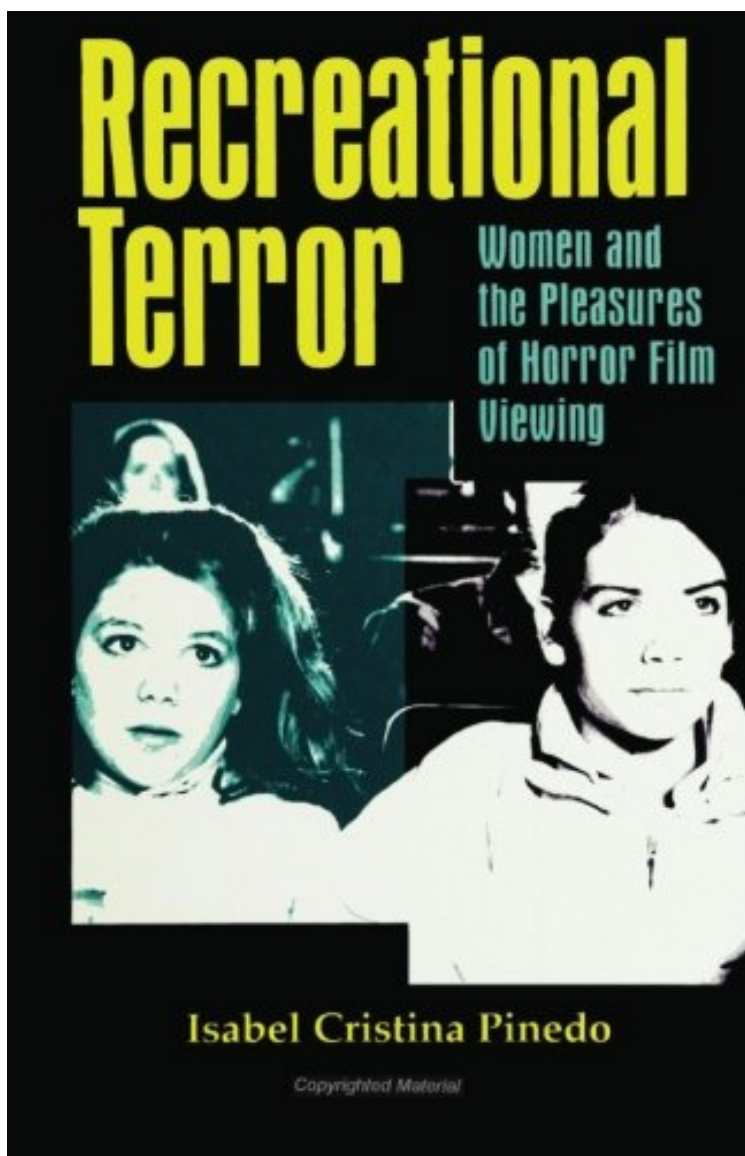


(Download ebook) Recreational Terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing (Sunny Series, Interruptions: Border Testimony Critical Discourse)

Recreational Terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing (Sunny Series, Interruptions: Border Testimony Critical Discourse)

Isabel Cristina Pinedo

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Recreational Terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing* (SUNY Series, *Interruptions: Border Testimony Critical Discourse*):

