

**"The house will come to you": Domestic Architecture in Contemporary Australian Literature and Film**

**Author**

Jeffery, Ella, Doolan, Emma

**Published**

2020

**Journal Title**

Antipodes: A Global Journal of Australian/New Zealand Literature

**Version**

Version of Record (VoR)

**DOI**

<https://doi.org/10.1353/apo.2020.0045>

**Copyright Statement**

© 2020 American Association of Australian Literary Studies. The attached file is reproduced here in accordance with the copyright policy of the publisher. Please refer to the journal's website for access to the definitive, published version.

**Downloaded from**

<http://hdl.handle.net/10072/419574>

**Griffith Research Online**

<https://research-repository.griffith.edu.au>

2020

## **"The house will come to you": Domestic Architecture in Contemporary Australian Literature and Film**

Ella Jeffery

*Queensland University of Technology, e.jeffery@qut.edu.au*

Emma Doolan

*Southern Cross University, Emma.Doolan@scu.edu.au*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/antipodes>

---

### **Recommended Citation**

Jeffery, Ella and Doolan, Emma (2020) "'The house will come to you': Domestic Architecture in Contemporary Australian Literature and Film," *Antipodes*: Vol. 34: Iss. 2, Article 9.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/antipodes/vol34/iss2/9>

# “The house will come to you”: Domestic Architecture in Contemporary Australian Literature and Film

ELLA JEFFERY AND EMMA DOOLAN

The house has long been an archetypal site of Gothic terror and entrapment. The Gothic dwelling is one of the most steadfast conventions of the mode, shifting as the Gothic has shifted through history to encompass a range of sites, from castles to cabins, speaking to ongoing anxieties about the security and stability of the home, nation, family, or self. The Gothic’s “relentlessly ‘architectural’ obsessions” (Castle 88) have been well documented, and Gothic buildings are frequently read as psychological as much as physical spaces. The Gothic edifice functions as a “sensation-machine” (Castle 88) capable of generating the sublime feeling of being overwhelmed by a greater power. The Gothic house, operating on a smaller scale, has likewise been associated with overarching power structures such as the nation, family, or—in the Female Gothic—patriarchy.

However, Australian Gothic studies have tended to focus on the natural landscape, dismissing the house as “largely invisible in Australian attempts at the gothic genre” (Scott and Biron 315). Liz Ferrier argues for the significance of the house in Australian literature broadly speaking, arguing that “architectural figures recur as metaphoric or metonymic representations in contemporary Australian fiction,” despite the dominance of landscape analyses in scholarship (41). We contend that Australia’s vernacular architecture—region- and climate-specific architecture designed for everyday use, primarily according to the needs of the working and middle classes (Drew 26), such as the bush shack, the shearer’s quarters, or the Queenslander—gives rise to different inflections within Australian Gothic narratives as the architecture connotes particularities of space, place, and history and speaks to a range of localized fears and anxieties. Because it responds to the specificities of local landscapes and climates and because certain types of building—such as the Queenslander house—become part of an area’s “regional sign system” (Craven, *Finding Queensland* 45), examining Australia’s vernacular architecture both partakes of and extends existing scholarship on Australian Gothic as primarily associated with the natural landscape.

It is important to recognize that houses are both architectural and affective structures: Gothic houses are physical spaces that produce or shape the felt, emotional experiences of inhabitants and visitors. Many cultural geographers and phenomenologists contend that there are layers of meaning bound up in house and

home, which can be read as a “place/site, a set of feelings/cultural meanings, and the relations between the two” (Blunt and Dowling 2). In this essay, our discussion of vernacular architecture includes the essential category of felt experience in our analyses of key texts, which many scholars see as a crucial element of reading and understanding any experience or construction of architectural space (see, for example, Boscaljon; Blunt and Dowling; King; Bachelard). Gaston Bachelard, in his seminal work *The Poetics of Space*, notes that the inhabitant of a house “experiences the house in its reality and in its virtuality” (5); the house is a place that holds intimacy and security, memory and nostalgia, to which Daniel Boscaljon adds that houses can also be sites of crisis, claustrophobia, and uncanniness (1). In the Gothic, characters are as confronted by the labyrinthine qualities of a dark, forbidding castle as they are by the disorientation, separation, or isolation they might experience within. In this way, architecture and affect, the felt and the physical, are inextricably linked in Gothic spaces, one often emerging from or exacerbated by the other, and our analysis examines these interconnected experiences of domestic sites.

Although the Gothic house or castle remains a significant site for scholarly inquiry, “all too often, symbolic readings of Gothic architecture overlook its concrete presence” (Aguirre 1). We examine examples of domestic architecture in a series of contemporary Australian films and novels, considering the ways in which each house—its location, architecture, and history, as well as its symbolic, socio-spatial, and felt dimensions—shapes the Gothic narrative that takes place within it. Four examples of domestic architecture in contemporary Australian films and novels provide a preliminary approach to this extensive and largely underdiscussed field. Our analysis begins with on-screen Gothic in order to consider the ways in which visual representations of domestic architecture align with and diverge from literary representation. We begin with Jennifer Kent’s internationally acclaimed film *The Babadook* (2014), in which the titular monster enhances the carceral and colonial implications of the protagonist’s inner-suburban terrace house in North Adelaide. We then turn to two neighboring houses in the Melbourne suburb of Sonya Hartnett’s novel *Butterfly* (2009), a text primarily concerned with the socio-spatial experience of suburban housing and the ways in which contrasts in houses correspond to perceived cultural and social differences. We consider the ways in which Gothic tension emerges via the architectural contrast between the two dwellings, which speaks to the excesses of 1980s aspiration and materialism. We then turn to small-town coastal Australia in Lisa Gorton’s *The Life of Houses* (2015), a para-suburban location where a labyrinthine Federation villa becomes an archive of counterfeit personal and public histories written over the traumas of the past. Finally, we return to the screen with another recent Australian film, Natalie Erika James’s *Relic* (2020), in which the weatherboard Edwardian country house recalls Anglo-American architectural traditions and speaks to Australia’s complex negotiations of origins and inheritance. Examining the ways different architectural styles are employed within these texts reveals the versatility of the contemporary Australian

Gothic and its capacity to address a variety of cultural anxieties and tensions through engagements with the built environment as well as the iconic rural landscapes that so often dominate the Gothic in Australia.

HOUSING THE AUSTRALIAN GOTHIC: FROM RURAL HOMESTEADS  
TO THE INNER-CITY QUEENSLANDER

The Gothic is a genre heavily reliant on setting for its effects (Hillard 112), and the house or dwelling has long been its dominant site and symbol (Baldick xx). In Australia, however, the Gothic has more often been connected with the landscape than with the built environment. In the absence of medieval castles and ruins, early colonial Australian writers, as Gerry Turcotte puts it, “map[ped] out a specifically local variant of the Gothic mode, one which turned to the specifications of the domestic landscape and voice to articulate the fear and exhilaration of the colonial condition” (“Australian Gothic” 12). The bush and outback, especially, have become iconic sites within mainland Australian Gothic, while the forests, mountains, and coastlines of Tasmania mark a specific regional variant of the genre. Scholars have recognized some individual buildings in literature as Gothic locations, such as the highway roadhouse, which Stephen Carleton claims as “the Northern Gothic spatial reinvention of the European castle or manor” (60) in the plays of Gail Evans, Mary Anne Butler, and others; the tropical north Queenslander house in Rachel Perkins’s 1998 film *Radiance* (Craven, *Finding Queensland* 49); or the bush shack in Barbara Baynton’s “The Chosen Vessel” (1896) and boarding school in Joan Lindsay’s 1967 novel *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (Steele). However, a “preoccupation with rurality” (Balazantegui 28) continues to dominate antipodean Gothic—both its fiction and its scholarship—and the Australian Gothic house has yet to be examined in all its variety and complexity.

