Thinking/Feeling: Emotion, Spectatorship, and the Pedagogy of Horror

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When teaching horror films, where the primary texts are created to frighten and disturb their audiences, instructors often find it challenging to find pedagogical strategies that are at once effective and responsible. For students not accustomed to horror, the shocking nature of the texts can sometimes be difficult to handle, while even the horror fans in one's classroom, once provoked by new critical approaches and theories, may find themselves newly unsettled even by well-known texts. Since many students have been trained to regard emotional engagement and rational thought as mutually exclusive, particularly in the context of formal education, they often perceive the emotional impact of horror as an impediment to critical analysis. In this essay I will offer practical strategies for helping students to identify, codify, and contemplate their emotional relationships to horror films, and to use those insights in aid of critical, historical, and thematic analysis, both in their written work and in classroom discussion. I will detail assignments and class activities developed while teaching junior-level film and media studies classes on "Horror and the Fantastic" in the Department of English at Texas Tech University, and explain how these exercises helped students to contemplate their own experiences of spectatorship, and those of fellow audience members, allowing them to intellectualize a given text without disregarding the importance of feeling.

While studies of popular culture are a well-established component of academic discourse, it remains that courses on forms and genres with a sensational or low-brow reputation tend not to be taken seriously, even, and sometimes especially, by the students who enroll in such courses hoping for an "easy A." While a class on, say, vampires, might place rigorous demands on students, drawing upon such discourses as the study of religion, the history of medicine (from epidemiology to psychiatry), economic and political theory, post-colonial criticism, gender and queer theory, representations of race, and so forth, the objections that these texts are "just for entertainment" and therefore "ruined" through sustained analysis, or that they simply do not warrant intellectual attention, tend to persist. While every instructor in the humanities has encountered similar challenges ("What do The Beatles have to do with me?"), the resistance is particularly strong when dealing with a genre like horror, one that trades in the baser emotions of fear, disgust, shock, and arousal, and which many perceive (sometimes justifiably) as exploitative, sadistic, or motivated by prurient interest. In my teaching, I have addressed this resistance by making these very emotional states a central focus, pointing out how they are not only central to human experience, but also illuminating how one's emotional engagement with a film, both as an individual and as a member of an audience, is crucial to understanding its rhetorical, social, political, and aesthetic properties.

At our first meeting of the semester, I ask students to brainstorm on the definition of "horror" – what words, concepts, and expectations come to mind? As the list of associations grows, including character types, varieties of monsters, tropes of scary music and so forth, the students arrive at the realization that horror, more than many other genres, is built around emotional states, specifically a combination of fear, tension, anxiety, and disgust, as well as their

physiological correlatives of muscle tension, covering one's eyes or ears, screams, nausea, and in some cases, laughter. In the first assigned reading, Noël Carroll's "The Nature of Horror", he explains that the horror genre, much like suspense or mystery, is named after a feeling, and that "the genres that are named by the very affect they are designed to provoke suggest a very tantalizing strategy through which to pursue their analysis" (Carroll 52). Indeed, since horror is defined in terms of emotional response, it is vital that students develop a nuanced understanding of what it means to have an emotion, the distinctions among emotions aroused by a text vs. real-life stimuli, and the relationship of emotion to film style and film culture, including practices of spectatorship. In order to cultivate this kind of sensitivity, I have designed an assignment that incorporates the traditional critical strategy of narrative segmentation, with an additional codification and analysis of viewer emotional states. For their first written assignment, students were asked to perform a segmentation of a film, in this case, *Night of the Living Dead* (George Romero, 1968), and to document and characterize their emotional reactions to each scene and sequence, including both physical and psychological responses (Appendix A).

While this exercise would be productive with any film, I chose *Night of the Living Dead* for several practical reasons. Since the film is in the public domain, it is very easy for students to access it online and in other media, thus avoiding the contingencies of there being too few library or rental copies, and the instability of commercial streaming systems where films appear and disappear without warning. Further, later in the semester, students were assigned Kevin Heffernan's article "Inner-City Exhibition and the Genre Film: Distributing *Night of the Living Dead* (1968)." Since much of this essay addresses contexts of exhibition and the film's reception

by urban audiences, particularly African-American viewers, it is useful for students to have already thought about it in some detail, and to have contemplated their own responses to the film.

