

# Gothic Novel & Horror Fiction

Dr. Katherine D. Harris

## Group Presentation

Each of the novels in this course is rich with historical, social, political and cultural references as well as being references themselves for later literature and film. For this option, students will work together in groups to present information on a chosen novel, its structure, its creation, its author, its characters, its later references in art – any information that the group finds interesting about its novel. It's the group's job to decide what is most important to show/tell the class, therefore be discerning about the information and dynamic about the presentation. Since a group will introduce each novel on the first day that it's scheduled, the presentation needs to inspire students to read, discuss and generally find out more about that novel. Choose from the novels below:

John Polidori, <i>The Vampyre</i>	Present 2/18
Bram Stoker, <i>Dracula</i>	Present 2/23
Vernon Lee, <i>Hauntings</i>	Present 3/16
Samuel Beckett, <i>Ill Seen Ill Said</i>	Present 3/18
Stephen King, <i>The Shining</i>	Present 4/8
R.L. Stevenson, <i>Dr. Jekyll &amp; Mr. Hyde</i>	Present 4/22
B.E. Ellis, <i>American Psycho</i>	Present 5/4

### The Presentation (20 min.)

During this 20 minute presentation, each student must participate in the actual presentation. The material should be presented cohesively; in other words, the presentation should clearly show that the group members have shared research, reviewed one another's work and integrated each other's presentations as seamlessly as possible. In the past students have used maps, film clips, songs, historical games, PowerPoint demonstrations and even websites to demonstrate and enhance their presentations and their grades. *You may use any of the audio visual equipment in this room – have some fun with it!*

For the presentation's contents, first and foremost, each group needs to discuss how its novel fits into the Gothic tradition by using excerpts from the novel. Research on the production and reception history needs to be included also. For instance: How was it written? In what form was it originally published? Can you show us an example? What did critics say about it? Who read it? (These questions are provided to help you with your research; not all need to be answered.) This portion should give the class a sense of the novel when it was originally published. You may also provide historical information: What political, social or cultural events are referred to or inspired the novel? Did the novel influence any parodies? Did it inspire any artwork or films? Is the author's background important to know? Don't just recite summaries or information from the novel's introductory pages; tell us what you found out about this novel. Excite us with your presentation.

This presentation requires each group member to perform research either in the library or on the Web. Please be skeptical of any Web resources that are not included in our Online Resources. I have many background materials on these authors and novels; come see me about research and resources.

### Timeline

In this course, we are not progressing chronologically through the readings. Instead, our readings are grouped by theme. Keeping up with the historical information can become unwieldy. To combat that entropy, we will construct and maintain an online timeline for each publication. Each group is responsible for adding at least 5 entries to the timeline prior to the presentation. During your presentation, use your timeline entries to demonstrate the cultural, social, political moments surrounding your novel. Also make use of the Gothic Timeline handout that is given in class today to help with important dates to add. We will have a tutorial on inputting your data into the Google Docs spreadsheet that is the basis of our timeline. (You should have already received an invitation to this spreadsheet.)

**Reflective Writing (300-500 words)**

Each group member is individually responsible for turning in a 300-500 word reflection about your role in the presentation. Since this is such a brief piece of writing, you'll have to be a good editor. You may use "I" but don't let it overwhelm your writing. This reflective writing is due on the day the group is scheduled to present. Consider this a formal piece of writing and conform to MLA style. See below for reminders about MLA style & about formatting your reflective writing.

**TURNING IN THE REFLECTIVE WRITING**

Some of the below format requirements are to be used only if you use these certain elements in your writing:

- 300-500 words, typed and double-spaced in 12pt font with one inch margins – REQUIRED
- Name, date, course and section number typed at the top left corner of the first page – REQUIRED
- Proofread everything before you turn it in; there should be no spelling or typographical errors – REQUIRED
- Works Cited page in MLA format
- In-text citations in MLA style (parenthetical citation)
- Name and page number typed in upper right corner of every page following the first page
- Staple the pages together (DO NOT FOLD OR PAPERCLIP YOUR PAGES)

**Grading**

Each Group Presentation will be based on its effectiveness (preparation, comprehension, depth), clarity, group participation and timeline entries. Failure to follow the above formatting requirements for the reflective writing will result in a lower grade. Late reflective writings will receive the penalization indicated on our Greensheet.