The homestead—an isolated, rural property typically situated far from metropolitan centers—is one type of dwelling that occupies a central and symbolic place in the catalogue of Australian Gothic houses, as it does in the national literary imagination. Rather than designating a singular architectural form, the term “homestead” can be applied to a range of different architectural styles. The homestead takes on a variety of dimensions in the work of contemporary Australian Gothic writers, and its colonial connotations are central to its function as a symbolic site through which Australian writers grapple with notions of power, surveillance, and claustrophobia. Charlotte Wood transforms the isolated rural homestead into a dystopian prison for women in *The Natural Way of Things* (2015) to reflect the nation’s ongoing debates about gendered violence and inequality. The homestead in Sonya Hartnett’s *Sleeping Dogs* (1995) is, likewise, a claustrophobic space of masculine surveillance and control, in which the patriarch, Griffin, rules his adult children without challenge, while in Andrew McGahan’s *The White Earth* (2004), the child Will moves to Kuran Station, a derelict homestead in Queensland’s Darling Downs,

where Will's uncle, John, seeks to consolidate his absolute possession of the land, repudiating any attempt to recognize its traditional owners. In Sarah Armstrong's *Salt Rain* (2004), the family homestead in the rainforests of northern New South Wales is a similarly patriarchal space, "every nail . . . driven in, . . . every cladding board fixed in place" (188) by a patriarch whose power over his family and the landscape lingers even after death. The house, set amid encroaching rain forest and beset by flood waters, reflects the novel's incest plot, its decaying architecture signifying a legacy of rot and a blurring of boundaries between inside and outside (Doolan, "Presumed Dead" 8).

One example of a specific style of Australian vernacular architecture that has been given scholarly attention in relation to literature and the Gothic is the Queenslander. Writers and scholars have long recognized the relationship between the felt and physical dimensions of the Queenslander's spatial arrangements, as well as its symbolic function. Thea Astley links the Queenslander to a rejection of conformity and convention—an assertion of regional identity, as "Queenslanders made no attempt to reduplicate the architecture of their southern neighbours" (8). Jessica Gildersleeve considers this "intoxicating Gothic fantasy of Queensland's difference" (207) to be rooted in the specificity of local landscape and architecture and linked to a sense of in-betweenness and marginality. In the work of Jessica Anderson, Gildersleeve argues, the space beneath the rural Queenslander house is liminal and associated with the "ineffectively buried detritus" (210) of both the domestic present and the colonial past—a version, then, of the Gothic castle's secret chamber. So too for David Malouf in *12 Edmondstone Street* (1985), where the Queenslander is detached from its rural origins and located in inner-suburban Brisbane. Malouf describes the underside of the Queenslander house as evoking "the terrible downward pressure of the house itself" (43); the knowledge of an open but subdomestic space becomes "a condition of life that goes deep into consciousness" (10). These writers show that the structure of the Queenslander itself produces uncanny sensations specific to the houses' architecture. In turning toward a series of contemporary novels and films, we examine the ways in which suburban and urban tensions play out via architectural spaces, moving beyond the homestead and Queenslander to consider other types of vernacular architecture located in urban and suburban environs.

Suburban houses are particularly complex in their array of cultural and social connotations; the replicable, often inexpensive vernacular architecture of the suburbs lends itself to fictional explorations of aspiration and banality in middle-class family lifestyles. The suburban Gothic, while a significant subgenre, has received relatively minimal scholarly attention; Bernice Murphy's *The Suburban Gothic in American Popular Culture* (2009) remains the sole book-length academic inquiry into the subgenre and is focused on American suburbia, which differs significantly from Australian suburbia, while Nathanael O'Reilly's *Exploring Suburbia: The Suburbs in the Contemporary Australian Novel* (2012) and Brigid Rooney's *Suburban Space, the*

*Novel and Australian Modernity* (2018) explore Australian suburbia more broadly. In Forrest, Harper, and Rayner's *Filmurbia: Screening the Suburbs* (2017), several essays consider some iterations of the suburban Gothic (Ellison, "Gritty Urban"; Rayner), but only a few scholars have investigated the Australian suburban Gothic in film or literature (see Jeffery; Howell; Mattes). There is also minimal research in this field on Australian vernacular architecture and the houses of suburban Australia (Howell is the only exception), but distinctive houses and suburban spaces abound in Australian Gothic literature, from the haunting and haunted house in Tim Winton's *Cloudstreet* (1991) to the Melbourne suburbs of Steven Carroll's Glenroy series (2001–19) and, more recently, outer-suburban housing-commission homes in Trent Dalton's *Boy Swallows Universe* (2018). Australian authors throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have grappled with the nation's increasing suburban sprawl, a frustration borne out in George Johnston's *My Brother Jack* (1962) and Patrick White's novella *The Night the Prowler* (1974), among others (McCann). Film scholars have discussed the "representation of malice hidden within the mundane" (Rayner 191) in films such as *Snowtown* (Mattes); *Beautiful* (2008) and *Lake Mungo* (2009) (Rayner); and *Suburban Mayhem* (2006), *Hounds of Love* (2017), and *Animal Kingdom* (2010) (Loreck), much of which builds on Dermody and Jacka's seminal discussion of Australian Gothic cinema (1988), in which they position films such as *The Cars That Ate Paris* (1974) and *The Plumber* (1979) as primary examples of an Australian Gothic mode that turns to the entrenched normality of suburbs as a site of repression and excess (Craven, "Ambiguities" 167).

#### THE FAILURE OF VICTORIAN IDEALS IN JENNIFER KENT'S *THE BABADOOK*

One recent example where the Australian Gothic house has received significant critical attention is the 2014 film *The Babadook*, set in a North Adelaide Victorian terrace house. The house's owner, Amelia, is a widow. Her husband died in a car accident driving her to the hospital when she was in labor, and the trauma of his death replays in a loop with the trauma of their son Samuel's birth and Amelia's twinned grief and postnatal depression. As Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar write, "Women themselves have often . . . been described or imagined as houses" (88), and that *The Babadook*'s terrace house operates as a reflection or extension of Amelia's psyche has been well documented by scholars (Aranjuez 126; Howell 187; Quigley 69). The terrace's dark and untidy interiors both reflect and materialize Amelia's grief, depression, and exhaustion. General neglect and mundane horrors like unwashed dishes, holes in walls, and faulty wiring become images of failure, danger, and loss of control as the monstrous Babadook causes lights to flicker and go out, places shards of glass in Amelia's meal, and manifests phantom cockroach infestations to time with a visit from welfare agents.

