



American Zombie Gothic: The Rise and Fall (and Rise) of the Walking Dead in Popular Culture

Kyle William Bishop

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Zombie stories are peculiarly American, as the creature was born in the New World and functions as a reminder of the atrocities of colonialism and slavery. The voodoo-based zombie films of the 1930s and '40s reveal deep-seated racist attitudes and imperialist paranoia, but the contagious, cannibalistic zombie horde invasion narrative established by George A. Romero has even greater singularity. This book provides a cultural and critical analysis of the cinematic zombie tradition, starting with its origins in Haitian folklore and tracking the development of the subgenre into the twenty-first century. Closely examining such influential works as Victor Halperin's *White Zombie*, Jacques Tourneur's *I Walked with a Zombie*, Lucio Fulci's *Zombi 2*, Dan O'Bannon's *The Return of the Living Dead*, Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*, and, of course, Romero's entire "Dead" series, it establishes the place of zombies in the Gothic tradition.



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