we're, at least on some level, anxious about the freedom of other cultures and, historically within the US, for example, with Native American peoples. But, both of those set up this very masculine and very presumptuous view that you need to be stoical, that you need to go out into the world and civilize it.

Coming back to the Gothic in Imperial era texts, you see bad things coming back. You see these people being tainted. This is particularly obvious in *Heart of Darkness* (1899), where Marlow comes back with the knowledge that Kurtz has “gone native,” that he’s cut off heads and put them on sticks. He’s brutalized the native people and, yet, he somehow absorbed their most brutal aspects. Marlow protects Kurtz’s wife from this, and then, he has this vision that the Thames has somehow become the heart of darkness. You see similar things in all types of authors from the time, like Richard Marsh with *The Beetle* (1897) and *The Joss* (1901), but we also see it in contemporary American narratives dealing with trauma, particularly, leading out of the Gulf conflicts. To come back to *American Sniper*, we learn in the film that Chris Kyle was killed by a traumatized veteran that he was trying to help. This whole story of the trauma of war returning and affecting the whole nation is what’s so compelling and so gothic about those stories as well. We see this everywhere. There’s a horror movie from the mid-80s called *House* (1986) about a Vietnam veteran who is haunted by his friend, whom the main character wasn’t able to kill for mercy’s sake when he was wounded and suffering. He didn’t have the kind of courage to do this dark act, and, therefore, he’s haunted. You see it as well in *House of Leaves* (2000) with the character of Will Navidson that’s playing on the real photographer Kevin Carter with the picture of the girl being stalked by the vulture but not helping. This idea that there’s something dark out there and that you might bring a piece of it back is a very compelling gothic element in that story.

SM: As an example of these problems, I wanted to bring up 9/11, which is probably one of the most obvious examples that one can think of in terms of national and Imperial Gothic. 9/11 has been characterized as a gothic event many times, and, in a way, this has supported the Bush administration’s racist narratives of the “War on Terror” and everything that entailed. So, going back to the idea of “reactionary versus progressive” or “transgressive,” and given how prone the Gothic can be to fuel reactionary discourses due to its power of Othering, do you think that pop culture gothic can be used to offer cultural resistance to US imperialism?

KC: Yes, absolutely. We’re coming back to that idea of guilt in Fiedler. The other narrative about 9/11 is that this is coming from US intervention in the Middle East, going back a long way. The act is absolutely morally wrong but there’s a long violent history behind it. Considering these narratives of trauma, I’m drawn to *First Blood* (1972) and the *Rambo* films, the third of which involves Rambo helping the Taliban to fight against the Soviet Union. There’s this sense that the chickens are coming home to roost. Not that we want to justify any of this, but if America is worried that there are religious fundamentalists out to kill Americans then it’s because of a situation created by American foreign policy, and we might make the same comparisons with the British empire with contemporary British fears about immigration and racial contamination. You might say, then, that if you don’t want to have a multicultural multi-racial society starting a global empire is perhaps the wrong way to go about that project. We can’t be too complacent in thinking of the Gothic as just being fearful of Othered things, or about

having a dark and gloomy worldview. There's something valuable about cynicism and the Gothic tells us that these narratives of patriotism, these very simplified jingoistic stories that we're fed, they're nonsense, and that if you scratch beneath that surface there's always something else going on. So, there's definitely capacity for resistance in that kind of gothic storytelling.

SM: Yes, I agree. I think it has the potential to be both. Even though the Gothic can, as you say, give hints about the absurdity of certain narratives, it can also be voyeuristic in that we are seeing the deconstruction of certain things, but that does not bring about any real change.

Open Q&A session

Paul Mitchell: I was thinking very much in terms of the movie *Don't Breathe* (2016) by Uruguayan filmmaker Fede Álvarez. It's a home invasion movie, in which three young adult characters invade a man's house and realize that he's blind. It turns out that the house owner is a military veteran, so the movie is about what happens to the invaders when they're in this house. Considering the things you were saying about trauma and about linking that to issues of imperialism, American foreign policy and the role that veterans play within that the promulgation of that narrative, I wanted to ask how you respond to that movie within this context of the domestic space—fundamentally, it's about a home invasion, but it's got this greater sort of political militaristic narrative about veterans and about the promulgation of American foreign policy.