The terrace has visibly gone to seed, and its darkened rooms and unkempt state speak to more than just Amelia's personal failings, pointing as well to failed

Victorian ideals of femininity, family, and motherhood (Aranjuez 126). The terrace house illustrates the transnational nature of Australian vernacular architecture; it at once signifies a distinctively Australian suburban domesticity and connects with the nation's colonial inheritance. The interiors were constructed for the film, and Kent drew on the British influence in Adelaide architecture, saying she did not want the house "to be particularly Australian": "I wanted to create a myth in a domestic setting. . . . It could have been anywhere" (qtd. in Lambie). The house's Victorian touches also reinforce an "atemporal quality" (Quigley 68) and link the house to a history of Australian suburbanization that begins with the "aspirations of British migrants" (Howell 193) and develops through later reform movements that considered inner-suburban terraces slums. With its lofty ceilings and cozy furnishings, the terrace house has the potential to be a site of ideal middle-class homeliness or an aspirational fixer-upper.

However, the house is "untouched by anything close to contemporary gentrification" (Howell 193). In this way, *The Babadook's* Gothic terrace house differs from the "aspirational narratives" (Howell 194) underpinning American New Hollywood suburban horror tales that critics frequently link with the film (Balanzategui 28; Howell 184). Instead, the film connects with contemporary "Australian realities of the suburbanisation of poverty and ongoing inequities in women's wages that put single parent families with female heads of household especially at risk" (Howell 194). As Adolfo Aranjuez notes, Amelia "is out of place within the New Momist milieu of trendy, gentrified suburbia, and she is immobile—both economically (via her low-paying nursing home job) and due to being 'stuck' in her grief" (126). Amelia's social and economic immobility (in contrast to the upward mobility of the suburban mothers around her) is further emphasized by the extension of the Babadook's power and the space of the house into her car. This symbol of mobility becomes instead an extension of the house, as the Babadook manifests itself while Amelia is driving, and the same cockroaches she discovers in a crack in the kitchen wall appear inside the car. In Australian Gothic, the car is often a symbol of masculine or colonial power (Gelder, "Australian Gothic" 122; Johnke 118); for Amelia, the car affords no escape from the demands of motherhood. Like the classic Gothic heroine, she cannot escape the power of the house; it exceeds its boundaries to take over the space of the car and even the suburbs themselves, as the Babadook's presence is hinted at in the police station and other locations.

The terrace's Victorian architecture recalls, also, other favored sites of the Gothic: the asylum and the prison. Visual similarities link Amelia's workplace, an aged care home with a dementia ward, to the terrace house, an analogy heightened by images of Amelia confined to the house, usually clad in a white nightgown, like a figure in a Victorian asylum. The house's stone cladding, sandstone window casings, and barred windows are also foregrounded in shots that recall the architecture of colonial prisons—and Amelia's sack-like nightie comes to resemble convict garb, as well as recalling the flowing white dresses and "fragile, delicate whiteness"



(Balanzategui 28) of New Wave Australian Gothic figures such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock*'s Miranda. Repeated images of barring—the windows, the headboard of Amelia's bed, the balusters of stair rails and the shadows they cast—reinforce the image of the house (and of motherhood) as a prison. The prison or garrison is a central space in colonial fiction, a transformation of the European Gothic castle, which becomes in a colonial setting “either the fort or the prison cell, and later, the isolated cabin in the woods or the bush” (Turcotte, *Peripheral Fear* 116). Such carceral spaces are, for Turcotte, linked with a Gothic fear of merging and otherness and a colonial fear of separation from the center and the annihilation of the self (116). The film's emphasis on the prison-like aspects of the house's architecture dramatizes Amelia's struggles with the unrelenting demands of motherhood on all aspects of her self—body, mind, privacy, identity, worth—until Amelia becomes both jailer and jailed, locking herself and Samuel into the house as she is overtaken by the Babadook.

However, the film climaxes with Amelia furiously asserting her ownership and control of the house and by extension her life: “You are trespassing in my house!” (01:22:00), she shouts, and the house seems to tear apart as she banishes the Babadook to the locked cellar. But, as the film's tagline asserts, you can't get rid of the Babadook, and while Amelia and Samuel are now freed from the prison-like confines of the house to enjoy the garden, Amelia must undertake a daily contest to keep the Babadook under control. Samuel, she tells him, will see it again himself when he is older—a nod toward the likelihood of Amelia passing on her own traumas along with the family home. Fittingly, then, rather than burning down or destroying the Gothic house, the film ends with the terrace house still standing—an assertion that the traumas and taboos the film explores cannot simply be banished but instead must be lived with.

#### EXCESS, ASPIRATION, AND SUBURBAN PASTICHE IN SONYA HARTNETT'S *BUTTERFLY*

The suburban house is also a site of class anxiety and aspiration in Sonya Hartnett's *Butterfly* (2009), which takes place across two neighboring houses in 1980s outer-suburban Melbourne. While some scholars have discussed the novel's representation of banality in Australian suburbia, positioning the novel as a dystopian narrative “heavy with symbols of longing for the unattainable” (Cain-Gray 34), and others have considered the occult elements of Plum's fascination with objects stolen from her friends (Finegan), this novel has not been discussed in relation to the Australian suburban Gothic despite its many Gothic elements. Hartnett's broader oeuvre is most frequently identified within the Australian Gothic tradition in novels like *Sleeping Dogs* (Hawkes 68), where the rural setting aligns with scholarly and literary traditions that situate the Australian Gothic in a harsh, isolated inland Australia. However, *Butterfly* can be read as a uniquely Australian suburban Gothic narrative in which class mobility, taste, and aspiration, symbolized by protagonists' houses,

exacerbate neighborhood fears and anxieties about “issues of personal identity and the paradoxical comforts and perils of conformity,” key concerns of the suburban Gothic (Murphy 4).

Over the course of the novel, fourteen-year-old Plum, an awkward teen struggling to maintain her social position among her cruel school friends and feeling patronized by her parents and much-older brothers, becomes gradually enchanted by her stylish neighbor, Maureen Wilks. Maureen, a housewife and mother, is conducting a secret affair with Plum’s older brother, Justin, and as the novel progresses, she befriends and manipulates Plum to advance her relationship with Justin, positioning herself as Plum’s confidante and offering questionable advice to the teen. The novel takes place almost entirely in the houses and yards of Plum and Maureen; Plum’s movement between these two contrasting spaces produces a Gothic distortion of Plum’s identity, relationships, and body, an “uncertainty about where to place the perimeters of the self” (Sedgwick 34). Hartnett’s exploration of these houses is concerned with the “social signals” and cultural values (King 3) of suburbia; it is the felt experience of houses and their architectural dimensions that generates tension in the novel. Hartnett does not identify the houses in terms of distinct architectural styles, instead presenting them as two opposing stereotypes of typical Australian middle-class suburbia that “operate as signs of status” (King 3). This pair of dwellings represent, in Plum’s case, a dilapidated and outdated older family home that has long been in the neighborhood and, in Maureen’s case, a cookie-cutter, aspirational, sterile suburban dwelling. These generic oppositions are emphasized in *Butterfly* through a range of sensory details that highlight characters’ responses to particular parts of each house, such as Maureen’s pride in her tasteful cream-colored living room or Plum’s distaste for her parents’ heavy wooden dining table. The houses ultimately represent two typical suburban dwellings of Australia’s 1980s middle class; the lack of specificity allows the Australian reader to imagine any familiar architectural style, positioning the two houses as symbolic of a localized, mundane suburban Australia.

