Gender Trapped by the Opera Ghost: A Trans Reading of Joel Schumacher's *The Phantom of the Opera*

Maram Raposo de Medeiros da Rocha

While teenage years are confusing times for most people, there is a common sort of loneliness specific to those who are marginalized persons. How does one construe an identity when there are few (if any) people like oneself, when it is taboo to simply be or feel like one's self? Some transgender people may 'disguise' themselves, like the Phantom did, in their physical (and metaphorical) secret chambers. This scenario of difficulties in finding identity, "complexified" by other social markers (e.g., class, race, ability) contributes to the possibility of what Jack Halberstam (2005) calls "new life narratives and alternate relations to time and space" (10). Thus, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersexual, Asexual, plus others who belong to this group but are not represented in the acronym) may revisit and scrutinize past experiences, such as my first viewing of *Phantom,* in a very different way than the general population, making sense of complex feelings about identity and how the past, already lived and felt, becomes something different once coming to understand one's identity.

This article is part of my journey to make sense of my own experiences around marginalization, but also an effort to allow myself and other transmasculine people to re-signify cisgender narratives so that they fit our trans bodies and minds. I do so by looking at the 2004 feature-length film of Andrew Lloyd Webber's

The Phantom of the Opera, which has been the longest running show on Broadway, from January 26, 1988, to the present day. The movie, directed by Joel Schumacher, stars Gerard Butler as the Phantom, Emmy Rossum as Christine, and Patrick Wilson as Raoul, and received four Oscar nominations. Using the film as visual and verbal text, I decode a transgender, particularly a transmasculine, reading (Radner and Lanser 1987, 414).

Sexed and Gendered Monsters

Gender-diverse characters are still scarce in Hollywood culture. The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)'s Studio Responsibility Index report (2019) found no transgender characters in all 110 movies released in 2018 by major North American studios (i.e., 20th Century Fox, Lionsgate, Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures, Universal Pictures, Walt Disney Studios and Warner Bros., in addition to four subsidiaries of these studios). What happens all too often is that, when 2SLGBTQIA+ characters are present, they are stereotypically portrayed or are killed off as a plot device to serve the cis-straight protagonist's trajectory. Historically, but particularly during the 1950s and 1960s, the representation of gay men has had a lot more visibility and variety of narrative than that of lesbians, trans, and other members of the community (Gibson 2006). In the 1970s, views on homosexuality started changing as it began to lose its association with pathology (Gibson).[1] While there were some positive depictions of gay men, lesbians still had quite negative representations, which may have had a direct influence on the rising violence against gender and sexual minorities (GLAAD, as cited in Gibson 265). Between the 1990s and 2000s, there has been a significant increase in the positive representation of 2SLGBTQIA+

---

[1] Homosexuality was considered a disease, not only in its representation in media, as Gibson (2006) discusses, but also at institutional levels, being listed as such by the American Psychiatric Association until 1973 (Drescher 2015).

characters. However, the representations are predominantly of white and upper-middle class individuals (Gibson).

Given the general context of the representation of gender and sexual minorities, it is not surprising to come across problems with the portrayals of trans people in film. While transgender approaches are still rare in interpreting monsters or monstrous characters in scholarly literature, trans identities have been historically used in film as tools for comedy and ridicule (Miller). In addition, trans representation in cinema often appropriates queer culture without necessarily accurately depicting trans people's lives (Mocarski et al.) or historical events and figures (Keegan). Instead, trans representation in Hollywood is largely based on Euro-colonizer perspectives of gender that too often offer White-washed narratives. In recent years, however, other forms of trans representation have emerged, where transgender artists of colour—like Laverne Cox and Isabel Sandoval—engage in the filmmaking process, signaling hopeful future outcomes (Dry). Examples include the documentary *Disclosure* (2020), where Sam Feder (director) and Laverne Cox (producer), both from the United States, expand on how Hollywood tells trans stories and how these stories impact pop culture as well as the lives of transgender people (Feder).