The assignment is organized in three stages. First, students create a narrative segmentation of the film, identifying how it is organized as a series of sequences and scenes, in some ways analogous to the chapters of a book (for an example, please see Appendix B). This kind of segmentation exercise is a standard practice in film analysis, used to map out the spatial, temporal, narrative, and formal organization of the film before proceeding to further critical analysis. Students are asked to describe the segmentation on a chart, but in addition to listing narrative events, they also note the emotional states of the characters in each scene. This part of the segmentation anticipates a later discussion of how character emotions might cue audience response.

In the second stage, students add a series of columns to the segmentation, but these are dedicated to their own emotional responses. I encourage students to make note of these as they watch the film for the first time, and then go back to define them more precisely. Students use the taxonomy of viewer emotions described in Carl Plantinga's *Moving Viewers: American Film and the Spectator's Experience*, where he provides a matrix of emotions specific to the circumstances of film spectatorship, distinguishing among responses to narrative events, character predicaments, the film as an artifact, and even to one's own moments of self-reflection (69). I ask students to focus on six of Plantinga's categories: global, direct, local, sympathetic/antipathetic, artifact and meta-emotions. Global emotions are those that span all or much of a film's duration, such as anticipation or suspense (69). Direct emotions concern narrative events and the unfolding of the story, such as curiosity about what will happen, or

confusion after an unexpected turn of events. Local emotions are quite brief, such as being startled at a "jump scare" or surprised at a loud noise. Sympathetic (or antipathetic) emotions take as their object the condition of characters, such as worrying about a character in danger, or feeling disdain for a villain (72). Meta-emotions are responses either to one's own emotions, or to those of fellow audience members, such as feeling guilty for having misjudged a character, or proud that you anticipated a plot twist, or shocked when someone laughs at a moment you deem inappropriate (73). Finally, artifact emotions are responses to "the film as a constructed artifact" – these emotions are not preoccupied with elements of the fiction, but rather, the film as a product of creative activity (69). For example, one might feel admiration for the cinematographer's innovative camera movement, or anger toward the screenwriter for resorting to a cliché. Students are reminded that as they record their emotional responses to each scene, many of which occur simultaneously, these might include psychological states and physical reactions, as well as more abstract thought processes.

In the third stage of the assignment, students are asked to develop an argument about the film's emotional structure – when and how it elicits emotional states, how these relate to the film's narrative and formal properties, and how these factors might inform one's reading of the film. While developing their arguments, I encourage students to ask themselves questions like: How does your emotional experience influence interpretation? Were you surprised at any of your reactions? What is the relationship between the characters' emotions and the viewer's? This last question draws upon their notes from the initial segmentation, where they observed characters' emotional states. The relationship between character and viewer emotion is particularly significant in the horror genre, for as Carroll explains, our attitude to elements of the text is

usually cued by characters' responses, and these responses are essential in determining the text's status as horror. For example, Carroll compares character responses to a werewolf in *The Howling* (Joe Dante, 1981), to *Star Wars* (George Lucas, 1977) characters' reactions to Chewbacca. While Chewbacca shares many physical properties with a werewolf, people in *The Howling* recoil in terror, while in *Star Wars*, Chewbacca is just "one of the guys" (Carroll 52). I ask students to consider if and how characters in *Night of the Living Dead* provide viewers with emotional models for their own attitudes toward both the monstrosity of the living dead, and the actions and attitudes of the (still-breathing) characters.

Not only does this assignment allow students to better appreciate films' narrative and formal structures, seeing exactly how filmmakers solicit emotional states to build suspense, encourage character identification, or produce reactions of shock or disgust, but also, by using the framework of the assignment, students are better able to identify their feelings about the rest of the course material and make use of those feelings in a critical capacity. For example, at a given moment a viewer might experience multiple conflicting emotions: a sympathetic emotion of fear (feeling afraid for a character), a local emotion of disgust (at a gory image), and also an artifact emotion of admiration (for the creativity of the makeup artist). Such a combination of feelings is at once powerful and confusing, but using Plantinga's categories allows students to make sense of their reactions, and apply this understanding to other themes and issues in the course.