Plum’s house is introduced in the novel’s opening pages as one of the many aspects of her life that fail to meet her aspirational ideals. The house is “big, and humiliating, . . . gloomy with pastoral paintings, hazardous with piled books. . . . Nothing in the house is new. . . . It’s unfair that [Plum] must endure timber and stone, when all her friends know the joy of plastic and smoked glass” (Hartnett, *Butterfly* 3). Next door, Maureen occupies a stylish single-story house, probably a suburban bungalow of the style popular in suburban Melbourne in the 1970s and ’80s, a space in which both the exterior and interior, even the car in the driveway, are perfect examples of “the middlingly classy” (Hartnett, *Butterfly* 60), which, to Plum, is exceptionally alluring in its alignment with current trends. Much of the novel is concerned with Plum and Maureen’s fraught relationship, and the juxtaposition of the suburban architecture and design shapes the novel’s suburban Gothic, where terror is generated by the clashing anxieties and aspirations of an upwardly mobile, increasingly affluent 1980s Australia.

Plum's sense of inferiority is exacerbated by her perception of her house as a bulky and uncouth structure, while Maureen's sophistication is embodied by the sleek and refined qualities of her bungalow. In *Butterfly*, architecture is primarily explored through the ways in which it constructs "a spatial imaginary: a set of intersecting and variable ideas and feelings" (Blunt and Dowling 2) for the inhabitants. The houses are strikingly different in style, age, and size, reflecting Robin Boyd's commentary in *The Australian Ugliness* (1960) that the suburbs in Australia are a pastiche of architectural forms and styles, where "a modernistic folly in multi-coloured brickwork may sit next door to a prim Georgian maisonette on one side and a sensitive work of architectural exploration on the other" (17). This vision of Australian suburbia is realized in the contrasting architectural styles of Hartnett's 1980s suburbs in *Butterfly*, where Plum's "mortifying" (3) two-story home, with its front porch, dark halls, and dense wooden furniture, sits beside a newer single-story bungalow, and Hartnett's suburban Gothic derives its force precisely from this architectural rift.

Plum's house is a multivalent site that resonates with a number of key Gothic tropes: the large, cluttered house recalls decaying and labyrinthine Gothic castles and mansions (Punter and Byron 261); it also corresponds to Gothic connections between "family line, social status and physical property" (Botting 4), using suburban architecture to reveal the tensions of a class-conscious neighborhood. Plum feels initially suspicious of Maureen's attempts at friendship, because "the Coyles have lived in this street forever, their Wilks neighbours only a few years, qualifying Plum to regard them with the hoitiness of landed gentry" (Hartnett, *Butterfly* 16). Plum has internalized suburban social hierarchies, and the architecture of the two differing houses facilitates her sense of her family's elevated social position. Looking down from her window at Maureen, she is unconvinced by the older woman's advances. While Plum's house is immediately recognizable as a more traditionally Gothic site, it is Maureen's single-story suburban bungalow where the novel's most terrifying and threatening encounters play out, and it is not until Plum leaves her own house and enters Maureen's backyard that she is in danger.

Just as it is easy for Maureen to speak to Plum from the window, it is also easy for Plum to enter Maureen's backyard, which she does in the typically casual way of Australian suburbia: through a side gate, bypassing the formal entrance to the home and pausing only briefly as "she remembers all those naive little girls tempted into vans or past a front door" (Hartnett, *Butterfly* 18) and the horrors that befall them, before dismissing the thought and forging ahead. When she enters Maureen's backyard, a Gothic distortion occurs, as Plum finds "the garden is different to how it appears from the height of her window. . . . Everything seems stretched skyward, making her think of fairies and sleepy tumbles down rabbit holes" (19), becoming a Gothic space that "exhibits different properties in different directions" (Aguirre 6). Plum's moment of fear before entering Maureen's yard is warranted; it is the threshold of her relationship with Maureen and represents an entry into a complex

adult world. As the novel progresses, Plum compares her house, body, and identity to Maureen's; she finds herself and her life unfit, rejects her family, starves herself, loses her friends, and attempts to change her name, effectively erasing much of that which constituted her identity.

In American suburban Gothic, suburbs are frequently depicted as comprising endlessly similar variations on the same house; "a deadening assembly of identikit houses and a breeding ground for discontent and mindless conventionality" (Murphy 5). In *Butterfly*, Hartnett constructs an alternative version of suburbia that uses architectural contrast to emphasize clashing suburban sensibilities and the contradictory instances of individualism and conservatism in late twentieth-century Australia, a distinctive national variation on suburban Gothic. Both the exteriors and interiors of the houses in *Butterfly* gesture toward an ingrained sense of individual difference, a resistance to conformity even when it is being unconsciously adopted, where the contrasting designs of the houses, as well as their age, size, and interior decoration, exacerbate Plum's "desire for improvement" (Cain-Gray 37) and come to symbolize her unarticulated anxieties about upward class mobility and her commodity fetishism. Ultimately, the architectural contrast of the two suburban dwellings encapsulates the terrors and violence of class anxieties in suburban Australia in the 1980s.

*THE LIFE OF HOUSES: INHERITANCE, MEMORY, AND HERITAGE ARCHITECTURE IN  
POSTCOLONIAL AUSTRALIA*

We now turn from the suburban neighborhoods of Adelaide and Melbourne to another highly recognizable site of Australian domesticity: the coastal town, where, as Elizabeth Ellison has argued, the beach functions as an extension of urban and suburban sprawl ("Gritty Urban" 81). Small coastal towns connect closely with enduring twentieth-century national mythologies of leisure, community, and nostalgia, and in Lisa Gorton's *The Life of Houses*, a single historic house stands out against the town's mild nostalgic backdrop, a beachside strip of shops, cafes, and unobtrusive houses, largely untouched by the tourism boom. *The Life of Houses* can be usefully compared to another historic home in Australian literature, one that has been extensively discussed in the context of the Australian Gothic: Kuran Station in Andrew McGahan's *The White Earth*, of which Stephanie Green contends that "the tropic power of Gothic anxiety serves to reveal the uncertain terms in which [the novel's] characters negotiate what it means to be Australian, more than 200 years after colonial invasion" (84). Gorton's principal architectural form is not the rural homestead, but in *Sea House*, the expansive, decaying heritage villa, she deploys a highly specific set of Australian Gothic tropes to grapple with questions of history, inheritance, and class in small-town Australia.

*Sea House* is a nineteenth-century heritage villa on the Victorian coast. The expansive single-story house is a labyrinthine site of Gothic excess and entrapment.

