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### *Immortal Monster The Mythological Evolution Of*

Immortal Monster (Hardcover) The Mythological Evolution of the Fantastic Beast in Modern Fiction and Film (Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction & Fantasy #78) By Joseph Andriano. Praeger, 9780313306679, 200pp. Publication Date: January 30, 1999

Monsters figure prominently in classic works of literature as well as in films and stories intended for a wide audience. Since Darwin's time, most of these imaginary beasts have taken the form of natural creatures, rather than supernatural ones. This volume explores both literary and cinematic texts that are especially explicit in their depiction of beasts in Darwinian terms, though these same monsters retain an archaic mythological aspect. The myth of Leviathan and Behemoth, for instance, is at the heart of *Jaws* as much as it is central to *Moby-Dick*; indeed, *Jaws* inherits the myth directly from *Moby-Dick*, as does King Kong. These and other monster tales keep the myth alive by retelling it in the context of biological and cultural evolution. There is a pattern of alternating bestialization and anthropomorphism in many monster tales, suggesting that these images are being displayed in repeated attempts to define who we are in relation to animals. As fables of identity, these tales dramatize our anxieties and fears concerning our own animal nature and help us come to terms with our own evolution.

Over centuries, discoveries of fossil bones spawned legends of monsters such as giants and dragons. As the field of earth sciences matured during the 19th century, early fossilists gained understanding of prehistoric creatures such as Tyrannosaurus, Triceratops and Stegosaurus. This historical study examines how these genuine beasts morphed in the public imagination into mythical, powerful engines of destruction and harbingers of cataclysm, taking their place in popular culture, film, and literature as symbols of "lost worlds" where time stands still.

The human mind needs monsters. In every culture and in every epoch in human history, from ancient Egypt to modern Hollywood, imaginary beings have haunted dreams and fantasies, provoking in young and old shivers of delight, thrills of terror, and endless fascination. All known folklores brim with visions of looming and ferocious monsters, often in the role as adversaries to great heroes. But while heroes have been closely studied by mythologists, monsters have been neglected, even though they are equally important as pan-human symbols and reveal similar insights into ways the mind works. In *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors*, anthropologist David D. Gilmore explores what

human traits monsters represent and why they are so ubiquitous in people's imaginations and share so many features across different cultures. Using colorful and absorbing evidence from virtually all times and places, *Monsters* is the first attempt by an anthropologist to delve into the mysterious, frightful abyss of mythical beasts and to interpret their role in the psyche and in society. After many hair-raising descriptions of monstrous beings in art, folktales, fantasy, literature, and community ritual, including such avatars as Dracula and Frankenstein, Hollywood ghouls, and extraterrestrials, Gilmore identifies many common denominators and proposes some novel interpretations. Monsters, according to Gilmore, are always enormous, man-eating, gratuitously violent, aggressive, sexually sadistic, and superhuman in power, combining our worst nightmares and our most urgent fantasies. We both abhor and worship our monsters: they are our gods as well as our demons. Gilmore argues that the immortal monster of the mind is a complex creation embodying virtually all of the inner conflicts that make us human. Far from being something alien, nonhuman, and outside us, our monsters are our deepest selves.

An important contribution to the growing interdisciplinary field of monster studies

The field of monster studies has grown significantly over the past few years and this companion provides a comprehensive guide to the study of monsters and the monstrous from historical, regional and thematic perspectives. The collection reflects the truly multi-disciplinary nature of monster studies, bringing in scholars from literature, art history, religious studies, history, classics, and cultural and media studies. The companion will offer scholars and graduate students the first comprehensive and authoritative review of this emergent field.

Beginning with celebrated classics, the author locates King Kong (1933) within the era of lynching to evince how the film protects whiteness against supposed aggressions of a black predator and reviews *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) as a product of the Depression's economic anxieties. From there, the study moves to the cult classic animated *Sinbad Trilogy* (1958-1977) of Ray Harryhausen, films rampant with xenophobic fears of the Middle East as relevant today as when the series was originally produced. Advancing to more recent subjects, the author focuses on the image of the monstrous woman and the threat of reproductive freedom found in *Aliens* (1986), *Jurassic Park* (1993), and *Species* (1995) and on depictions of the mentally ill as dangerous deviants in *12 Monkeys* (1996) and *The Cell* (2000). An investigation into physical freakishness guides his approach to *Edward Scissorhands* (1990) and *Beauty and the Beast* (1991).

Nushawn Williams, accused of deliberately infecting numerous individuals with AIDS, was subsequently dubbed an AIDS predator in the U.S. national media and is now incarcerated. His treatment by the media and the judicial system, argues Shevory (politics, Ithaca College), is unsupported by the evid

Diasporic Identities and Empire: Cultural Contentions and Literary Landscapes explores traditional theories on hybridity,

generated in consideration of multicultural infusions, and at times profusions, of colonial migrations. Arguments on defining Englishness and the insinuations of a 'fixed centre' for the marginalised are now considered on a global scale as postmodernity defies imperial homogeneity. Although postcolonial studies have largely been Anglocentric and Western in focus, developments elsewhere have opened up theoretical applications on cultural shifters such as that of the diaspora. The Arabian world, the Caribbean, North and Latin America, Australia, and more recently, countries such as Ireland and Scotland, have emerged as regions confronted with comparable power struggles. Mass migration, exile, refugee reshuffling and diasporic repositioning provide neo-hermeneutics on the predicament of the global, which is undergoing major geopolitical and cultural transformation. This volume addresses how writing from the peripheries is developing a new worldview through diasporic modes of thought. By moving beyond the facile search for an imperial 'centre,' these contributions provide an understanding of the rupture in identity since there is a feeling of 'being held back from a place or state we wish to reach . . .' (Brooks). This volume is a unique collaboration by academic scholars from four different continents, and a vast number of regions, critically converging on the contemporaneous debate that problematizes the diasporic identity.

This book presents contributions from different authors covering the mythical basis for different religions. It also shows how psychology and philosophy have been influenced by myths.

This interdisciplinary collection brings together world leaders in Gothic Studies, offering dynamic new readings on popular Gothic cultural productions from the last decade. Topics covered include, but are not limited to: contemporary High Street Goth/ic fashion, Gothic performance and art festivals, Gothic popular fiction from Twilight to Shadow of the Wind, Goth/ic popular music, Goth/ic on TV and film, new trends like Steampunk, well-known icons Batman and Lady Gaga, and theorizations of popular Gothic monsters (from zombies and vampires to werewolves and ghosts) in an age of terror/ism.

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