

*A Reddit
Hot Take:*

Power Horror

How manipulated power structures have
influenced the modern Horror genre



Now: What's Happening?

Power Horror

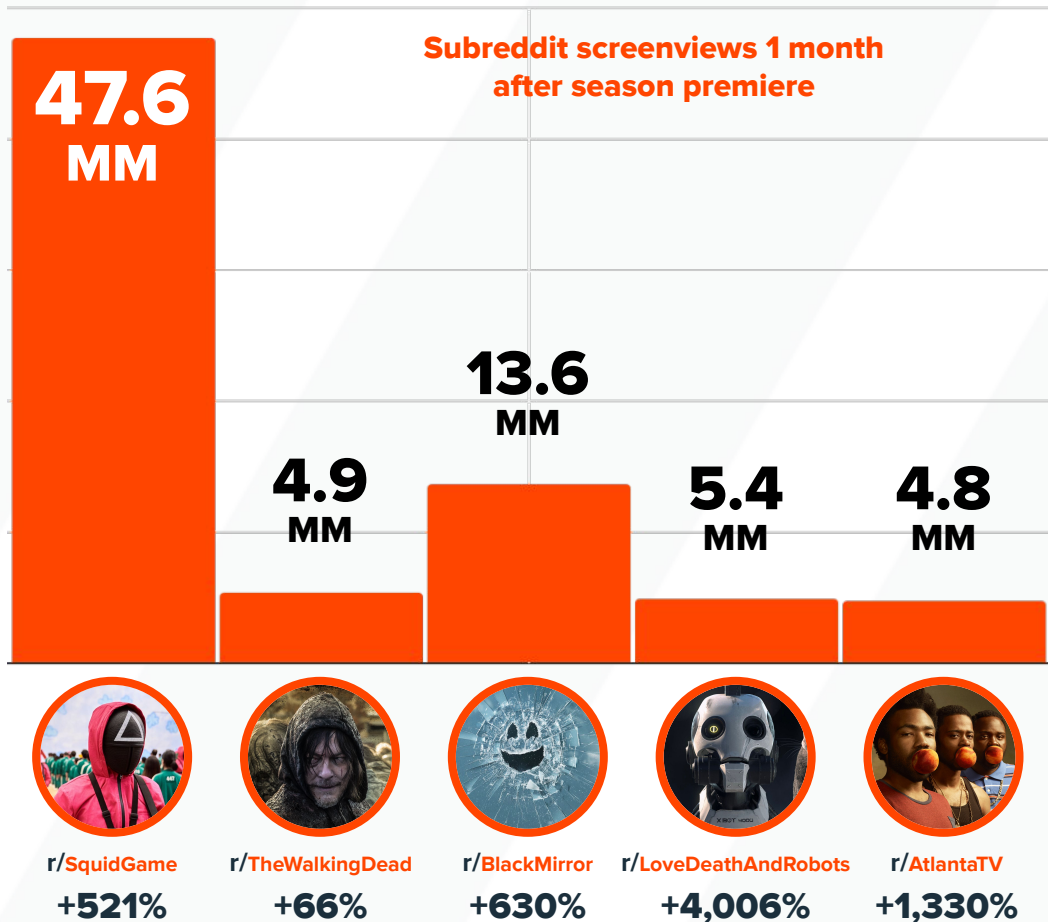
Trend Summary: Today, true terror is seeing the power structures of our world reflected back at us and amplified to their logical extremes.

With the tumultuous state of our world, it can feel like *the real world* is the *true horror*. How can supernatural forces compete with the real terror reflected in our ever-present news feeds?

But as it always does, the genre has adapted, moving away from the blood, gore, and jump scares of past movies, into a more realistic reflection of power structures operating unchecked. For many, the horror is all around us—silently torturing us in our daily lives.

This is Power Horror, the exaggerated depiction of what we're all fearing: that **our lives are subject to the whims of an invisible power structure.**

Source: Reddit Internal



Produced by Reddit Global Insights



Interview with a Vampire is the ideal
fit with this Power Horror trend...