Situated by the sea, the house is recognizable as a distinctively Australian dwelling, with its wraparound veranda that forms “an outdoor room” (Gorton 38), corrugated iron roof that “curve[s] to meet iron lace and iron pillars” (38), and rare “early Australian cedar furniture” (13), but it is also connected to the Eurocentric Gothic tradition of grand seaside dwellings such as Manderley in Daphne du Maurier’s *Rebecca* (1938). The decaying house, with its long hallways, narrow, high-ceilinged rooms, and rare furniture, recalls classic Gothic ruins and castles in which heroines become entrapped or imprisoned (Punter and Byron 261). The house’s wide wrap-around veranda and its generations of haughty inhabitants produce a postcolonial Gothic in which the house dominates the coastal landscape, and the owners patronize other locals as “vulgar” (Gorton 124) or “not of their class” (95). While the Australian coast is frequently depicted as a space of leisure, it is also, as Ellison has established, a place of horror as “the site of white invasion” (116). Sea House, filled with artifacts and narratives that recall Australia’s colonial history as well as notions of class derived from English sensibilities, creates an English-inflected Australian Gothic that speaks to the conflicts of national identity and inheritance, the formation of national myths built on a counterfeit history.

It is largely through the eyes of another teenager that the reader explores Sea House: Kit, sent from Melbourne to visit her estranged grandparents for a week while her mother, Anna, meets her lover in secret. Kit’s grandparents, Patrick and Audrey, are an eerie, isolated pair occupied only with the preservation of their increasingly deteriorating house and the writing of a (possibly false) family history. Patrick tells Kit of Admiral Kelty, the family’s forebear who originally purchased the house. The naval title and assumed wealth suggests a once-great power in colonial Australia, which, combined with the crumbling house itself, contains clear “allusions to aristocracy in decline” (Green 91), a common Gothic trope that points to broader postcolonial anxieties about ownership and belonging. The house’s anxious foundations are literalized in its crumbling verandas and rusting furniture, which Kit’s grandparents entirely ignore, clinging to outmoded class notions predicated on English gentility and a falsely elevated sense of their class position. The Gothic can be “a mechanism for fictional interrogations of the intersections between place, identity and power” (Green 85), and in *The Life of Houses*, Sea House’s heritage architecture operates as a singular symbol of a broader national anxiety about colonial violence and ongoing erasure of the traumas of the past.

Whereas the Coyle house in *Butterfly* and its juxtaposition with the bungalow next door produces a suburban Gothic that emerges from the tensions and anxieties around taste and aspiration, Sea House’s heritage architecture produces a Gothic that is deeply embedded in and shaped by its clear ties to personal and public history. Kit’s mother, Anna, remembers her parents’ “entire rejection of what went on outside their property. . . . Her parents’ only intimacy was a shared obsession with the past” (Gorton 12). Throughout the novel, Patrick and Audrey isolate themselves from the beachside community; their house, also, with “mahogany, humourlessly florid”

(27) furniture, prized artifacts, and fussy ironwork stands in stark contrast to the small beachfront town's parks and ice cream shops. The house rests on "an imperial foundation" (Crouch 46), but its rust, mice, and "uneasy damp smell" (Gorton 38) suggest that despite the owners' attempts to instill an imported set of values, the house itself is entirely subject to the depredations of the Australian environment.

Sea House contains many archetypal Gothic motifs that speak to Australia's violent colonial history, a distorting blend of Eurocentric Gothic inflections and Australian domestic realism. The house's proportions frequently change, which Manuel Aguirre notes is a common feature of excessive Gothic space (6). In daylight, it looks "smaller and prettier" (Gorton 38) as Kit stands outside, but inside, she is again submerged in the "watery dimness" (38) of its interior, finding herself diminishing in the house's enormous proportions, returning "to the underworld of childhood" (95). The veranda is the most frequent focus of such descriptions of decay throughout the novel, variously described as rotting, crumbling, and "held up by paint" (184). In selecting a highly specific feature of vernacular Australian architecture, Gorton reinforces the incompatibility of the family's superficial ties to a false history of Australia. The house also contains several ad hoc and contrasting rooms that turn the site into the kind of architectural pastiche common in classic Gothic novels, such as the recently built kitchen, a "cheap, bright room" (187) with fluorescent lights, and a room in which all the furniture is painted black in mourning for the death of Prince Albert. The two rooms literalize the family's uncomfortable transition between Australian modernity, as represented by the fluorescent kitchen, and an allegiance to the nation's English colonizers.

Kit frequently feels lost in the mismatched, maze-like house and is faintly repelled by the many artifacts and heirlooms her grandparents preserve, which she gradually realizes may be false or meaningless—"evidence that made no pattern, told her nothing" (Gorton 39). Kit's discomfort with or inability to make sense of this "evidence" of Australia's past gestures to a broader national rejection in contemporary Australia of such evidence: a desire, like Kit's, to see "nothing." Ken Gelder and Jane M. Jacobs note that "postcolonial ghost stories flourish precisely at those moments contemporary Australians are asked to remember something they have forgotten or denied or attempted to extinguish" (qtd. in Gelder, "Postcolonial Gothic" 204), and Gorton draws a direct parallel between the decaying heritage home with its false but ferociously preserved artifacts and Australia's national heritage, a violent past that is often overlooked or ignored as counterfeit narratives are preserved and consolidated. The novel's final chapters ask a quintessentially Gothic question of inheritance: after Patrick's sudden death by heart attack, Kit symbolically rejects her rightful place in the line of inheritance by secretly leaving and returning to her inner-city Melbourne home. However, her grandparents' insistence, "the house will come to you" (Gorton 43), suggests that despite her refusal, the house, like the history it represents, is her inheritance and that eventually the haunted history of family and nation must be reckoned with.

THE HORRORS OF AGING IN NATALIE ERIKA JAMES'S *RELIC*

Like the other houses surveyed in this article, the house in the 2020 film *Relic* partakes of the atmosphere and connotations of its location as well as the specificities of its architecture. *Relic* is set amid the lush, wooded hills of Creswick in the Ballarat hinterland, in Victoria. The weather is rainy and cold, and the house is hemmed in by a thick, mysterious forest that early shots depict from above as an impenetrable ocean of green isolating the house from neighbors and the distant city. The reviewer Alexandra Heller-Nicholas describes the Creswick area as having, in the local imagination, “a whispered air of antipodean Lynchian mystique,” and the setting is indeed more akin to *Twin Peaks* (1990–91) than Australian Gothic classics like *Wake in Fright* (1971) or *Mad Max* (1979). However, details—such as Australian accents and scenes set in Melbourne—situate the film decidedly within Australian space and the tradition of the “Weird Melancholy” of the Australian bush (Gelder, “Australian Gothic” 116). But the film brings the weirdness of the bush into close proximity with everyday middle-class life. Trips back and forth between Creswick and Melbourne emphasize the house’s location in an easily accessible hinterland not far divorced from the urban and suburban. Hinterlands, like beaches, can function as extensions of or contrasts to urban and suburban space in Australian fiction. They are liminal spaces usually situated between the nation’s populous coasts and sparse interiors where repressed cultural matter can be explored (Doolan, “Hinterland Gothic” 179). Heller-Nicholas notes of the filming location “the tension between its specificity and its universality. It is both somewhere and nowhere simultaneously.” The location also speaks to the ambivalent status of grandmother Edna, whose disappearance due to the onset of Alzheimer’s brings her daughter, Kay, and granddaughter, Sam, from Melbourne to search for her.