KC: I thought that movie was really interesting. It's got that very satisfying narrative that the presumed bad guys have messed with the wrong guy. It's bringing me back to those ideas of this necessity to be a sheepdog as mentioned in terms of *American Sniper*. There was more to this though, because he was actually quite sadistic. He's got a girl that he's kidnapped and that he's got tied up, so it plays with your assumption about who is the villain and who is the victim. It speaks well to that question about whether the Gothic is progressive or if it is actually reactionary. It seems to be quite an interesting movie in the sense that it's really complex and in terms of what it suggests about America and some of its attitudes. I think that's absolutely fascinating regarding that sense that something threatening is elsewhere, that the violence and the darkness happen over there and that people are expected to (and often quite young people—we can get into quite a lot about the funneling of kids into the US military) commit acts of extreme violence for the right purposes. If we think of Guantanamo Bay, it is considered entirely appropriate if it's in favor of a particular political military end, but it's completely inappropriate in the domestic context. So, I love that idea that those very qualities that make this veteran a hero also make him a villain. I think this really brings together some of the stuff we've been talking about.

[NN]: We have talked about the political leniency of the Gothic and how it can be progressive and transgressive, but also conservative. Do you think the genre has a responsibility to be either? Or can we take it as a form of art, in and of itself, without a second objective? Can we still enjoy Lovecraft regardless of the fact that he was a racist?

KC: That's a very important question for our times. I've already mentioned Victor LaValle. In his introduction to *The New Annotated H.P. Lovecraft* (2019), he wrote about reading Lovecraft and enjoying his fiction. Then, realizing that he was horrifically racist, as an African American, he decided that he couldn't enjoy this anymore. Eventually, he came round to a perspective that is along the lines of being able to criticize someone and still appreciate aspects of their work. Now, in some ways that's not very contemporary. This is a huge issue and partly a generational thing but we have started to demand certain standards of creators and even stories themselves. I don't want to endorse any evil narratives though, and there's no doubt that I do enjoy gothic narratives that either satirize bad things or that put forward viewpoints I agree with, so there is a picking and choosing of where your own standards lie. I just don't think it can ever be a completely morally responsible genre. Fred Botting, in one of the most foundational statements in this field, claims that the Gothic is a writing of excess and it always has to cross boundaries, including those of taste. I think that's why it's important for us to take a critical stance.

N: To build on that, do you think something is more artistic or intrinsically more valuable when it has a political or social message? For example, *Funny Games* (1997) versus *A Clockwork Orange* (1971). The first one presents violence without a context, while the second explores whether it is better, morally speaking, to have a choice to do good or to not have that choice. However, it doesn't give you an answer, that's on the viewer or on the reader to ponder.

KC: Both films are held up as works of art and they're generally quite respected on that basis. I do like Oscar Wilde's idea that all good art is perfectly useless and there's an element of that in ambiguity. When I teach the Gothic, my students get a bit annoyed sometimes about the ambiguity of Hawthorne and authors like that. They often ask: "what did actually happened?" "What are we supposed to think about this?" Well, that's part of the medium and I think that's great. The aestheticization of violence and of immorality is in itself interesting.

Paul Mitchell: You talked about *The Ballad of Black Tom*, and how it explores this idea of non-white spaces being dangerous, and that led me to think of the filmmaker Jordan Peele, specifically the movie *Get Out* (2017), and the way it does a very similar thing in its opening to what you've mentioned. I wanted to ask if you've got other examples of texts by African Americans, women or other minorities who are using the Gothic as a space to present an alternative and/or subversive vision of America.