While it's very important to have actual 2SLGBTQIA+ characters in movies, particularly trans characters played by trans actors, that is not the only possible mode for understanding trans in film. Reading queerness into seemingly cis-straight characters is not a new practice: several Disney animations have been recuperated by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, such as Disney heroine Mulan, who creates/embodies a male persona as a means to take her father's place in the Chinese army against a foreign threat, or Elsa from *Frozen*, whose theme song about embracing oneself and living authentically became an anthem for the lesbian community (Bancroft & Cook; Buck & Lee; Romano et al.). Thus, the lack of explicitly 2SLGBTQIA+ characters in Schumacher's (2004) *The*

Phantom does not foreclose any resemblance to transgender narratives.

The face is humans' main source of non-verbal communication with other humans, its features critical for judging and categorizing others (Krause et al.). In particular, the face is an important variable in the ever-present, unconscious, and automatic judgements of sex/gender. A person's identity is subjected to gender boundaries *years* before secondary sexual characteristics (i.e., features not related to reproduction that are used conventionally to attribute gender, e.g., facial hair, hairline distribution, jawline, and eyebrows) begin to develop. The gender boundaries around trans people tend to become even more pronounced when their transitioning becomes visible to others.

The Phantom's face, like the face of transmasculine individuals, can be a source of discomfort, not in itself, but based on how others react to it. Both experience othering by being automatically categorized in social interactions through their facial attributes. While some do pursue bodily modifications, not all trans people pursue gender-affirming surgery. Similarly, it would be a mistake to assume that every trans person has an interest in the changes attainable through hormone therapy (e.g., facial hair, jawline). In other words, there isn't a necessity for either treatment for a person to be trans and each treatment can be sought independently. Following this logic, the Phantom's experiences with discrimination are especially comparable with those of transmasculine people, particularly those who do not use HRT and those who do but are in early stages. The importance of the Phantom's face as an embodiment of abjection is comparable to the physical strains of transitioning, in particular bodily alterations with surgery and/or hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

This Phantom's Background

The story of *The Phantom of The Opera* has been told in numerous ways: the original novel by Gaston Leroux (1911), movies,[2] musicals, and movie musicals (Biancorosso). Inspired by the Leroux novel, the narrative, throughout the different media, features a complex relationship between a brilliant, yet disfigured, man—the Phantom—and his music student—Christine. In Schumacher's 2004 film, upon seeing the face behind the mask the Phantom wears, Christine becomes terrified of him and, unlike in the novel where Christine is then held hostage after the unmasking, the Phantom escorts Christine back to the above grounds of the Opera House. She then seeks refuge with her childhood sweetheart, Raoul, who, together with the Opera House management, bids an intellectual war against the Phantom. This rivalry is triggered partly by the murder of their handyman, Joseph Bouquet (Kevin McNally), by the Phantom—which, in turn, had served as retribution directed at the management for not following the Phantom's instructions regarding the opera production of *Il Muto*. Using his wit, the Phantom creates a meta-trap: he demands the Opera House host his play, "Don Juan Triumphant," with Christine as the leading lady, knowing that Raoul and the theatre owners will try to capture him during its performance. As the production is set in motion, the oblivious group of managers and Raoul prepare to apprehend the Phantom only to have him kidnap the star from the stage, mid-opening night. He achieves this by impersonating the lead singer Ubaldo Piangi (played by Victor McGuire), whose character in the play wears a black mask. Being both smart and incredibly theatrical, the Phantom abducts Christine using a trapdoor connecting the stage of the Opera to its underground, his home and domain, and triggers a mechanism he installed to drop the Opera's huge, intricate chandelier on top of the stage, thus preventing his pursuers from following.

---

[2] The first screen version (1925) starred Lon Chaney as the Phantom. Others include the 1943 version starring Claude Rains, 1962 with Herbert Lom, and 1989 with Robert Englund.

