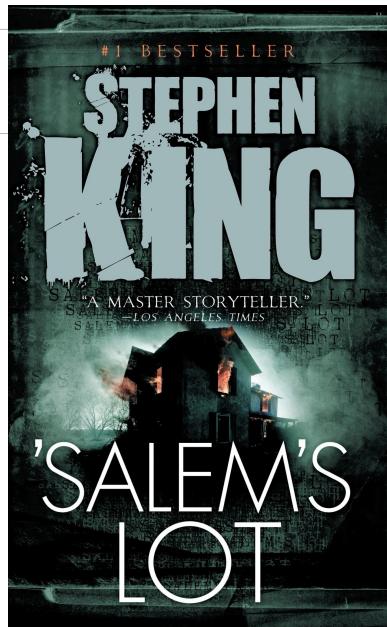


ANG1755: Vampires in Films and Literature

Winter 2020
Dr. Michael E. Sinatra

'Salem's Lot

- ❖ Structure
- ❖ Salem's Lot
- ❖ Vampires
- ❖ Metafictional aspect



Week 5

- ❖ Stephen King, 'Salem's Lot (1975)
- ❖ 'Habeus Corpus'

Structure

- Prologue (pp. 1-13)
- PART ONE: The Marsten House
- I. Ben (I) (pp. 17-23)
- II. Susan (I) (pp. 24-61)
- III. The Lot (I) (pp. 62-119)
- IV. Danny Glick and others (pp. 120-64)
- V. Ben (II) (pp. 165-91)
- VI. The Lot (II) (pp. 192-233)
- VII. Matt (pp. 234-54)
- PART TWO: The Emperor of Ice Cream
- VIII. Ben (III) (pp. 257-82)
- IX. Susan (II) (pp. 283-311)
- X. The Lot (III) (pp. 312-63)
- XI. Ben (IV) (pp. 364-410)
- XII. Mark (pp. 411-439)

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- ❖ Prologue (“Almost everyone thought the man and the boy were father and son. They crossed the country on a rambling southwest line in an old Citroën sedan”)
- ❖ Unnamed protagonists
- ❖ Parallel with Stoker’s novel (e.g. use of newspaper clippings, scrapbook, recollection, characters’ reaction to the existence of vampires)
- ❖ Reverse plot (“I might have gone to one of your great and teeming cities” [352])

King on 'salem's Lot

"how Stoker's aristocratic vampire might be combined with the fleshy leeches of the E.C. comics, creating a pop-cult hybrid that was part nobility and part bloodthirsty dope, like the zombies in George Romero's Night of the Living Dead. I also wanted to tell a tale that inverted Dracula. In Stoker's novel, the optimism of Victorian England shines through everything like the newly improved electric light." (xx)

'Salem's Lot

"in my novel 'Salem's Lot, the thing that really scared me was not vampires, but the town in the daytime, the town that was empty [...] knowing that there were things in closets, that there were people tucked under beds, under the concrete pilings of all those trailers" (King, Bare Bones 5).

"He looked up and saw the Marsten House, its shutters still closed, looking down on the town with rickety malevolence. It was harmless now, but after dark...?" (628).

"It was not over in 'Salem's Lot yet, it seemed" (5)

"The town kept its secrets, and the Marsten House brooded over it like a ruined king" (615).

"They found him in the bedroom at the end of the upstairs hall, dangling from a rafter" (52).

Vampires

King on the vampires found in E.C comics

"[They] were pale, paranoid nightmares with gigantic fangs and fleshy red lips. ... [They] were prone to tearing and ripping and shredding. These vampires did not just scare me; they fucking terrified me, chasing me through dreams with their lips peeled back to show their monstrous cannibal teeth." (xviii)

"I doubt very much that vampires -- if they exist at all -- rise at almanac sunset," Jimmy said. "It's never full dark" (393)

“Salem’s Lot slept darkly, and the vampires walked its streets and country roads like a trace memory of evil” (614).

“The town is not slow to wake -- chores won’t wait. Even while the edge of the sun lies below the horizon and darkness is on the land, activity has begun” (62).

"And in the awful heavy silence of the house, as [Matt] sat impotently on his bed with his face in his hands, he heard the high, sweet, evil laugh of a child---
---and then the sucking sounds." (254)

"When Delbert Markey stepped out of his deserted tavern just after eight o'clock, Carl Roreman and a grinning Homer McCaslin stepped out of the shadows and said they had come for a drink" (615).

"She is very lovely, mr. Mears -- very toothsome, if I may be permitted a small bon mot. I have no further need of her and so I have left for you to -- how is your idiom? -- to warm up for the main event. To whet your appetites, if you like. Let us see how well you like the appetizer to the main course you contemplate, shall we?" (495)

"There was a sudden booming noise, like a hollow gunshot, followed by a profound and soulless chuckle.
Susan screamed ... a sound that trailed away to a moan and then to silence" (436).

"In the center, on a raised dais and spotlit by Jimmy's flashlight, Susan Norton lay still. She was covered from shoulders to feet in a drift of simple white linen, and when they reached her, none of them had been able to speak. Wonder had swallowed words.

In life she had been a cheerfully pretty girl who had missed the turn to beauty somewhere (perhaps by inches), not through any lack ion her features but---just possibly---because her life had been so calm and unremarkable. But now she had achieved beauty. Dark beauty." (500)

"The power in the voice along was so great that he felt the fear ebbing from him, the feathers in his feet turning to lead" (436).

"Barlow's red eyes rolled in their sockets, filling with a hideous life and mocking triumph. They locked with Mark's eyes and Mark gaped down into them, his own eyes growing blank and far away" (606).