Once students are equipped with an effective vocabulary to describe emotional states, they are able to pursue increasingly complex discussions about the implications of their own spectatorship. Students were able to document their emotional and intellectual responses through

another teaching strategy, where I asked students to use their mobile devices to provide live commentary on Twitter during class screenings. Early in the semester I advise students about our use of Twitter – recommending, for example, that they set up an academic account separate from their personal one – and before each screening I create a unique hashtag to organize their comments.[1] As students share their responses to the film, I encourage them to keep Plantinga's taxonomy in mind, noting, for example, when they thought the lighting was intriguing (artifact emotion) or were suspicious of a character (antipathetic), and so forth. In the economical verbal system of Twitter, the categories help students to clarify their responses on the fly. For example, a comment like "creepy!" could be specified as a long-lasting global emotion, a sudden local emotion, a meta-emotion about a classmate's response, or an artifact emotion praising an actor's performance. While there is a danger that using Twitter during screenings might introduce unnecessary distractions, it does allow students to be aware of one another's reactions, and, more important, the reasons for them. For example, in addition to the verbal and physical cues one would normally get from fellow audience members, such as gasping, starting, shifting in one's seat, or laughing, students are able to express the underlying motivations for those reactions. During the screening of *The Blair Witch Project* (Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez, 1999) I noticed that many students were shifting in their seats, but the Twitter feed clarified the multiple causes of that behavior, including boredom, direct and/or sympathetic emotions of suspense and fear, and the sometimes dizzying hand-held camera movement. This distinction became invaluable in the ensuing class discussion of the film's strategic uses of boredom, frustration, and physical disorientation.

Of all the categories in Plantinga's system, students find artifact and meta-emotions the most difficult to grasp, so it is especially important to review these concepts in some detail. In preparation for the assignment, students performed an in-class segmentation and emotional analysis of Lois Weber's *Suspense*, a home invasion drama from 1913 (Appendix B). Only ten minutes in length, the film is easy to segment in a short period of time, but more important, *Suspense* not only provides historical perspective on suspense cinema, but its self-awareness about the conventions of what had, even at this early date, become an established genre, make it especially effective for reinforcing the concepts of artifact and meta-emotions. First, *Suspense* uses creative formal strategies, including an elaborate tripartite split-screen composition for representing telephone calls, unusual camera angles such as a bird's-eye-view shot of the prowler approaching the house, and interesting camera movement, such as the high-speed car chase where one car appears in the other's rear-view mirror. Instances like these inspire artifact emotions of respect for the filmmakers' creativity – emotions that students can readily recognize. At the same time, film self-consciously employs predictable plot devices, such as the prowler finding a key under the doormat, in a way that inspires an artifact emotion of detached amusement that is subsequently reinforced by the film's alternation between horror and humor.

The moments of humor in *Suspense* also provide a good opportunity to discuss meta-emotion. For example, students tend to laugh when the prowler stops to eat a sandwich in the kitchen, or during the slapstick interlude where a man is run over during the car chase. These incidents demonstrate how laughter can function as a means of releasing tension, but also as an opportunity for camaraderie with fellow audience members. While an individual might find a scene funny, there is often a communal element to horror humor, particularly when audiences

laugh simultaneously in the aftermath of a scare. Such responses have meta-emotional components, in that one laughs at oneself for "allowing" the film to generate local emotions of shock and startle, while that laughter is often sustained through contagion, to the point where it is sometimes difficult to resist joining in with an enthusiastic audience. Our discussion of *Suspense*, and subsequent discussions of humor and other meta-emotional states, allow students to become more sensitive to the ways horror films encourage viewers to think about their feelings, while also increasing their awareness of how social context informs spectatorship. Once students become conscious of this social component of meta-emotion, they are better able to appreciate how the public exhibition of a film might have social and political implications beyond "mere entertainment." For example, when we began to discuss feminist readings of slasher films, such as Carol Clover's *Men, Women and Chainsaws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film*, students were primed to think about the implications of an audience cheering for a female hero, even as they take pleasure in another woman's bloody demise.[2]