Raoul immediately goes to Christine's rescue with help from Madame Giry (Miranda Richardson), an Opera employee responsible for the ballet as well as communication between its management and the Phantom. Her backstory is shown in a flashback: she narrates to Raoul the circumstances of how she met the Phantom as a young girl. Having rescued the Phantom from an abusive environment with a freak show circus, she hides him under the Opera House, and he makes it his home from then on. When the Phantom captures Raoul, he forces Christine to choose between binding herself to him (and freeing Raoul) or freeing herself (and having Raoul murdered). Christine shows a mix of affection and forgiveness towards the Phantom and he, moved by her empathy and understanding, releases the young couple and escapes from an angry mob led by the rest of the Opera management.

Gender performance is important to the movie's source. As Jerrold E. Hogle (2002) argues, Leroux's work toys with the triad of sex-gender-identity; all three main characters display characteristics that cross hegemonic borders of the gender binary (12-14). Leroux describes the Phantom's voice as both masculine and feminine (following the premise of sex/gender binary): "the Phantom's voice, with its abnormally wide range . . . proves able to alter its perceived sex" (Hogle 13). Christine plays a male character (a "trouser role" in opera); and Raoul is sensitive and gentle. Further, *Phantom*'s representation of "the intense confusion of genders is echoed throughout the novel, so much so that they become hard to separate even in the other main characters" (Hogle 13). Even non-central characters, such as the flamboyant chorus singers (Figure 1), perform non-normative gender presentations while performing for one of the Opera House's productions.

Figure 1. Screenshot showing the cast of the *Il Muto* production: "Poor Fool, He Makes Me Laugh" [00:59] ©*The Phantom of the Opera*, directed by Joel Schumacher (2004; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2005), DVD.

By adapting the novel into a musical, Lloyd Webber introduces audio-visual elements to the narrative, bringing the "power of the music of the night" to this work. The audience becomes captive to the beautiful songs, which may cause dissonance once the face behind the mask is revealed—literally, during unmasking scenes, or figuratively, when the Phantom's more problematic side is shown. Furthermore, the film's casting of Butler as lead contributes to the contrast between a normatively attractive man and the deformed half of his face (Figure 2), which society does not accept.

Figure 2. Screenshots depicting the contrast between the portrayal of the Phantom before his reveal scene (left) and after (right) – Respectively: "I Remember/Stranger Than You Dreamt It" [00:45] and "The Point of No Return" [01:55] ©*The Phantom of the Opera*, directed by Joel Schumacher (2004; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2005), DVD.

Abjection and Identity

Barbara Creed (2015) shows that horror movies historically link hegemonic femininity to the monstrous. Figuratively, a lot of films of this genre make feminine characters evil, cruel, or physically anomalous; they literally make actual monsters female. With reference to the Phantom's character in a transmasculine reading, the process of monstrification is similar to Creed's, but here the specificities of misogynistic discourse are targeted at transgender individuals (i.e., transmisogyny). Julia Kristeva's (1982) theory of abjection is embodied by the Phantom in his condition of being deemed horrendous, and consequently cast out of society. Analogous to the adaptation of Creed's material to a transfeminist context, here the idea of the abject is linked to signifiers of transgender identity, as opposed to signifiers of femininity and womanhood.

Hegemonic Hollywood cinema historically has focused on the rejection of women and femininity, and contributed to the idea that beauty and goodness parallel one another (Creed; Dion, Berscheid, and Walster 285). In other words, virtue is to attractive appearance what evil is to appearances outside of normative beauty standards, like the Phantom. While Creed's work situates femininity and womanhood as abject—which here I link to transmisogyny—Harry Benshoff (2015) connects the dread associated with monsters in the horror genre to homosexuality, as the "coded inequality of the sexes becomes one of the bases for the dominant ideology's fear and loathing of male homosexuals" (121). The "coded inequality" Benshoff refers to is also a significant foundation of hate directed toward transgender individuals, because it prescribes strict and binary gender norms.