Like the location, the house itself presents as liminal and to some degree uncannily un-Australian, foregrounding the way in which Australian vernacular architecture is both regionally distinctive and indelibly connected with international architectural traditions. As with *The Babadook*, the production designer Steven Jones-Evans explains that the *Relic* house was selected precisely because they “weren’t telling an Australian story”: “we were telling a universal one, so we wanted the house to feel universal” (qtd. in Tangcay). While the house appears perfectly at home in its hinterland setting, nestled amid neglected formal gardens and encroaching forest, the Edwardian villa, with its gabled gray roof and white weatherboard exterior, also recalls North American or British architectural traditions, such as the shingle-style houses of New England. Further complicating the house’s provenance and signification, the Japanese Australian director, Natalie Erika James, also drew on memories of her grandmother’s “creepy Japanese traditional house” (qtd. in Francisco). Likewise, the film’s storyline and themes both draw on and consciously depart from the local and vernacular to create a hybrid, internationalized Australian Gothic that speaks to universal—rather than chiefly local—concerns, namely aging and dementia.

Initially, the house is also a surprisingly *un-Gothic* space, with its white walls and thoroughly domestic, lived-in interior. Set back from the road among established trees, with a landscaped hedge and ornate bird bath on the front lawn, the house is an image of genteel charm set against the darkly menacing backdrop of the woods. Inside, antique furnishings, filmy curtains, flowers, and domestic clutter give the house a warm and familiar atmosphere. Jones-Evans notes that the house was intended to connote elegant and sophisticated middle-class living as well as a layered family history (qtd. in Tangcay). The house is a repository for the family's mementos and personal artefacts, but the line between a healthy accumulation of domestic detritus and an unhealthy hoarder's habit is signaled as Kay and Sam encounter boxes overflowing with unsorted paraphernalia and discover notes Edna has left pinned amid the clutter reminding herself of everyday tasks—to take pills and turn off taps—or, more chillingly, a note left in a pocket: “Don’t follow it” (00:18:30).

The house's uncanniness emerges gradually through such out-of-kilter details: fruit rotten in the bowl, a banging sound in the walls, a chair pushed out of alignment, makeshift locks on the doors. This is a familiar, domestic space where something is awry, where something out of the ordinary and unfamiliar has intruded, and the *heimlich*—to use Freud's term—begins to slide uneasily into the *unheimlich*. Angled shots uneasily tilt the homely interior, and close-ups of increasingly unsettling details (such as the accumulating number of sticky notes) both foreground a growing sense of dis-ease and render background shapes distorted and unclear. Kay tells Sam that Edna has been afraid someone is coming into the house, leaving lights on and doors open, moving furniture. The locks on the doors are to keep this threat out—however, Sam discovers that there is a lock on the door of the closet in the bedroom, too, as if the threat may actually emanate from within. Indeed, the threat stems from a pair of uncanny doubles with which the house is associated: a decaying cabin outside in the woods, which Kay sees in dreams, and Edna's own aging, Alzheimer's-afflicted mind. As in *The Babadook*, the film draws a link between the female self and the domestic space of the house, in the tradition of the Female Gothic, where women who “inhabit mysteriously intricate or uncomfortably stifling houses are often seen as captured, fettered, trapped, even buried alive” (Gilbert and Gubar 83). All three women in *Relic* find themselves trapped by the house and its connections to a family legacy of mental deterioration, connections that are resolutely architectural.

The cabin that Kay sees in her dreams was the original family homestead, where Kay's great-grandfather died, neglected and afflicted with dementia. It has been knocked down, but the family retained the stained-glass window from the front door to use in the new house. The legacy of dementia and neglect founded at the cabin thus comes to infect the family home via the architecture; a black mold creeps from the window into the walls of the house, and when Edna finally returns, wandering in from the forest, the same mold is beginning to spread across her skin—her



house, body, and mind decay in sync. Sam also discovers the mold taking hold inside the locked closet in Edna's bedroom. The closet opens onto a bewildering internal labyrinth—a funhouse-mirror version of the house, where the clean, straight lines of its Edwardian architecture become disordered and irrational. The interconnecting, dead-ending passages, cluttered with family mementos, are shifting and unstable; the walls begin to close in. The earlier distortions of the house's interior take material shape in this collapsing labyrinth, where Sam becomes trapped as Edna increasingly succumbs to dementia, until, overtaken by the black mold and rendered monstrous, Edna attacks Kay.

The orderly architecture and gracefully aged interior and exterior of *Relic's* family home can be read as presenting an idealized image of the aging self that contrasts horrifyingly with the alternatives: the disordered labyrinth, the decaying cabin in the woods, or the soulless nursing home Kay visits—"independent living with the edges taken off" (00:36:38), as a nurse puts it. Ferrier argues that fictional houses are linked with the idea of a stable, knowable and clearly bounded self; however, such houses, like such ideas, are often subject to collapse, conflagration, and failure (45–46, 52). In *Relic*, the idealized image reveals itself to be unsafe, insecure, as the uncanny labyrinth opens up within the previously stable and familiar space of the house, and the house succumbs to its own internal rot. Edna's house—which can be seen as a metaphoric extension of her mind—is permeable, frighteningly open to alien influences from both within and without. She locks the doors, but Sam and Kay are able to enter through an oversized dog flap, and in any case, the rot is already inside the house, spreading through the walls, part of the house's own materials. Crucially, however, as in *The Babadook*, this house does not fall down or go up in flames (as is so common in Gothic narratives), and the monster is not destroyed. The film ends with both Kay and Sam recognizing that the monster is still, in some sense, Edna and staying in the house to care for her, and it closes on an image of the black mold creeping over Kay's own skin. The house, with all its horrors and complexities, endures, to be inherited by Kay, and later Sam, who must both live on inside it.

#### CONCLUSION

This article has surveyed some forms of vernacular Australian architecture and the ways in which they shape Gothic narratives in film and literature. Scholars have argued that the use of the terrace house or the shingle-style cottage can be read as attempts to internationalize Australian cinema and locate Australian houses within an American Gothic or horror tradition of haunted houses (Balazantegui; Howell). These architectural forms can serve to universalize the genre's settings and themes, but we also recognize that Australian vernacular architecture is by nature international, partaking of a range of influences and styles. Therefore, we read these houses as sites that writers and filmmakers deploy in order to address not only universal but also distinctly Australian anxieties about individual, regional

and national inheritance, identity, and taste. They are places in which individuals grapple with the repressed trauma of the violent past, challenge the nation's cultural inheritance and dependence on other Anglophone nations, and interrogate the trends, tastes, and styles that have defined Australia throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Through examining some key architectural forms in contemporary Australian texts, we position the Australian Gothic house as a site that both shapes and is shaped by our particular regional circumstances and responds to uniquely Australian fears.