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*[The Vampire's] curse compels him to make ever more victims, just as the capitalist is compelled to accumulate. His nature forces him to struggle to be unlimited, to subjugate the whole of society. For this reason, **one cannot 'coexist' with the vampire. One must either succumb to him or kill him.***

– Franco Moretti “*Dracula and Capitalism*”



Origin: Where did this come from?

Horror is a sleeping giant

The horror genre doesn't generate the same headlines as the latest Marvel movie or reality TV hijinks, but on Reddit, it's a sleeping giant with an intense fandom.

The popularity of horror on Reddit outpaces sports, anime, or reality TV, but it's not driven by singular IPs in the same way other genres are. It's the superfans of content that drive its engagement.

Pandemic-enforced delays in content production coupled with the ubiquity of streaming services has created the perfect storm for horror content. Redditors are rediscovering older horror properties and then flocking to subreddits like r/horormovies to swap recommendations and find their next binge. The result is a more personal exploration of content, driven by personal passions rather than blockbusters.

From: monolithic To: niche superfandoms

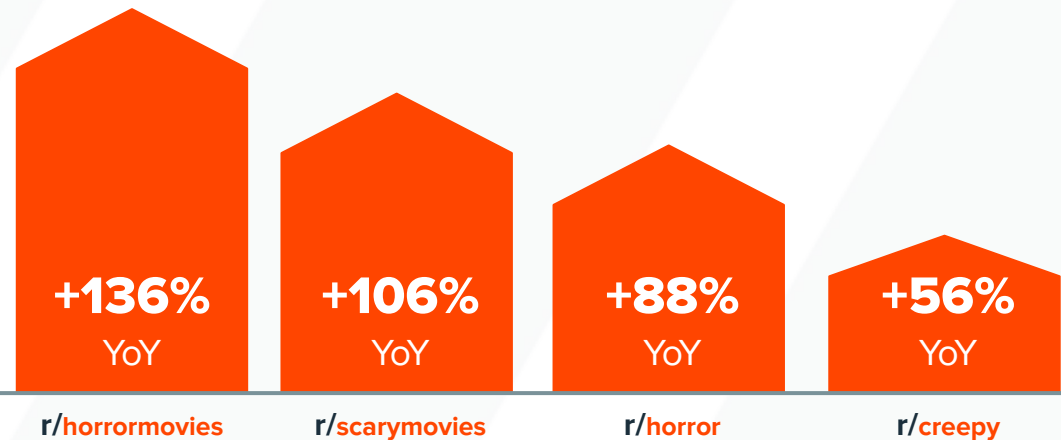
Source: GWI USA, Q1 2022; Reddit Internal, Screenviews, May 2022 vs May 2021