8 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Isabel Pinedo as drinking and movie-watching buddy. By Robert Beveridge
Isabel Cristina Pinedo, *Recreational Terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing* (State University of New York Press, 1997) Imagine yourself (assuming you're not one) a hardcore horror film fan, a kind of horror film Trekkie. The kind of person who can spout filmographies from all the big directors and extemporize on, say, the similarities in the subtexts of John Carpenter's *The Thing* and Craig McMahon's *Machined*, while taking a five-minute detour in the middle to compare and contrast the differences between Carpenter's and Howard Hawks' visions of the original story on which both versions of *The Thing* are based (you, of course, know that that story is John W. Campbell's "Who Goes There?"), and how you can tie them all in to Brad Anderson's *The Machinist* with ease. Now, aren't you the kind of person who would think to yourself, "man, it would be great to see a feminist reading of Dario Argento's *The Stendahl Syndrome!*"? You won't get a reading of Argento here, which I think is one of the book's major failings-- Argento is the kind of director who just begs a feminist interpretation-- but you get a bunch of other interesting stuff, certainly enough to make this book well worth your time (again assuming you're that hardcore horror film geek). You will also find Pinedo failing one of the great acid tests of any critic who deals in horror film-- waxing poetic on the racial overtones of *Night of the Living Dead* without even hinting that she's aware that they're all accidental. (The casting of Ben Jones was, for all intents and purposes, an accident; Romero and Russo did not specify the race of the character in the script.) But that's not nearly enough to drag down the book's high points. As usual, many of them come in the form of tactful, pistols-at-ten-paces style attacks on other critics whom Pinedo believes have completely missed the mark when interpreting films she is also addressing. This is the kind of stuff that makes books of cultural criticism fun, and you'll get a nice dose of it here (if you want the juicy stuff first, skip forward to Chapter 4 before reading the entire book). Getting past all that, though, there's the meat of the book to consider, in which Pinedo answers the question of why a woman, and specifically a feminist, would be interested in watching (or, heaven forbid, enjoying) horror films. Needless to say, since we're all human, some of her defenses and discoveries necessarily apply to others who enjoy the occasional blood-soaked good time. As with most critical works, one sometimes gets the feeling that perhaps this is all being overthought, but that doesn't make it any less interesting. Worth a read. You get the feeling it would be a lot of fun to watch horror movies with Pinedo and discuss them afterwards. I'm off to rent *The Stendahl Syndrome*. **

In *Recreational Terror*, Isabel Cristina Pinedo analyzes how the contemporary horror film produces recreational terror as a pleasurable encounter with violence and danger for female spectators. She challenges the conventional wisdom that violent horror films can only degrade women and incite violence, and contends instead that the contemporary horror film speaks to the cultural need to express rage and terror in the midst of social upheaval.

Isabel Pinedo's *Recreational Terror* provides a superb analysis not only of women's greater agency within and outside the horror genre, but also of why people enjoy horror films in general. Her excellent book is remarkably readable and yet sophisticated, written well enough to satisfy both general readers and film theory aficionados. Lynn S. Chancer, Sociology, Barnard College, Columbia University For those who are disgusted by and afraid to look at this disreputable genre, Pinedo explains why, and for fans, she provides critical attention to the fears we bring to this bloody spectacle. In an original contribution to genre/audience study, the author focuses on an important shift in narrative structure and devices within the postmodern horror film. With enthusiastic attention to detail, her work uncovers an irrational world where the mutilated female body is the site of a collapsed social order that viewers recognize and fear. Pinedo also persuades us to look at how subversive elements of female subjectivity within specific films and within contemporary audiences have informed the genre and its reception. Through an examination of this contradictory and complex dynamic we are persuaded to look again at the horror film and ourselves. Serafina K. Bathrick, Professor Emeritus, Hunter College Pinedo has seen some 600 films, and the wealth of this experience is reflected in the book. She makes distinctions that are neither obvious nor trivial, and reads these films as texts with the sophistication of someone whose interdisciplinary background includes film studies, sociology, and psychoanalysis. Her insistence on contextualizing both the films and what has been said about them by reviewers and film critics and theorists is consistent with the best work now being done by social scientists, historians, literary scholars, and students of film. Michael E. Brown, Northeastern University "Isabel Pinedo's *Recreational Terror* provides a superb analysis not only of women's greater agency within and outside the horror genre, but also of why people enjoy horror films in general. Her excellent book is remarkably readable and yet sophisticated, written well enough to satisfy both general readers and film theory aficionados." -- Lynn S. Chancer, Sociology, Barnard College, Columbia University "For those who are disgusted by and afraid to look at this 'disreputable' genre, Pinedo explains why, and for fans, she provides critical attention to the fears we bring to this bloody spectacle. In an original contribution to genre/audience study, the author focuses on an important shift in narrative structure and devices within the postmodern horror film.

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From the Back Cover
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About the Author
Isabel Cristina Pinedo is Assistant Professor of Media and Cultural Studies in the Department of Communications at Hunter College of the City University of New York.