A great many additional forms of Australian vernacular architecture remain underconsidered in Australian Gothic scholarship. Scholars of Australian Gothic, such as Ken Gelder and Gerry Turcotte, have often focused on early scholarship's designation of the bush as the "nineteenth-century Gothic figure par excellence" (Craven, "Ambiguities" 169), and even in contemporary scholarship, it remains a critical commonplace that "Australian Gothic texts swap the European haunted house for the unfamiliar, expansive Australian bush and the small country town" (Richards 224). Despite a number of individual analyses of suburban Australian Gothic, hinterland Gothic, or coastal Gothic, domestic dwellings in Australia remain largely undiscussed as potential sites of a distinctive Australian Gothic that responds to highly specific, local ways of dwelling and understandings of what it means to dwell in suburban Australia. When the genre's common connection to rurality is left aside, a great many additional texts can be considered Australian Gothic, and in this survey of several key texts, we argue for the significance of the house as a key site in Australian Gothic. We contend that a vernacular architectural Australian Gothic is just as distinct from the haunted houses and castles of the Americas and Europe as the bush of colonial Australian Gothic was distinct from the misty moors and jagged mountain ranges of classic Gothic texts and that the Australian Gothic house is worthy of closer critical attention.

Australian Gothic literature can, like Australian architecture, be regarded as a vernacular Gothic mode, adapted to local conditions and purpose-built to express regional tensions and cultural anxieties. Australian Gothic literature both draws on and subverts the conventions of European and American Gothic modes, and Australia's domestic architecture also takes its basic forms and early concepts from Euro-American architectural conceits, altering them through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in search of a distinctively national architecture (Drew 27). Like vernacular architecture, Australian Gothic is malleable, taking on new iterations and expressions as cultural and social attitudes shift and change.

### Works Cited

- Aguirre, Manuel. "Geometries of Terror: Numinous Spaces in Gothic, Horror and Science Fiction." *Gothic Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2008, pp. 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.7227/GS.10.2.2>.  
*Animal Kingdom*. Directed by David Michôd, Porchlight Films, 2010.

- Aranjuez, Adolfo. "Monstrous Motherhood: Summoning the Abject in *The Babadook*." *Screen Education*, no. 92, 2018, pp. 122–28.
- Armstrong, Sarah. *Salt Rain*. Allen and Unwin, 2004.
- Astley, Thea. "Being a Queenslander: A Form of Literary and Geographical Conceit." *Thea Astley's Fictional Worlds*, edited by Susan Sheridan and Paul Genoni, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006, pp. 7–21.
- The Babadook*. Directed by Jennifer Kent, Causeway Films, 2014.
- Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Translated by Maria Jolas, Beacon Press, 1994.
- Balanategui, Jessica. "The *Babadook* and the Haunted Space between High and Low Genres in the Australian Horror Tradition." *Studies in Australasian Cinema*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2017, pp. 18–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17503175.2017.1308907>.
- Baldick, Chris. Introduction. *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales*, edited by Chris Baldick. Oxford UP, 1992, pp. xi–xxiii.
- Baynton, Barbara. "The Chosen Vessel." 1896. *Bush Studies*, 3rd ed., Angus and Robertson, 1983, pp. 132–40.
- Beautiful*. Directed by Dean O'Flaherty, Kojo Pictures, 2008.
- Blunt, Alison, and Robyn Dowling. *Home*. Routledge, 2006.
- Boscaljon, Daniel. *Resisting the Place of Belonging: Uncanny Homecomings in Religion, Narrative and the Arts*. Routledge, 2013.
- Botting, Fred. *Gothic*. Routledge, 2014.
- Boyd, Robin. *The Australian Ugliness*. 1960. Text Publishing, 2002. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/qut/detail.action?docID=844229>.
- Cain-Gray, Lara. "Longing for a Life Less Ordinary: Reading the Banal as Dystopian in Sonya Hartnett's *Butterfly*." *Utopias, Dystopias, Alternative Visions*, special issue of *Social Alternatives*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2009, pp. 35–38.
- Carleton, Stephen. "Australian Gothic: Theatre and the Northern Turn." *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2012, pp. 51–67.
- The Cars That Ate Paris*. Directed by Peter Weir, Royal Smeal Films, Salt Pan Films, 1974.
- Castle, Terry. *Boss Ladies, Watch Out! Essays on Women, Sex and Writing*. Routledge, 2002.
- Craven, Allison. "The Ambiguities of Ancestry: Antiquity, Ruins and Converging Traditions of Australian Gothic Cinema." *Studies in Australasian Cinema*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2020, pp. 162–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17503175.2020.1845284>.
- . *Finding Queensland in Australian Cinema: Poetics and Screen Geographies*. Anthem Press, 2016. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1ffjpw](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1ffjpw).
- Crouch, David. "Writing of Australian Dwelling: Animate Houses and Anxious Ground." *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 27, no. 80, 2003, pp. 43–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14443050309387911>.
- Dalton, Trent. *Boy Swallows Universe*. Fourth Estate, 2018.
- Dermody, Susan, and Elizabeth Jacka. *The Screening of Australia: Anatomy of a National Cinema*. Vol. 2, Currency Press, 1988.
- Doolan, Emma. "Hinterland Gothic: Subtropical Excess in the Literature of South East Queensland." *Tropical Gothic*, special issue of *eTropic*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2019, pp. 174–91. <https://doi.org/10.25120/etropic.18.1.2019.3679>.
- . "Presumed Dead: Gothic Representations of the Missing Person in Contemporary Australian Literature." *Aeternum: The Journal of Contemporary Gothic Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2016, pp. 1–15. [www.aeternumjournal.com/volume-3-issue-1](http://www.aeternumjournal.com/volume-3-issue-1).
- Drew, Philip. "Inspiration from Below: Australian Vernacular in Contemporary Architecture." *Architectural Theory Review*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2006, pp. 26–40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13264820609478553>.
- du Maurier, Daphne. *Rebecca*. 1938. Knopf, 2017.
- Ellison, Elizabeth. "Badland Beach: The Australian Beach as a Site of Cultural Remembering." *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2016, pp. 115–27. [https://doi.org/10.1386/mapc.12.1.115\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/mapc.12.1.115_1).

