

*Horror: the Soul of the Plot Part Two*

By Elizabeth J. Tenney, CRDL Reference Associate

The horror genre really took off in the 20th century. Pulp fiction and comic books brought a visual element to the plots of short stories by authors like H. P. Lovecraft. Some stories from the turn of the 20th century have been reproduced more recently in graphic novel form (the successor to the comic form) such as *William Hope Hodgson's The House on the Borderland*.

The short horror story form is also well represented with authors like Algernon Blackwood in the early century, and midcentury by Ray Bradbury, Roald Dahl, Shirley Jackson, and many others. These stories are pulled together in compilations like *Alfred Hitchcock presents stories that scared even me* and *Gallery of horror*, edited by Charles L. Grant. Many of the stories written in the 1950's and 60's became a treasure trove of ideas for Hollywood blockbuster movies.

Popular fiction readers clamored for horror in the later half of the 20th century and scary stories have flourished for readers at every level. From Goosebumps to Stephen King, anyone who loves to scream can find the story that's right for them. For adults, horror fiction can fall into several categories, like supernatural and apocalyptic tales, monster stories, medical and scientific terror (like genetic mutations), psychological serial killers, and "slatterpunk", which emphasizes grisly violence, blood and gore.

Probably one of the most popular American authors ever is Stephen King, whose latest best seller, *Duma Key*, has a home @ your library. The Sookie Stackhouse series by Charlaine Harris, tells the modern adventures of a psychic Southern vampire and her relationships. An earth shattering comet threatening apocalypse and evil forces seeking a deadly weapon in historical London are the themes of *Wormwood* by G.P. Taylor. *Blood Colony* by Tananarive Due, is the story of clashing supernatural forces of immortal beings fighting for dominance over secrets that can destroy humanity. *Apocalyptic: Wastelands : stories of the Apocalypse*, edited by

*Horror: the Soul of the Plot Part Two*

By Elizabeth J. Tenney, CRDL Reference Associate

John Joseph Adams, is a compilation of short stories about the end of the world from the perspectives of a host of the best contemporary horror writers in America and Australia.

There are so many titles, it's hard to list all of the great books in the collection, but here is a selected list of examples:

Medical horror:

- *Toxin* / Robin Cook
- *Infected: a novel* / Scott Sigler

Scientific/ technological terror:

- *Stranger in the chat room* / Todd & Jedd Hafer,
- *Fear nothing* / Dean Koontz

Shocking Psychological/ serial killers:

- *Flowers in the Attic* series/ VC Andrews
- Odd Thomas series /Dean Koontz

Gorey Splatterpunk:

- *30 days of night* / Steve Niles
- Go-go girls of the apocalypse by Victor Gischler

Don't forget all the great events coming up @ your library: Dollmaking on November 6; CRDL Jazz & More @ the Library on November 12; Adult Photo Family Tree crafting on November 12; a presentation of Freedom, Slavery and Roots of American Music on November 17; and the CRDL Teen Pizza Taste-Off on November 18 (with Hungry Howies, Papa John's, the Pixie, and Cottage Inn Pizza). As always, CRDL Storytime is on Mondays and Thursdays at 10:15 A.M. at Veterans Memorial Library and Wednesdays at 11AM at Faith Johnston Memorial Library.