Introduction

1 Clive Barker, 'Cenobite', 1986.

‘To darken the day and brighten the night’: Clive Barker, dark imaginer

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In one of his more in-depth television interviews, while promoting his newly published novel *Weaveworld* in 1987, Clive Barker was introduced by host John Nicolson as having such a remarkable impact on the horror genre that, some believed, ‘it could only be the product of a diseased mind’.[1] Rather than directly insult Barker on television, the description actually amused the author, a gleeful grin spreading across his youthful, handsome face. The television show, BBC’s *Open to Question*, was far removed from the more typical book promotion television shows or talk show slots during which hosts gently prod and chat with the author to showcase their new novel. The thirty-minute interview quickly proceeded to take the form of a confrontational interrogation, with Barker positioned to offer a defence for the ‘indefensible’ horror genre. Topics were dominated by audience-led comments and queries which evidenced the cultural residue of moral panic, following on from the video nasty crisis that had gripped the UK in the early 1980s. There was a particular emphasis on the potential for copycat killings inspired by his work, or the potential viral spread of violence which, at any moment, threatened to burst forth from the screen simply because of Barker’s appearance on the show. What was visible to the viewer was the fear Barker’s work was capable of conjuring. His visions and creations were perceived as dangerous, subversive and, if left unchecked by moral codes and censorship, verged upon the obscene. One audience member aligned his material with the Moors murderers Myra Hindley and Ian Brady, while another, misunderstanding a joke, accused Barker of attending autopsies for perverse fun (rather than for research as Barker stated). Further queries included a genuine questioning of whether Barker possessed a ‘warped’ mind, followed by accusations that he was merely out for cheap thrills, and that he and his fellow filmmakers (including David Cronenberg and Wes Craven) were responsible for the desensitisation of viewers (a thinly veiled code for moral corruption) as a result of their sick and twisted creations in print or laid bare on screen. It was a hysterical response by many in the studio audience who had

simply not read his books or watched his films (arguably, they may have been primed to ask such loaded questions) but it made for good television. Despite these concerns about the limits of violence on screen and its potential to infect and destroy the minds of innocent viewers – descriptions that echoed hysterical reactionary headlines from tabloid newspapers in the early 1980s, or Frederic Wertham's warning of the corruptive power of comic books in his 1954 book *Seduction of the Innocent* – Barker's articulate responses to these concerns were disarmingly charming, intellectual, and thoughtful. Rather than simply dismiss these concerns as nonsense, which one might expect, Barker did outline and expand upon his own drive to write metaphors for the human experience, and his exploration of it through fantasy. This line of questioning led to a more important and interesting revelation: what truly interests Barker is not simply the blood and guts of literature and cinema but rather the rearrangement and transformation of the human body, leading to a transcendence of the human condition. Clive Barker is all about the liberating possibilities of transfiguration.

This book is a necessary scholarly intervention. Since the late 1990s, with rare exception, critics and scholars have neglected Barker's works. This may seem strange to contemplate at first, as Barker has been an influential and bankable author since the mid-1980s; thirty years later his novels still debut on the *New York Times* best-seller lists, and his cultural influence and impact in the genre are widely regarded in the horror community; fans, scholars, and artists in the field continually point to Barker's career as a polymath as being far-reaching and significant. Despite these accolades, scholarly engagement with his work beyond the hugely successful *Books of Blood* and the *Hellraiser* series has been strangely stagnant. His numerous works in fiction, film, and art have come to occupy a unique identifier of his particular artistic vision; his diverse talents mark him among an enviable cohort of highly influential authors and filmmakers. Yet, the very nature of Barker's visions of horror, his ability to transcend genres (from horror to dark fantasy, from children's literature to poetry) and artistic forms (filmmaking, plays, sketches and painting, sculpture, photography) has, contradictorily, actually contributed to this strange scholarly omission. While fiction has remained Barker's primary creative outlet, he refuses to restrict himself to any one form for long without experimenting with another. The *Books of Abarat* series (2002–), for example, is published with glossy prints of paintings by Barker, which detail the fantastical world and its creatures, taking years to produce; all of these paintings are created to accompany an ongoing imaginative saga of a young girl's quest in a mythical realm where time is spread across a phantasmagorical archipelago. This makes Barker a rare trans-disciplinary figure for scholarly inquiry – a polymath in a continuous state of creating and imagining new worlds, creatures, and stories, and finding new ways to tell them. This book is, then, an invitation, to re-evaluate Barker's works by exceptional scholars who dare to peer beneath the fold of his challenging, exhilarating, and confrontational creations.