- . "The Gritty Urban: The Australian Beach as City Periphery in Cinema." *Filmurbia: Screening the Suburbs*, edited by David Forrest, Graham Harper, and Jonathan Rayner, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017, pp. 79–94.
- Ferrier, Liz. "From Pleasure Domes to Bark Huts: Architectural Metaphors in Recent Australian Fiction." *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1987, pp. 40–53. <https://doi.org/10.20314/als.c9c4ea1bac>.
- Finegan, Samuel. "Adolescent Occultism and the Philosophy of Things in Three Novels." *Transnational Literature*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2015, pp. 1–11. ProQuest.
- Forrest, David, et al. *Filmurbia: Screening the Suburbs*. Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53175-9>.
- Francisco, Eric. "Relic Director Explains the Meaning to Her Film's Eerie Ending." *Inverse*, 17 July 2020, [www.inverse.com/entertainment/relic-ending-explain-movie-director-spoilers](http://www.inverse.com/entertainment/relic-ending-explain-movie-director-spoilers).
- Freud, Sigmund. *The Uncanny*. 1919. Translated by David McLintock, Penguin Books, 2003.
- Gelder, Ken. "Australian Gothic." *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*, edited by Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy, Routledge, 2007, pp. 115–23.
- . "The Postcolonial Gothic." *The Cambridge Companion to the Modern Gothic*, edited by Jerrold E. Hogle, Cambridge UP, 2014, pp. 191–207.
- Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. 1979. 2nd ed., Yale UP, 2000.
- Gildersleeve, Jessica. "Trauma, Memory and Landscape in Queensland: Women Writing 'a New Alphabet of Moss and Water.'" *Queensland Review*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2012, pp. 205–16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/qre.2012.23>.
- Gorton, Lisa. *The Life of Houses*. Giramondo Publishing, 2015.
- Green, Stephanie. "The Condition of Recognition: Gothic Intimations in Andrew McGahan's *The White Earth*." *Queensland Review*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2016, pp. 84–94. <https://doi.org/10.1017/qre.2016.9>.
- Hartnett, Sonya. *Butterfly*. Penguin, 2009.
- . *Sleeping Dogs*. Penguin, 1995.
- Hawkes, Lesley Kathryn. "Fear, Voice, and the Environment in Sonya Hartnett's *Forest* and *The Midnight Zoo*." *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2011, pp. 67–76.
- Heller-Nicholas, Alexandra. "'My Name is Edna': Fragmentation, Space and Identity in *Relic* (Natalie Erika James, 2020)." *Film International*, 11 July 2020, <http://filmint.nu/relic-natalie-erika-james-review-heller-nicholas/>.
- Hillard, Tom J. "From Salem Witch to *Blair Witch*: The Puritan Influence on American Gothic Nature." *Ecogothic*, edited by Andrew Smith and William Hughes, Manchester UP, 2013, pp. 103–19.
- Hounds of Love*. Directed by Ben Young, Factor 30 Films, 2017.
- Howell Amanda. "The Terrible Terrace: Australian Gothic Reimagined and the (Inner) Suburban Horror of *The Babadook*." *American-Australian Cinema: Transnational Connections* edited by Adrian Danks et al., Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 183–201. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-66676-1\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-66676-1_9).
- Jeffery, Ella. "'Impossible to Keep': Home Renovation and the Australian Suburban Gothic in Sonya Hartnett's *Golden Boys*." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, vol. 61, no. 5, 2020, pp. 577–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2020.1758612>.
- Johinke, Rebecca. "Manifestations of Masculinities: Mad Max and the Lure of the Forbidden Zone." *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 25, no. 67, 2009, pp. 118–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14443050109387646>.
- Johnston, George. *My Brother Jack*. 1962. Angus and Robertson, 1990.
- King, Peter. *Private Dwelling: Contemplating the Use of Housing*. Taylor and Francis, 2004.
- Lake Mungo*. Directed by Joel Anderson, Mungo Productions, 2009.
- Lambie, Ryan. "Jennifer Kent Interview: Directing *The Babadook*." *Den of Geek*, 10 Oct. 2014, [www.denofgeek.com/movies/jennifer-kent-interview-directing-the-babadook/](http://www.denofgeek.com/movies/jennifer-kent-interview-directing-the-babadook/).
- Lindsay, Joan. *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. 1967. Penguin Classics, 2017.

- Loreck, Janice. "Stranded in Suburbia: Women's Violence in Australian Cinema." *Australian Humanities Review*, vol. 64, 2019, pp. 121–38. ProQuest.
- Mad Max. Directed by George Miller, Roadshow Entertainment, 1979.
- Malouf, David. *12 Edmondstone Street*. Penguin, 1985.
- Mattes, Ari. "Antipodean Dream, Antipodean Nightmare: Spatial Ideology and Justin Kurzel's *Snowtown*." *Australian Humanities Review*, vol. 61, 2017, pp. 27–47. ProQuest.
- McCann, Andrew. "Decomposing Suburbia: Patrick White's Perversity." *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 18, no. 4, 1998. <https://doi.org/10.20314/als.c705e2407a>.
- McGahan, Andrew. *The White Earth*. Allen and Unwin, 2004.
- Murphy, Bernice. *The Suburban Gothic in American Popular Culture*. Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230244757>.
- O'Reilly, Nathanael. *Exploring Suburbia: The Suburbs in the Contemporary Australian Novel*. Teneo Press, 2012.
- The Plumber*. Directed by Peter Weir, South Australian Film Corporation, 1979.
- Punter, David, and Glennis Byron. *The Gothic*. Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- Quigley, Paula. "When Good Mothers Go Bad: Genre and Gender in *The Babadook*." *Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies*, no. 15, 2016, pp. 57–75. <http://irishgothic horror.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/issue15-paulaquigley-babadook.pdf>.
- Radiance*. Directed by Rachel Perkins, Eclipse Films, 1998.
- Rayner, Jonathan. "The Suburban Australian Gothic in *Lake Mungo* and *Beautiful*." *Filmurbia: Screening the Suburbs*, edited by David Forrest et al., Palgrave, 2017, pp. 191–205. <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53175-9>.
- Relic*. Directed by Natalie Erika James, Carver Films, 2020.
- Richards, Stuart. "Reawakening in Yoorana: *Glitch* and the Australian Gothic Film." *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, vol. 16, no. 3, 2018, pp. 221–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400309.2018.1479182>.
- Rooney, Brigid. *Suburban Space, the Novel and Australian Modernity*. Anthem Press, 2018.
- Scott, John, and Dean Biron. "Wolf Creek, Rurality and the Australian Gothic." *Continuum*, vol. 24, no. 2, 2010, pp. 307–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304310903576358>.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*. Arno Press, 1980.
- Snowtown*. Directed by Justin Kurzel, Madman Films, 2011.
- Steele, Kathleen. "Fear and Loathing in the Australian Bush: Gothic Landscapes in *Bush Studies* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*." *Colloquy*, no. 20, 2010, pp. 33–56. [www.colloquy.monash.edu.au/issue20/steele.pdf](http://www.colloquy.monash.edu.au/issue20/steele.pdf).
- Suburban Mayhem*. Directed by Paul Goldman, Icon Films, 2006.
- Tangcay, Jazz. "How the 'Relic' Production Design Team Used the Power of Suggestion to Create the Horror Film's Haunted House." *Variety*, 10 July 2020, <http://variety.com/2020/film/production/relic-haunted-house-production-design-1234701468/>.
- Turcotte, Gerry. "Australian Gothic." *The Handbook to Gothic Literature*, edited by Marie Mulvey Roberts, Macmillan, 1998, pp. 10–19.
- . *Peripheral Fear: Transformations of the Gothic in Canadian and Australian Fiction*. Peter Lang, 2009.
- Twin Peaks*. Created by Mark Frost and David Lynch, American Broadcasting Company, 1990–91. TV series.
- Wake in Fright*. Directed by Ted Kotcheff, Group W Films, NLT Productions, 1971.
- White, Patrick. *The Night the Prowler*. Penguin, 1974.
- Winton, Tim. *Cloudstreet*. Penguin, 1991.
- Wood, Charlotte. *The Natural Way of Things*. Allen and Unwin, 2015.

Reproduced with permission of copyright owner.  
Further reproduction prohibited without permission.