The concepts of artifact and meta-emotion are particularly useful in countering students' concerns that focused analysis, or learning about the technical, industrial, or historical production of a text, will "ruin" the experience of film viewing. While it is true that in some cases, academic study makes it more difficult to take unadulterated pleasure in a text that contains previously undetected problematic messages, or has a troubling historical provenance, instructors work to persuade students that education illuminates rather than destroys the object of study. One of the apparent conflicts for students comes from their having internalized the conventions of classical cinema, which perpetuate a powerful myth that formal elements must become invisible to the viewer and subordinated to goals of narrative and character development. Cultural myths of

spectatorship where one is "absorbed" into the film, or "forgets" that it's only a movie, are a powerful component of how many students typify the experience of cinema, and one that is rarely examined until they take a film studies course. However, once students are able to detect the importance of artifact and meta-emotions, they can better understand how awareness of the film as the product of a creative process, and of their own activities as spectators, need not ruin the experience, but rather, are essential to it. For example, in their Twitter feed on *Candyman* (Bernard Rose, 1992), several students noted an artifact emotion of admiration for Tony Todd's performance as Candyman, and specifically the ways his acting style resonated with other horror film stars, particularly Bela Lugosi in *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931) and Boris Karloff in *Frankenstein* (James Whale, 1931). During our classroom discussion, I was able to use this observation to demonstrate how genre spectatorship depends on consciousness of extra-textual references, and in this case, how viewing *Candyman* in the context of a larger tradition of actor performance of monstrosity and otherness might help us to better appreciate the film's commentary on race and gender.

Students also began to discern how different types of emotion map onto one another, such that the apparent distancing of artifact and meta-emotions might accentuate rather than diminish one's engagement with the fictional scenario. For example, one student observed that while he was viewing *Night of the Living Dead*, he was absent-mindedly chewing a piece of gum. To his surprise, he became acutely self-conscious about his chewing while watching scenes of cannibalism, and this sudden awareness of his own body, rather than pulling him away from the fiction, made his local and direct emotions of disgust all the more powerful. Meanwhile, when we discussed *The Blair Witch Project*, students were able to identify how the film's

lengthy sequences of objectively boring action (or inaction), mundane, redundant, and tiresome dialogue, and consistently unsteady and confusing camera movement encourage a level of antipathy for the main characters, and that this antipathy was mapped onto negative artifact emotions toward the directors Myrick and Sanchez, given that the formal strategies they employ consistently frustrate, annoy, and even nauseate the viewer. These practices irritate the audience in a manner that not only builds tension for the scary sequences, but also draws their attention to their own role as spectators, and thus generates a number of meta-emotions about their own complicity in the violations and violence they watch in the film. In this case, students discover that their steady stream of artifact and meta-emotions, rather than detracting from their engagement with the fiction, are quite integral to it, and are inextricable both from the film's potential critique of documentary practice, and its capacity to produce global, direct, and local emotions of shock and fear.

While these exercises focus on students' individual and collective emotional states in the here and now, they also open up opportunities to talk about spectatorship in its historical context. First, in preparation for the assignment, I was careful to contextualize *Night of the Living Dead* in the political climate of late 1960s America, particularly regarding Cold War anxieties, anti-war activism, the women's movement, and the Civil Rights movement. For example, students are generally unaware that in 1968, it was truly exceptional to have an African-American actor portray the hero in a film, especially one with an otherwise white cast. Black and white audiences alike were unaccustomed to identifying and sympathizing with black characters, and this dynamic was crucial in the reception of Duane Jones' performance as Ben, and to the film's political commentary. Of course, instructors typically provide historical context for any of the

texts they include in their syllabi, but in this case, my agenda was to give students clues as to how and why audiences might have reacted to the film, and how such reactions might have larger social and political implications.[3]