Because the Phantom has been treated like the monstrous other, he fears rejection, misunderstanding, and discrimination. He therefore isolates himself from a society that seeks to eliminate him. He is acutely aware of the social perception of him by others as he sings to Christine: "why, you ask was I bound and chained in this cold and dismal place? Not for any mortal sin, but the wickedness of my abhorrent face." This social exclusion is made clear visually by Madam Giry's flashback: the young Phantom is rescued from an abusive home with the circus. The freak show context adds to the association between the social reject and queerness because the people used as entertainment[3] and those who belong to gender/sexuality minorities are singled out and ostracized by general society (Clare).

---

[3] Aside from the Phantom himself, "the devil's child" (Schumacher 2004, 01:27), other social rejects used as attractions in the circus include a *femme*-presenting person with a beard, a contortionist, and a fire breather.

(In)visible Ghost

The Phantom is both a presence and an absence as he controls the opera house, but is rarely seen among the people who frequent the theatre. His isolation becomes a conduit for creativity; it gives him liberty to fully be himself and provides the safety to explore his artistic (musical, theatrical, architectural, illusionist) abilities. Without human contact he is free from discrimination within the social sphere and thus is able to access the possibilities attached to a life free from judgement, as well as protection, as he describes it, "from the garish light of day." The daytime and the light represent the social world that rejects him; his withdrawal from that world creates the necessary environment to develop his creative skills.

Nevertheless, the pain of social rejection remains a basic aspect of the character. In the final moments in the movie, he refers to "[t]his face, which earned a mother's fear and loathing." The words allude to a lifetime of prejudice, and more specifically, "earned" allows for the speculation of the Phantom's internalized attitudes toward himself. Like the Phantom, many 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals face discrimination early on, with some facing homelessness due to parental rejection, and several isolating themselves or being isolated from (potential) support networks (Johnson and Amella).

The Phantom wears a mask throughout most of the movie to conceal that part of himself that is not socially acceptable. The lyrics to "Masquerade" exemplify the safety behind being able to figuratively cover yourself: "Masquerade! Hide your face so the world will never find you." However, it also suggests that masks are more common than might be suspected: "Masquerade! Look around, there's another mask behind you." As Erving Goffman (1959) suggests, social behaviours and roles have performative features, here alluded to by the Phantom's mask. The mask becomes part of the Phantom's identity, an alternative face he wears to navigate the world.

There is a duality in play between the control the Phantom has and the fear he instils in the people who frequent the Opera House, coupled with the social protection acquired by living underneath the building and wearing a mask. These are both strategies that aim to protect from discrimination and abuse. The same goal of self-protection may be of interest to some trans people, when an acquired invisible transmasculinity means one has become blended-in with society's standards of masculine features. While the Phantom hides underground and behind a mask, trans men may hide in plain sight, yet like him, they always run the risk of being outed. Their trans identity remains a target for social exclusion, which, despite manifesting with lesser likelihood after some time on HRT, still happens in situations such as in physicians' offices, during identification documenting, or when encountering a snitch who reveals their identity.

The Mirror Pass—Relationship Traps

The mirror in Christine's dressing room works as a window to the relationship between Christine and the Phantom as well as a secret passage to his lair beneath the Opera House. The use of a mirror as a door to the Phantom's dominion serves as a metaphor for his own mind and emotion (Figure 3); thus, inviting Christine through the doorway has powerful implications that he is also admitting her into a layer of his vulnerability.

Figure 3. Screenshot showing Christine's back as well as her reflection in the mirror, with the Phantom being visible from the other side of it – "The Mirror" [00:31] ©*The Phantom of the Opera*, directed by Joel Schumacher (2004; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2005), DVD.