1 in 3

Redditors enjoy Horror, making it **the #4 most enjoyed** TV/Film genre

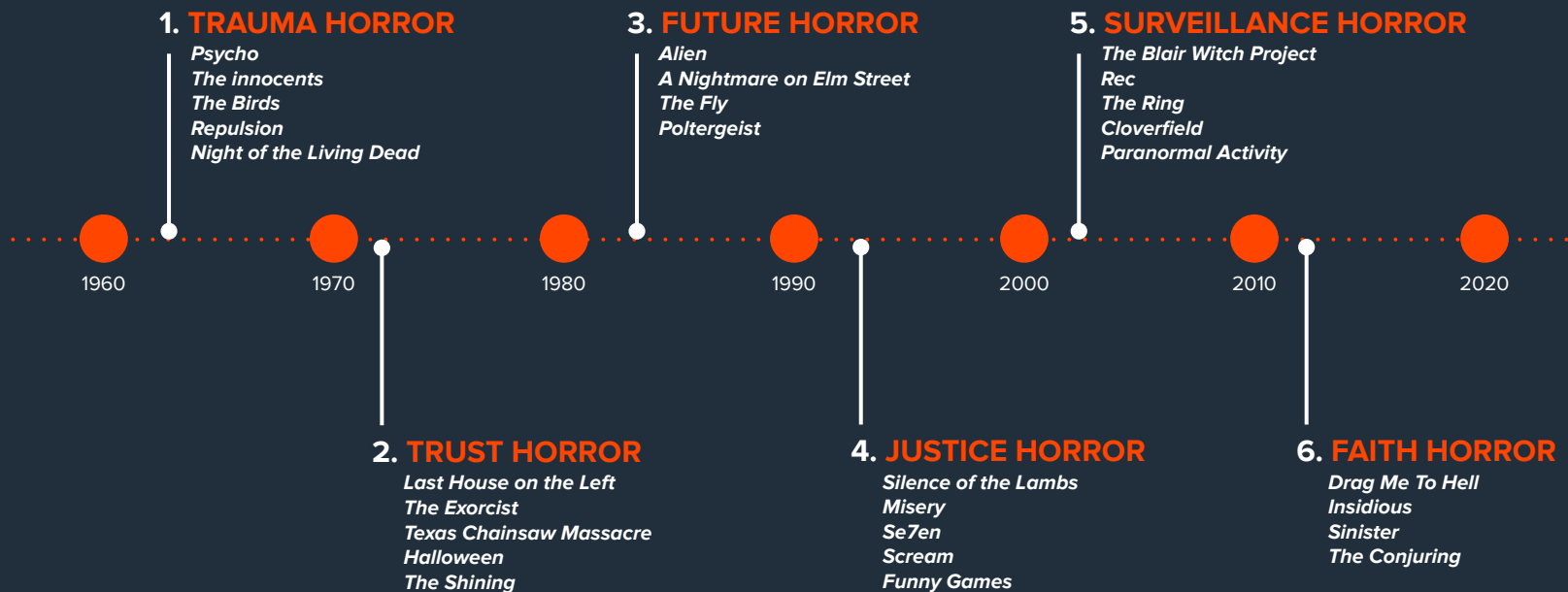
1.3x

Redditors are more likely to enjoy Horror than **Sports, Anime, or Reality TV**



Produced by Reddit Global Insights

Horror reflects the collective anxiety of our times and pushes it to the extreme...



Next: What's Coming

The Horror Next Door

While there will always be room for the classics, horror is being redefined by the masses. Fans are sharing their personal stories of everyday terror, lending a lived-in, all-to-real vibe to the genre.

The result is more short form with formats that leave much up to the imagination. The stories feel more confessional, leaving you with the question: did this really happen? Does it really matter?

It's a profound change. While IP will always be attractive, there's an audacious belief that **my experience** is actually worth telling. Rather than waiting for the next book, movie or season of TV, the stories we share with one another can fill the gaps.

Our prediction? The next big horror franchise will come from adaptations of these fan-driven posts.

Source: Reddit Internal, June 2021 to May 2022; Quantcast

Top 50

r/nosleep and **r/creepy** are among the most subscribed subreddits across **all of Reddit**

209M

Screenviews for **r/twosentencehorror** in the last 12 mos, up **+43.9% YoY**



+71%

YoY increase in total views of **r/horrorlit**

60%

Of **r/horrorlit** is under 30 years old



Produced by Reddit Global Insights

Horror is becoming more bite-sized and personal...

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You can tell where a corpse is buried by looking out for certain flowers that like to grow over dead bodies.