Of course, asking students to speculate about how a historical audience might have responded to a given film is potentially problematic, for in the absence of documentation, students might resort to stereotypes and received ideas about the past. However, with this point of caution in mind, I was able to ask students to compare their responses to films from different historical periods as a means of demonstrating how audience expectations change over time. For example, when it comes to gender relations, *Suspense* provides useful contrasts with *Night of the Living Dead*, particularly when we consider students' sympathetic and antipathetic feelings toward the main female characters. In the case of *Suspense*, the besieged woman portrayed by Lois Weber – a mother with an infant, no less – provokes consistently sympathetic emotions. Students were afraid for her safety, and felt a combination of worry and pity for her, given her obvious vulnerability, anxiety, fear, and concern for her child. While they found her fainting spell at the end of the film melodramatic, and even darkly humorous, they felt it was consistent with the 1913 context of the film. Meanwhile, in *Night of the Living Dead*, many students remarked on how their sympathetic feelings for Barbra (Judith O'Dea) shifted dramatically toward antipathy over the course of the film. In the opening sequence in the graveyard, students feel sorry for Barbra as her brother teases her, and this sympathy turns to a more serious concern as she witnesses her brother's death at the hands (and teeth) of the living dead. However, once she flees to a nearby house, where she meets Ben and the other characters, she begins to shut down emotionally, becoming catatonic and ineffectual. While her character is clearly suffering

from personal and existential trauma, students note that they start to find Barbra increasingly annoying, to the point where her final demise is not only expected, but a source of satisfaction. On a certain level, *Suspense* and *Night of the Living Dead* have similar spatial and conceptual structures, where an invading and malevolent force threatens a domestic space, a space that represents both family structures and the larger social order. In both cases, the main female character collapses from fear, but in Barbra's case, this behavior inspires irritation rather than sympathy. While I do point out that Weber's performance of helplessness in *Suspense* is self-consciously overwrought, students soon realize that by 1968, second-wave feminism had begun to create an expectation of self-reliance for female characters. Therefore, rather than sympathizing with Barbra as a damsel in distress, we expect her to embrace her agency, and find it frustrating when she fails to do so.

The critical framework of emotional analysis allows students to unpack their reasons for liking, disliking, or feeling conflicted about a given film, and also to better understand and respect the divergent opinions of their classmates. In many instances, I found that discerning emotional structures, and being able to categorize one's feelings, was particularly helpful to students who do not typically enjoy horror, or even horror enthusiasts as they struggle with the more disturbing elements of a given text. Since no emotion is more "correct" than another, students were able to validate and explicate their experiences, and then use those explications in critical discussions whose intellectual value beyond the context of the course became quickly apparent – once you realize that thinking and feeling are not so far apart, the traditional hierarchies of intellect and affect come into question. In an educational environment that often dichotomizes thinking and feeling, I have found that these exercises help students become

attuned to the rhetorical uses of emotion, the function of emotion in both individual and communal experience, the way feelings can manifest in public space, and the potential social and political implications of one's sympathies. The necessarily extreme feelings aroused by horror texts provide ample material for students to learn new ways of thinking about feeling, which in turn allows them to discover the value of horror.

Appendix A: Assignment Instructions

First Assignment – Segmentation and Emotional Analysis

ENG 3388: Horror and the Fantastic

Much in the way that a novel is usually divided into chapters, films are generally organized as a series of narrative segments. In order to analyze a film, it is important to document and understand this structural organization. A segmentation provides a scene-by-scene outline of the film, noting its major narrative events. A scene is a narrative unit, usually bounded by space, time and action, and we can say that a scene begins and ends when there is a significant change in one or all of these components.

For this assignment, you will perform a segmentation of George Romero's 1968 film *Night of the Living Dead*. (Note that this film has been re-made in various forms. You may not do your assignment on a remake. You must use the original 1968 film.)

Night of the Living Dead is in the public domain. Therefore, it is available for free (legally) online and it is easy to find inexpensive DVD copies. There are also links on the class website.

This assignment has three stages, and you should do them in order:

The first stage of this assignment is to distinguish the major narrative units of the film – a breakdown of the scenes. (See the model for *Suspense*). In your description of narrative events, you should mention the emotional states represented in the film, i.e. the emotions of the characters.

The second stage of the assignment is to document the various emotional responses felt by the viewer. I recommend that you watch the film all the way through and make note of your reactions, then go through it more slowly in order to clarify and distinguish the emotions. You must utilize Carl Plantinga's chart of "Types of Spectator Emotions" from page 69 to categorize these various emotional responses. You should devote particular attention to the following emotion types: Direct, Local, Sympathetic/Antipathetic, Meta-emotions, and Artifact. You may address Global emotions in your discussion, but given their generalized nature, it is not necessary to document them throughout. Your descriptions of emotions may include physical responses as well as more abstract concepts.