In addition, there is the playful element of the Phantom's and Christine's images appearing on either side of the mirror door. This image also offers a different path of analysis, toward the complexities of their attraction and gendered identities reflected and refracted within the mirror. As they observe each other and their own reflections, they share a moment of discovery of the self, the other, and the uncanny attraction between the two (Greenhill, Best, and Anderson-Grégoire 200).

The first time Christine enters the underground of the Opera is followed by a scene presenting the sexual nature of her relationship to the Phantom. As a consequence of the "sweet intoxication" of the melodic encounter, the singer responds to her teacher and begins caressing his face. Her curiosity over what the protagonist might be hiding entices her to investigate, and in response to her removing his mask without his consent, Christine gets a harsh rebuke from her teacher. The Phantom has not chosen to disclose his identity to her, and her action is a violation of his trust, a situation that might resemble transgender encounters with (potential) intimate partners. While some choose to be open about being trans, others prefer to

keep this aspect private for a variety of reasons, including their safety. Thus, Christine's actions parallel the pressure to move to a level of intimacy that forces disclosure of a trans identity; in this case, the other party (the Phantom) is not ready and does not consent.

During the performance of the Phantom's play, Christine removes his mask for a second time, revealing his identity in a big transformation scene. This moment has many similarities with queer narratives of being (publicly) outed—in this case, by a loved one. [4] The two moments of outing implicate violence, both when Christine removes his mask (in private, within his quarters) and when she shares her knowledge with the Opera's audience. While some experiences of being outed result from accidental instances (e.g., usage of the wrong pronouns, nouns, or even names), others resemble more closely what happens in the film: an intentional act by a formerly trusted person that endangers the transgender individual by revealing their identity in a public setting.

The Phantom's outing scenes parallel the disclosure of trans identity in a romantic partner situation and in a more public one. Trans narratives often display converging elements with respect to dating experiences: disclosing a trans identity risks rejection, for instance based on a supposed sexual preference for certain genitalia or on the interpretation of passing as a form of deceit. Within popular culture, this perceived attempt at deceit is referred to as a "trap." The rationale behind claiming to have been "trans trapped" is based on the transphobic premise that trans people are pretending to be someone else, as opposed to simply being themselves (GLAAD). When Christine exposes her mentor, she reveals something intimate about him (the face behind the mask) to people that she knows will come after him, i.e., Raoul, the Opera management, and the police. The assembled team, and the Opera's audience alike, scream at the

---

[4] Outing is having a queer identity made public by a third party, deliberately or occasionally un-deliberately, without the queer individual's consent.

sight, horrified. While the first group is arguably stirred by the Phantom's earlier murders, members of the general audience join the original team in a rage originated, not by knowledge of the murders, but by Christine's big reveal. By the time the Phantom grabs Christine and activates his trapdoor on the stage, a mob has already formed, intent on rescuing the leading lady and, more importantly, chasing her captor, whom they now deem a monster.

As much as being outed has personal impact, it affects how a person is perceived and thus treated socially. Although the chase can be considered a reasonable reaction to the Phantom's murders, the mob's persecution can be interpreted as rage born out of the visceral sentiments evoked by the reveal of his face. By this logic, their rage is justified by what they perceive as being deceived by the Phantom's non-normative face. Correspondingly, trans identities are still immensely discriminated against, whether facing prejudice in everyday contexts, or falling victim to hate crimes, and the "trap" — or failure to pass—is often the justification for this treatment (Holden; Cowie; Lee; Kelleher; Johnson and Amella).

The Phantom's appearance with and without the mask represents the difference between passing and not passing in social encounters: the Phantom remains the same individual, but without his mask, his difference is more apparent to observers. While his face is partially hidden, viewers experience this Phantom as a gorgeous one. However, once the tension between him and Christine boils over, her ultimate betrayal onstage exposes a different version of the Phantom as the camera focuses on the deformed half of his face (Figure 2).