KC: That's quite a broad-ranging question. In LaValle's work, there's these things that the protagonist does when has to adopt mannerisms of what's expected of him to avoid racism,

which takes me back to representation of being African American in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952) and other similar classic examples. But there, interestingly, the narrator says: "I'm not a spook from Edgar Allan Poe or anything like that." I also like the way that Toni Morrison has used the Gothic. It is particularly compelling in *Beloved* (1987) because it's essentially a haunted house novel about the traumas of the past. *Lovecraft Country* is another one, Matt Ruff is a white author, and this is interesting if we think of the racial politics that we've been talking about, but there's still plenty of things there to unpack. I definitely think there's a lot going on in this area at the moment. The comparison between *Get Out* and *The Ballad of Black Tom* definitely works, and that also evokes the complacency of liberal people. It fits with a lot of James Baldwin's writing about hypocrisy and about using African Americans for your own ends.

Mónica Fernández Jiménez: You've mentioned Hawthorne in one of your previous answers and I wanted to ask if you could elaborate a little bit more on your ideas about Hawthorne as a figure of the American gothic. These foundational figures are very interesting and there are many themes and elements that can be explored but, how do you interpret the appearances of houses in his fiction, where there's a strong connection with Europe and the Calvinist tradition?

KC: That idea in the preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) that the mischiefs of the past are revisited on the present portrays the house as locus for guilt. The thing that gets me about Hawthorne with those texts set in the early Puritan period, such as *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and short stories like "Young Goodman Brown" (1835) and "The Minister's Black Veil" (1836), is that it appears as if these stories are contemporary with their events when, in reality, Hawthorne is looking back to a period of about 150 years before he's writing. Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" and Herman Melville's "Bartleby" (1853) are written very close together but one of them seems even more modern than it is, and the other one seems like it's set in the medieval past and yet, they're contemporary.

We have a trend now for Neo-Victorian fiction that takes knowing look back. The most recent one that I've read and that I've found interesting is *The Essex Serpent* by Sarah Perry (2016). It dips into the minds of the characters and suggests that they couldn't know what we know—that kind of thing is what John Fowles does in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969). My point is that I think Hawthorne is completely fascinating in terms of being one of the foundational authors of writing a history about that early period with the benefit of hindsight, with the knowledge and the weight of guilt that implies. There's that biographical detail that his great-great-grandfather had been a judge in the Salem Witch Trials and that he was kind of embarrassed by the religious fanaticism, superstition, hysteria and scapegoating. That mood has stuck with American gothic, that sense of the guilt about the past and how the past still lives on in the present (for instance, with slavery, as we've been talking about racial issues). There's that famous Faulkner quote that the past is not dead, it's not even past and, for me, that's what Hawthorne does.

Alejandro Batista: You talked about regionalism in the Gothic and about looking back. It seems that it has a lot to offer to the Gothic in terms of exploring the past but, what about the future and future gothic authors? We are in a globalized world right now, and regionalism is somehow diffused and blurry. So, how do you see the future of the Gothic in this regard?

KC: That brings me back to the previous question about the slightly revised takes on the Gothic we're seeing from certain authors. I would recommend a novel by British author Helen Oyeyemi, *White is for Witching* (2009), which is about race and the Gothic. It deals with the expansion of perspectives across areas that we talked about earlier focused on race, class, gender and sexuality. The range of authors working in this field and using the traditional storylines of the Gothic for their own ends is probably the most transformative thing that that we're seeing. Traditionally, to go back once more to that early Gothic, it's partly about people who see themselves as the mainstream dominant culture worrying about this weird crazy person over here, which is about that Othering that's at the heart of the Gothic. But we're starting to see some of those narratives turned around a little bit, and again, globalized. I talked about Mexico as a US's Other, if we look at things like the recent Mexican gothic and the ways in which people are using these narratives, there's a reclaiming of the ghosts, spirits and monsters of these stories that have such different meanings in their native context. They've been completely misrepresented. This is potentially fun but there's also a lot more potential to explore these myths and stories that the Gothic draws on in a more authentic way. That seems to me to be the near future, a wider range of perspectives and viewpoints.

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