The third stage is your analysis of the film's narrative and emotional structure. When I say "analysis," this means that you develop an argument drawing upon both your subjective impressions of the film and the material that you have documented. In your analysis, you should comment on how the film structures the viewer's perceptions and emotional responses, and how this contributes to the film's overall meaning. How does the emotional experience influence interpretation? What is the relationship between the characters' emotions and the viewer's? Keep in mind both Carroll and Plantinga's arguments about emotion. Your analysis must make direct

reference to your segmentation, e.g. "If we compare scene III part b with scene VII part d, we can see how the repetition of a location but with radically different narrative actions provokes an artifact emotion in the viewer…" This analysis should be three (3) pages in length. Since it is brief, avoid lengthy introductions, plot summaries, or commentary not relevant to the assignment.

A word to the wise: This is a time-consuming assignment, so you must begin as soon as possible. If you start now, you will not only have time to complete it, but you will also have time to approach me for help and/or take your draft to the Writing Center.

Note the following:

- Refer to events in films in the present tense. For example: "the young couple visits a graveyard", or "the thunder and lighting create a scary mood".
- Film titles should be in *italics*, not in "quotation marks."
- A scene is NOT the same thing as a shot. A shot is a single uninterrupted series of frames, and it can be of any duration. A scene is a narrative unit. A scene can consist of a single shot, but that is unusual in mainstream cinema. Avoid the term "camera shot" – shot is sufficient.
- While a scene possesses unity of space, time, and action, within a single scene there can be a flashback to another space and time (say, inside the character's mind), or there can be a representation of a distant space, such as a television image. For our purposes, these moments are still considered part of the scene because it is consistent with its action (i.e.

the character's remembering is part of the action of the scene, or the act of watching television is part of the scene).

- Cross-cutting: It is common in cinema to cut back and forth between two spaces to represent simultaneous activities. We can consider these to be part of the same scene.
- In the film you're going to analyze, the bulk of the action occurs in and around the house where the people are trying to defend themselves against the living dead. Given that the location is fairly consistent, you may find it difficult to decide where scenes begin and end. However, note that there are distinct locations in the house such as the living room and basement. Also, at various points people do have conversations on different themes, and different characters enter and leave the scene. Therefore, the transition from one scene to the next might have more to do with a thematic shift, or a change in characters.
- *Night of the Living Dead* is an extremely influential film. Therefore, if you have seen a horror film made since 1968, you have probably seen references to it that will influence your reactions. Therefore, it is fair for you to speculate about audience reactions in the 1968 context, but you may also talk about your reaction as a 21st century viewer.

Appendix B: Segmentation and Emotional Analysis of *Suspense* (Lois Weber, 1913)

Narrative Segmentation	Emotional Responses
I. Maid's Departure a) Maid sets suitcase and hat on kitchen table, listens at door, peers through keyhole b) Wife and baby in living room c) Maid leaves note saying she's leaving, locks front door	*Direct:* curiosity, anticipation *Sympathetic:* concern for the wife/baby *Antipathetic:* judgment of maid as irresponsible, cowardly *Artifact:* amusement at keyhole shot, recognition of obvious plot device of key under doormat
II. Outdoor scene, tramp enters shot a) Maid leaves the scene, tramp re-traces her steps	*Direct*: anticipation, curiosity about tramp *Sympathetic*: concern for wife/baby
III. Telephone call – screen split	*Direct:* unnerved by tramp's behavior

three ways, husband annoyed he'll be home late, wife smiles, says she's ok. Tramp listens at window.	*Sympathetic:* concern for wife because of tramp's suspicious expression and husband's late return *Artifact:* interest in three-way division of screen
IV. Home alone a) Wife finds note. Looks worried. She declines to call husband, or retrieve key. She secures windows and doors. b) Tramp appears at window while wife picks up baby	*Direct:* worry, increasing suspense, directing attention to layout of house *Sympathetic*: worried for wife *Antipathetic:* antipathy toward tramp, who is now a peeping tom. Frustration with wife for not retrieving key from under doormat, and not calling husband.
V. Tramp prowling a) Tramp creeps around house, approaches doormat and looks up to window b) Wife sees him from bedroom	*Local*: startle from tramp's direct gaze *Sympathetic:* concern for wife's panic *Artifact*: impressed with creative camera angle directly above tramp, plus his looking directly at camera
VI. Second Telephone call – three-way split screen	*Direct:* urgency *Sympathetic:* worry for both wife and