To the Phantom, the effort of being inconspicuous about his identity is grounded in being exposed and, with that exposure, being discriminated against. Notably, exposure is indeed what happens, and the fictional Parisian society persecutes the Phantom, arguably, based on his appearance. In similar fashion, society excludes trans

people by denying this population access to basic resources based on their transness (whether it be real or assumed by others). Rather than defining Phantom, or trans individuals, solely based on what is deemed monstrous, there is value in observing them in more comprehensive ways.

The Phantom draws intrigue and fascination through his redeeming characteristics of love for Christine and creation of music. Because the film aligns its viewers with Christine's experiences and emotions, including her kindness towards the Phantom after her abduction, these features can afford the Phantom sympathy as well as the diegetic possibility of being loved despite his violent actions and physical attributes. He would be rendered unlovable to the audience if his sensitivity and creativity (and the conventional side of his face) were removed from the otherwise normative body. Like him, trans men whose bodily features fall within hegemonic ideas of beauty are often described as handsome "in spite of" being trans: in other words, the perceived transgressions of gender by trans people are commonly (partially) forgiven (only) if their gender performance/presentation occurs in normative ways.

Finally, the Phantom follows contemporary tendencies of presenting himself simultaneously as self and Other, by being monstrous (face and murders) or trans and appealing (music and love for Christine) at the same time (Sobchack 174). His character provides the audience a complex play between being bewitched by the genius and repelled by cultural values that cast aside individuals deemed abject. In one of the final scenes in the movie, the Phantom makes his escape from the place where such traumatic experiences occurred by breaking a mirror into his freedom. He is no longer bound by his image and leaves through a secret passage to the city of Paris through the broken mirror. In his escape *finale*, he is shown calmly walking away, only this time without wearing his mask.

References

Bancroft, Tony, and Barry Cook (Dir. and Animators). 1998. *Mulan*. (Prod. Walt Disney Enterprises), length: 1h 28min.

Benshoff, Harry M. 2015. "The Monster and the Homosexual." In *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*, edited by Barry Keith Grant, 2nd ed., 116–41. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press.

Biancorosso, Giorgio. 2018. "The Phantom of the Opera and the Performance of Cinema." *The Opera Quarterly* 34 (2–3): 153–67.

Buck, Chris, and Jennifer Lee. 2013. *Frozen*. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures.

Clare, Eli. 2013. "Freaks and Queers." In *Gender and Women's Studies in Canada: Critical Terrain*, edited by Margaret Helen Hobbs and Carla Rice, 1st ed., 145–59. Toronto, Ont.: Women's Press.

Cowie, Sam. 2018. "Violent Deaths of LGBT People in Brazil Hit All-Time High." *The Guardian*, January 22, 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/22/brazil-lgbt-violence-deaths-all-time-high-new-research. Accessed January 31, 2022.

Creed, Barbara. 2015. "Horror and the Monstrous-Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection." In *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*, edited by Barry Keith Grant, 2nd ed., 37–67. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press.

Dion, Karen, Ellen Berscheid, and Elaine Walster. 1972. "What Is Beautiful Is Good." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 24 (3): 285–90.

Drescher, Jack. 2015. "Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality". *Behavioral Sciences (Basel, Switzerland)* 5, 565–75.

Dry, Jude. 2020. "Trans Movies and TV Shows to Watch for Transgender Awareness Week." *IndieWire*. November 18, 2020. https://www.indiewire.com/2020/11/trans-movies-tv-transgender-awareness-week-1234599394/. Accessed January 31, 2022.

Feder, Sam (Dir.). 2020. *Disclosure: Trans Lives on Screen*. Netflix. (Prod. Field of Vision, Bow and Arrow, Entertainment, and Level Forward; Dist. Netflix), length: 1h 47min.

Gibson, Rhonda. 2006. "Zero to 24-7: Images of Sexual Minorities on Television." In *News and Sexuality: Media Portraits of Diversity*, 257–78. London: Sage Publications.

