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Book Review: Little Horrors

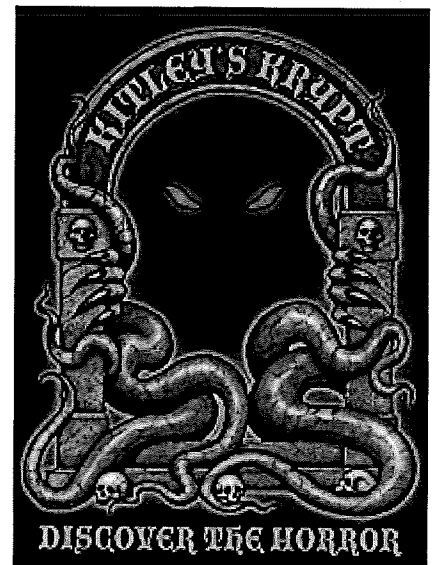
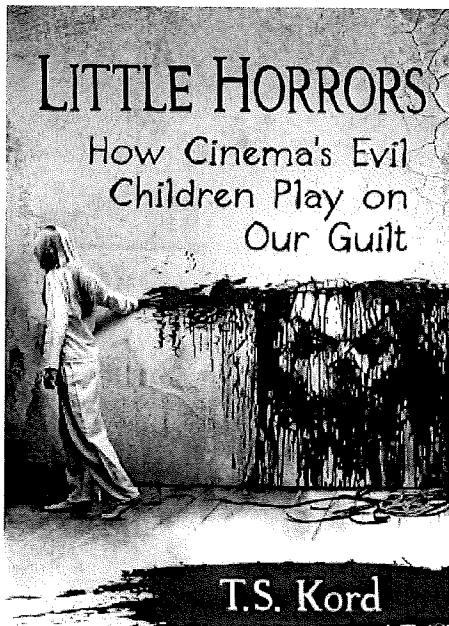
November 13, 2016 by Jon Kitley in Reviews: Horror Reference Book and tagged Little Horrors, McFarland

Little Horrors: How Cinema's Evil Children Play on Our Guilt

By T.S. Kord

Published by McFarland, 2016. 228 pages.

I first became aware of this book from my friend Gavin Schmitt's review, which immediately grabbed my attention at the author's introduction and her feelings towards some of the more scholarly reference books. When writing this book, she was told on more than one occasion that it wasn't academic enough. But Kord didn't care and states that "they failed to convince me that a good idea is worth less because it's expressed clearly, and I've never been a fan of the academic credo that if a book is comprehensible to more than three people, the author must have sold out." For that, this author has my undying attention and praise! That is exactly the problem I have with a lot of these film theory books, that it seems more important to them to talk over their audience than to actually get down to their level to get their point across. So major kudos to Kord for standing by her thoughts on this subject and not be swayed to change it just to get published.



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Okay...let's get to the book. I have to say that I was amazed at some of the information laid out in here, such as simply the number of horror films dealing with evil children, as well as how far back they go. Kord does an exceptional job covering different themes of them, but still able to express her opinions and theories on why they work, or more importantly, how they work on our psyche. There are different chapters on some of the different themes, such as Family, Religion, Nature, etc. At the beginning of some of these chapters, such as the one on Nature, I was a little confused at this, since I thought it was about evil children, but Kord brings it together explaining her points. And again, she speaks at the level at the reader making it very easy to follow what she is trying to say. Reading through this book gave me plenty of titles that made me want to re-visit, as well as some that I had passed up before, but now feel the need to see. To me, that is a sign of a great writer.



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will be reprinted.

Of course, I did find a few things that I had slight issues with. The first one wasn't the author's fault, but there seems to be a page(s) missing. A paragraph ends on page 50, but then on page 51, we start in mid-sentence, so not sure what or how much we're missing. But then there were a couple of things that were from the author that made me scratching my head a bit and is the one thing that I have so much trouble getting past, when an author states something that happens in a movie that just isn't accurate. Sure, this is me being very anal and nit-picking, but I just can't help it. When discussing John Carpenter's *Halloween*, Kord states "The majority of the film's victims are babysitters who ignore their charges, spending their time on the phone with friends, doing their nails or watching TV." Okay...I may be wrong, but I thought that Annie was the only victim that was a babysitter. Not sure if I would call that a 'majority'. When discussing *Pet Sematary*, at the end of the film, she states "In the final scene, Rachel returns from the dead and cuts Louis' throat." I believe Louis is hugging her while she is about to stab him in the back when the screen goes black, then you hear him scream. But again, might be me being a bit anal.



Those little picky things aside, I really enjoyed reading Kord's thoughts and theories, and brought up a lot of great points. Sure, some of them might be reading a little too much into the stories, but they are still worth pondering, even if you don't agree with them. That is the fun part of film theories, as long as we don't try to say that they are fact. And you never get that feeling from Kord, which was very refreshing for this type of book.

For information ordering this book, you can contact McFarland from their website [HERE](#) or you can order by phone by calling 800-253-2187.

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