a) Tramp finds key under mat and enters house b) Wife reports that tramp is entering kitchen c) Husband's expression changes from smiling to shock d) Tramp cuts telephone cord e) Husband runs out of his office	husband *Artifact*: confused by level of activity in all three parts of the screen
VII. Car Chase a) husband jumps in car idling outside building and drives off b) car's owner informs police, who give chase c) wife clutches telephone d) tramp walks idly through kitchen, eats a sandwich e) cars race around corners f) wife barricades self in bedroom g) humorous moment where man is run over but unhurt	*Direct*: excitement, suspense, laughter at tramp eating sandwich, worry *Artifact*: noting the combination of humor (tramp eating/man run over) with fear (tramp picks up knife). Admiration of clever rear-view mirror shot. *Meta-emotion*: pleasure in laughing with an audience
VIII. Chase intensifies	*Direct:* Increasing suspense

a) the cars get faster and closer b) tramp moves further into the house, starts to climb stairs, approaches camera with very menacing expression c) wife screams and clutches baby	*Sympathetic:* concern that husband will be stopped by pursuers. Meanwhile, understanding that the pursuers think they are in the right. Also, sympathy for wife's increasing fear, worry for baby's safety
IX. Entering Bedroom/Foot chase a) tramp's arm breaks through bedroom door, unlocks it, pushes barricade away b) close-up of mother screaming c) husband jumps from moving car and runs toward house	*Direct:* increasing suspense, anxiety *Sympathetic*: fear for wife, concern that husband won't make it in time *Artifact*: admiration for filmmakers' decision to have husband leap from the car rather than stopping it
X. Rescue a) tramp enters bedroom, wife screams b) police arrive at abandoned car and run toward house, firing guns c) tramp stops when he hears guns, runs down stairs d) husband bursts in and struggles	*Direct:* anxiety, excitement, relief *Sympathetic:* worry that police will shoot husband, fear for wife, admiration of husband for successful rescue *Antipathetic*: disdain for tramp for terrorizing the wife, and for his cowardice at sound of gunfire.

with tramp e) police apprehend tramp	*Artifact:* Appreciation of the use of gunfire – clever plot device.
XI. Bedroom finale a) Husband enters bedroom, where wife and baby are collapsed on bed b) husband picks up baby, and explains to pursuers that he stole the car to rescue his family. Embraces wife. c) Pursuer pats husband on back, leaves frame with police officer	*Direct:* relief, humor *Sympathetic:* concern for wife, relief with husband *Artifact*: Again, noting use of humor in husband/pursuer interaction. Wondering why the wife doesn't sit up.

Notes

[1] Thanks to Andrea Wood for sharing her strategies in using Twitter during screenings, and then employing students' comments as a foundation for further class discussion.

[2] There are multiple audio and video recordings of audience reactions to horror films available online that one can use to illustrate spectator behavior. These include both personal recordings made by filmgoers, and promotional materials, such as the many trailers for the *Paranormal Activity* films that use night-vision footage of screaming audiences. For example, "Paranormal Activity - Sherry Lansing Theatre Reactions" shows a variety of audience reactions: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_LfV7SGA-2o, while a 1979 audio recording of an audience watching John Carpenter's *Halloween* was synched with video from the appropriate sequence http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZ1M3P1isHA.

[3] I have used excerpts from the documentary *The American Nightmare* (Adam Simon, 2000), which examines the history of American horror cinema, to contextualize the reception of *Night of the Living Dead,* specifically director Jon Landis' account of his surprise at seeing a black hero in a film, film scholar Adam Lowenstein's explication of the correspondences between the film and lynching imagery, and George Romero's account of hearing about the assassination of Martin Luther King shortly after completing the film, and how this event would invariably inform audiences' reading of Ben's murder at the end of the film.

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