Butler Brown Bag Series for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Presents

Possession Films and the Horrors of Womanhood

Casey Kelly
Media, Rhetoric, and Culture

Wednesday, December 4
Noon-1 p.m., AU111

Students, staff and faculty are all welcome - no RSVP required

Why do films about demon possession seem to resonate with American filmgoers? In this presentation, Casey Kelly examines contemporary horror films about demonic possession in the context of present cultural anxieties about young women’s sexuality. In a public culture saturated with messages of sexual purity and abstinence-until-marriage, possession films transcode contemporary discourses about the dangers of young women’s sexual agency into a cinematic form that resonates with the gender anxieties of popular audiences. With an emphasis on the threats to young women’s innocence and physical integrity, the dangers of lost fatherhood, and the protections of religious faith and the nuclear family, possession films project collective fears that burgeoning womanhood might precipitate a crisis in masculinity and the family. Through a comparative analysis of the rhetoric of sexual purity advocates and the narrative structure of possessions films, Casey will illustrate what is currently articulated as monstrous about young women in American culture. This lecture will examine the 2012 film The Possession to show how images of vulnerable, violated, and monstrous young women legitimize male control over female bodies.

Visit www.butler.edu/faculty-development/brown-bag-series for information on upcoming presentations.

The Butler Brown Bag Series is sponsored by the Office of the Provost and Phi Kappa Phi.