GLAAD. 2020. "GLAAD Media Reference Guide - Transgender Issues." *GLAAD*. Accessed September 29, 2021. https://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender.

———. 2019. "2019 GLAAD Studio Responsibility Index." *GLAAD*. https://www.glaad.org/sri/2019.

Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Anchor Books.

Greenhill, Pauline, Anita Best, and Emilie Anderson-Grégoire. 2012. "Queering Gender: Transformations in 'Peg Bearskin,' 'La Poiluse,' and Related Tales." In *Transgressive Tales: Queering the Grimms*, edited by Kay Turner and Pauline Greenhill, 181–205. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Halberstam, J Jack. 2005. *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives. Sexual Cultures*. New York: NYU Press.

Hogle, Jerrold E. 2002. *The Undergrounds of the Phantom of the Opera: Sublimation and the Gothic in Leroux's Novel and Its Progeny*. New York, NY: Palgrave.

Holden, Alexandra. 2019. "The Gay/Trans Panic Defense: What It Is, and How to End It." American Bar Assocation. March 31, 2019. https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/member-features/gay-trans-panic-defense/. Accessed January 31, 2022.

Johnson, Michael J., and Elaine J. Amella. 2014. "Isolation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth: A Dimensional Concept Analysis." *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 70 (3): 523–32.

Keegan, Cáel M. 2016. "History, Disrupted: The Aesthetic Gentrification of Queer and Trans Cinema." *Social Alternatives* 35 (3): 50–56.

Kelleher, Cathy. 2009. "Minority Stress and Health: Implications for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Young People." *Counselling Psychology Quarterly* 22 (4): 373–79.

Krause, Sascha, Mitja D Back, Boris Egloff, and Stefan C Schmukle. 2014. "Implicit Interpersonal Attraction in Small Groups: Automatically Activated Evaluations Predict Actual Behavior Toward Social Partners." *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 5 (6): 671–79.

Kristeva, Julia. 1982. "Approaching Abjection." *Oxford Literary Review* 5 (1–2): 125–49.

Lee, Cynthia. 2020. "The Trans Panic Defense Revisited." *American Criminal Law Review* 57. (4): 1411-98.

Leroux, Gaston. 1910. *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. 1st ed., Pierre (Lafitte & Cie).

Miller, Lucy J. 2015. "Becoming One of the Girls/ Guys: Distancing Transgender Representations in Popular Film Comedies." In *Transgender Communication Studies: Histories, Trends, and Trajectories*, edited by Leland G. Spencer and Jamie C. Capuzza, 131–44. Lexington Books.

Mocarski, Richard, Robyn King, Sim Butler, Natalie R. Holt, T. Zachary Huit, Debra A. Hope, Heather M. Meyer, and Nathan Woodruff. 2019. "The Rise of Transgender and Gender Diverse Representation in the Media: Impacts on the Population." *Communication, Culture and Critique* 12 (3): 416–33.

Radner, Joan N, and Susan S Lanser. 1987. "The Feminist Voice: Strategies of Coding in Folklore and Literature." *The Journal of American Folklore* 100 (398): 412–25.

Romano, Aja, Alex Abad-Santos, and Emily VanDerWerff. 2020. "Beyond Mulan: The Queerest Films in the Disney Canon." *Vox*, September 8, 2020. https://www.vox.com/culture/21417212/what-are-the-gayest-disney-films-mulan-queer-subtext. Accessed January 31, 2022.

Schumacher, Joel (Dir.). 2004. *The Phantom of the Opera*. (Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2005), DVD. (Prod. Joel Schumacher Productions, Really Useful Films, and Scion Films), length: 2h 23min.

Sobchack, Vivian. 2015. "Bringing It All Home: Family Economy and Generic Exchange." In *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*, edited by Barry Keith Grant, 2nd ed., 171–91. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.