Oh, The Horror!

Horror/Survival Horror Games
What is a Horror Game?

- “Horror” vs “Scary”
  - Most ‘horror’ games bill themselves as ‘survival horror.’
  - Horror is intended to horrify, creep out, or startle the audience.
  - Different ‘survival horror’ games put an emphasis on a different blend of the above three.
Examples
Why Horror Games?

- Each of these three components—horrifying, startling, creeping out—are handled better by various mediums.
  - Books: Horrify, creep out.
  - Movies: Horrify, startle
  - Games: Good at all three!
The Hunters

- Two frequent tropes in horror games:
  - Predators (Alien: Isolation, Slender, Resident Evil, Outlast, etc)
  - Inner Demons (Silent Hill, Lone Survivor, Five Night’s at Freddy’s, Amnesia: The Dark Descent, Amnesia: A Machine for Pigs)
Immersiveness

- Mirrors reality
- Discovery
- Causes physical reactions
- Survival aspect
- Consistent atmosphere - suspense
- Must constantly be alert- jump scares
SEVEN TYPES OF VIDEO CONTENT **CONSUMED BY GAMERS**

1. **Announcement** – Brand-released content, first look at a game, 1-3 minutes long
2. **Gameplay Demo** – Brand-released content, first look at game mechanics, often debuted at E3, 5-15 minutes long
3. **Launch** – Brand-released content, reminder that the game will soon be on sale, 1-3 minutes long
4. **Game Powered Entertainment** – Community-created content, funny videos & parodies, less than 5 minutes long
5. **Tutorial** – Community-created content, how-to videos, 1-5 minutes long
6. **Walkthrough** – Community-created content, gameplay footage, 15 minutes or more
7. **Review** – Third-party review, 4-5 minutes long
Socialization

- Sharing reactions and experiences
- Fear as a uniting emotion
- More fun with an audience
Rise in Popularity

- Shorter and more entertaining to watch
- YouTubers (PewdiePie)
- "Zombie craze"

Best Sellers February 2015
1.) Dying Light (PS4, XBO, PC)
2.) Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare (XBO PS4, 360, PS3, PC)
3.) Grand Theft Auto V (XBO, PS4, 360, PS3)
4.) Minecraft (360, PS3, XBO, PS4)
Originality

How do you make Horror original?

- Indie horror
- Creative storyline/POV - Bioshock/Last of Us
- Scare tactics
- Essentially all the same game
- Immediate vs Threatening
- Amnesia vs Outlast:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rblCXgPY0cU
Jump Scares
Simple but effective - finding a balance - cheapest - creates physical reaction - immediate adrenaline - establishes the environment - never safe - ambiguity
Player Power

How does this affect scare level?
- Position of vulnerability
- Physical vs emotional
- Memory as weakness
- Relatability and empathy

How does this affect gameplay?
- Makes the game harder
- Discovery
- Immersiveness
Why Do People Like Being Scared?

- Adrenaline Rush (makes them feel more alive, gives them a high)
- Social Approval (like taking a dare, it’s showing people what you’re willing to endure for their entertainment)