"Teeth. Barlow's teeth -- all that was left of him. Ben reached down and picked them up -- and they twisted in his hand like tiny white animals, trying to come together and bite" (617).

“Ben fumbled one of the stakes from his belt and dropped it. He cried out miserably, in utter despair. Outside, the sun had deserted Jerusalem’s Lot. Its last rays lingered on the roof of the Marsten House” (608).

“Can you stand doing... doing what you did to Susan a thousand times? Pulling them out of their closets and their stinking little bolt holes screaming and struggling, only to pound a stake into their chest cavities and smash their hearts? Can you keep that up until November without going nuts?” (500)

Metafictional Aspects

“You think he’s a real writer, Park?”
“Sure he is. he’s got three books right in this library.”
“True or made up?”
“Made up.” (35)

“[Ben about his interest in Marsten House]
Or maybe just tapping into the atmosphere of
the place to write a book scary enough to
make me a million dollars.” (177)

“Of course, being a literary man, it had been
the first thing that had come to mind when
Jimmy Cody had thumbnailed Danny Glick’s
case. [...] One was taught that such things
could not be; that things like Coleridge’s
‘Cristable’ [sic] or Bram Stoker’s evil fairy
tale were only the warp and woof of fantasy.”
... / ...

... / ...
Of course monsters existed; they were the
men with their fingers on the thermonuclear
triggers in six countries, the hijackers, the
mass murderers, the child molesters. But not
this.” (251-2) [cf. Matt as Van Helsing p. 479]

“[Matt] had ranged across the length and
breadth of the English language like a
solitary and oddly complacent Ancient
Mariner” (103) [cf 251-2]

"According to folklore, the marks disappear," Matt said suddenly. "When the victim dies, the marks disappear."

"I know that," Ben said. He remembered it both from Stoker's Dracula and from the Hammer films starring Christopher Lee. (265)

"[Mark] cut [Susan's] adult temporizing short impatiently: 'You came to kill the vampire, didn't you?'

'Wherever did you get that idea? Vampires and things like that?'

He said sombrely, 'A vampire tried to get me last night. It almost did, too.'

'That's absurd. A big boy like you should know better than to make up---'" (414-5)

"Stephen King is not the man to create a new twist on vampire mythology as Matheson did; King's genius is his ability to recondition what already exists, to give old lore a contemporary luster" (96).

Mary Pharr, "Vampiric Appetite in I Am Legend, 'Salem's Lot, and The Hunger" (1999)

Ultraviolet

'Habeas Corpus' (2000)





Realistic setting

Use of music

Shots of sunset

Title referring to technology used to check for bite marks
(twist on absence of traditional trace)

Modern technology

"they're a death squad"

"don't take everything he says as gospel"

❖ Vampires as the new minority ("women, black, disabled, gay, now us")

"Code V neutralized - send in the cleaners"

❖ Bite to make one "very susceptible to suggestions"

"Successful parasites don't kill their hosts."



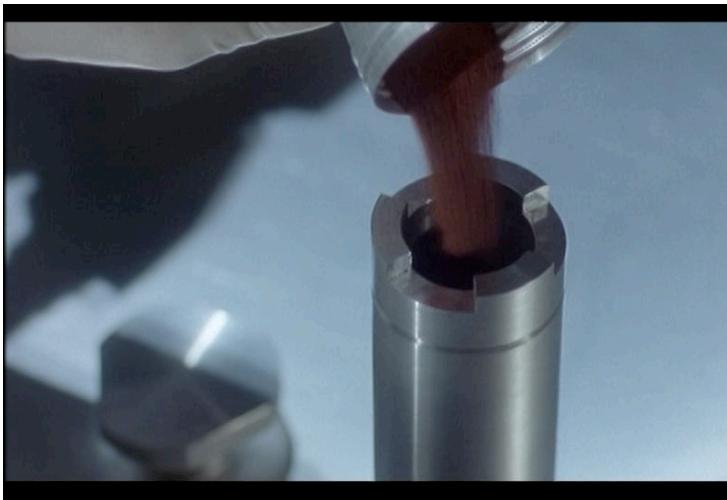
Title of the episode

"It's a prison, not a cemetery"

Crosses and holy water "Jury's out on that. It's a bit like homeopathy, it's a question of faith on both sides."

❖ "They don't drain their prey unless they want to recruit, and they're very careful about who they recruit. Like we are."

"They can regenerate, we just don't know how"



"They're organizing, for a reason." "What for?" ...
"Our free range days are over."

Joe Ahearne's television series *Ultraviolet*, which ran on the UK's Channel 4 in 1998, uses the figure of the vampire to explore how the discourse of monstrosity, once deployed against an ideological enemy, can lead to the steady erosion of the principles that are ostensibly being protected.

David McWilliam, "Perfect Enemies", *Gothic Studies* 15, 1 (2013) 44

When staring at the face of a vampire, the hunter is confronted by the reflection of their own determination to survive, yet this is ignored due to their refusal to consider the motivations of their enemy without the filter of dogmatic ideology. Both sides see the actions of the other as indicative of their monstrosity.

David McWilliam, "Perfect Enemies", *Gothic Studies* 15, 1 (2013) 44

The vampires in *Ultraviolet* are portrayed by the hunters as inhuman, parasitical, devious, vicious, unnatural, disturbing terrorists that attack humanity covertly. However, the organisation tracking down and slaying vampires is revealed early in the series to be a modern incarnation of the Roman Catholic Church's Inquisition, generating Gothic associations with zealous torture and merciless purges, suggesting that their covert operations are at least partly designed to hide their fanaticism.

David McWilliam, "Perfect Enemies", *Gothic Studies* 15, 1 (2013) 48