It's not discovering a familiar-shaped patch growing in my backyard that makes me wish I didn't know this - it's that the patch has been moving closer to my back door.

r/TwoSentenceHorror

May '22 Winner



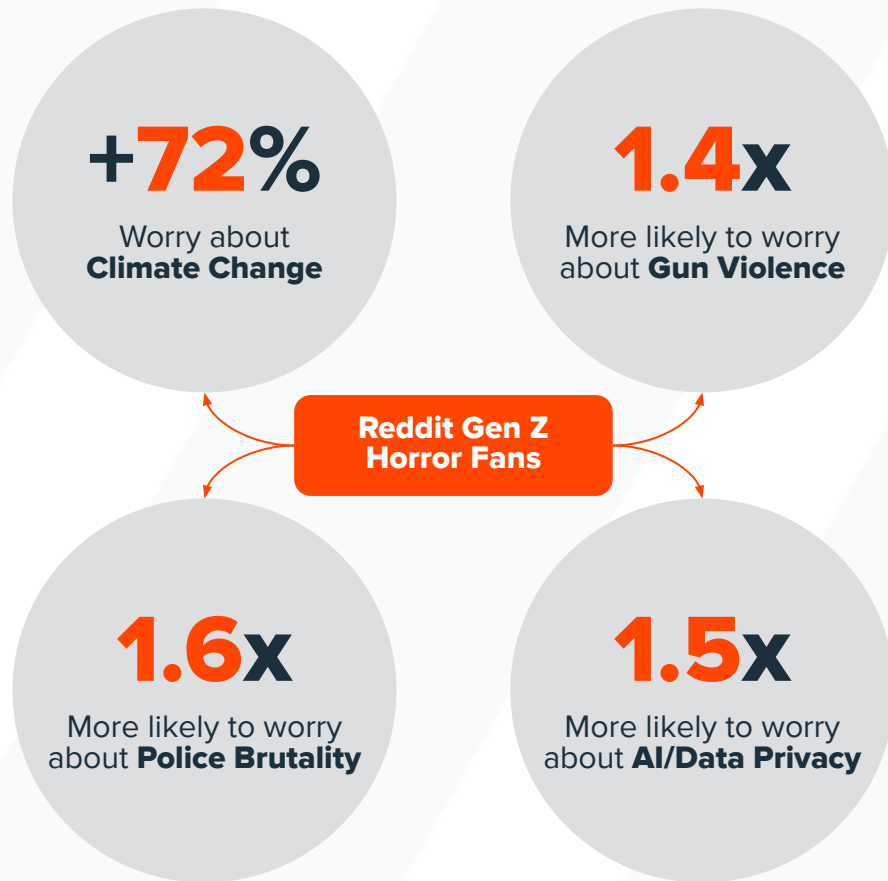
Personal Tragedy Horror

If horror reflects the anxiety of our times, then Gen Z and Gen Alpha are uniquely positioned to imprint their own anxieties on the genre.

Daily mass shootings. Climate collapse. The opioid crisis. Younger generations have more than enough fuel to keep the horror genre alive. But the thread running through all these fears is the worry that our governmental systems are no longer able to keep our darker human impulses in check.

The plot of this new horror? Perhaps it's climate migrants driven to a new town where the locals are not only heavily armed, but also in league with a brutal police force that use the power of tech to surveille, harass, and terrorize.

The true terror: the fear of just how inhumane humanity can be.



Today, true terror is seeing the power structures of our world reflected back at us and amplified to their logical extremes.

Implications

The anxiety of power is driving the horror genre today, but as we look ahead, this will be infused with more personal, confessional touches.

01. Painfully Real

Ground your IP in real moments that underscore the uphill battle your protagonist faces. Even if the eventual terror is represented by something supernatural, remember that personal experiences need to be the jumping off point.

02. Snackable

Creating snackable, short-form content can satisfy horror fans' appetites in between large IP drops. Consider b-roll, short stories or side quests as a way to expand the IP beyond the main narrative.

03. Invisible Sights

The jump scare isn't dead, but a subtler, more nuanced fear is permeating horror. Look for moments to highlight the tension that comes from feeling like things in life are just *off*. It's this invisible dread that makes the fear more real.

04. Know Your History

Horror fans on Reddit are extremely well versed. A nod to those classic influences, or better yet, participation with the community are great ways to share your horror bona fides. They want to see you're as passionate about the genre as they are.



Thanks!