Clive Barker is a self-described imaginer. Born in Liverpool in 1952, he grew up feeding his imagination through sketching and creating monsters. Flashes of his childhood are revealed in his fiction filtered through descriptive memories of his boyhood in Liverpool, traced in the opening chapters of his novel *Weaveworld* (1987), in which his protagonist Cal Mooney discovers a magical carpet which conceals a doorway to another world. Barker, in an interview with his biographer Douglas Winter, revealed that he gained a reputation for being a dreamer at a young age: 'I was always an imaginative child, and my imagination had considerable range – from the very fanciful, light material to rather darker stuff … I had imaginary friends, and I liked monsters and drew monsters'.[2] His parents indulged his desires to create shows and theatrical performances too: his father Len Barker, a talented carpenter, built him a stage for puppet shows and helped young Clive paint backdrops to stage his backyard productions for the neighbourhood kids (with multiple shows each day). Barker never lost his taste for the monsters; they would later birth a significant career beginning in 1980s London, before migrating to the dream palace of Hollywood. Initially a student of Philosophy, Barker switched to a degree in English literature, graduating with honours from the University of Liverpool in 1974; he found academic study rather tedious, and, upon completion, quickly moved on to more personally fulfilling artistic pursuits and work in the theatre, which eventually led him to London. There, alongside many talented and creative friends, including Doug Bradley (who would become renowned as the Cenobite 'Pinhead' from *Hellraiser*) and Peter Atkins (novelist and screenwriter – *Wishmaster* franchise, *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*), this artistic motley crew of actors and writers collectively created The Dog Company, a fringe acting troupe wholly dedicated to producing avant-garde theatre and new forms of serious stage artistry. Their achievements included critical praise at the 1981 Edinburgh Fringe Festival for the 1980 Barker play *The History of the Devil*, with Doug Bradley cast as his infernal majesty.

Thoroughly dedicated to writing and directing increasingly demanding and ambitious plays for The Dog Company, Barker began to write short stories by night – at first, this was for interest and to amuse friends. In the process of these writing sessions, Barker soon found himself creatively unbound (by censorship and by scope) and entertained the possibility of potentially publishing some of these stories; within a few years, these night-time tales would become the six-volume *Books of Blood* which launched his career as a serious author of horror fiction. The success generated by the incredible word of mouth about the collection, each volume ripe with increasing visceral promise, was beyond Barker's expectations. The *Books of Blood* would prove to have considerable critical weight too, garnering traction both in the UK and the United States. Barker's star was on the ascent, complete with the now infamous endorsement by Stephen King as 'the future of horror' which would adorn Barker's publicity material and novels for decades to come.[3] Sphere published the six volumes of

Books of Blood, during which time they began carefully crafting Barker's next project, his debut novel, *The Damnation Game* (1985). The novel was not an immediate hit but soon it would prove to critics and fans alike that Barker was no one-hit wonder. *The Damnation Game* remains a firm favourite with many Barker readers because of its taut prose, bleak nihilism, and invigorating exploration of a modern Faustian bargain. The novel, for all of its horrific violence and gore, is a melancholy nightmare of emptiness in 1980s London, and garnered a nomination for the World Fantasy Award for Best Novel in 1986.

His creative reputation in horror circles quickly bled across into filmmaking; remarkably, within three years of his first successful publication, he was directing his first feature film and creating a nightmarish vision that would achieve cult acclaim and leave a bloody imprint in 1980s British cinema. Barker vehemently disliked the screen adaptations *Underworld* (1985) and *Rawhead Rex* (1986), finding his stories completely compromised by the filmmaking process. In order to bring his own unfiltered, extreme ideas successfully to the screen, Barker would have to be intimately involved with the process himself, and, thanks to the success of *Books of Blood* and *The Damnation Game*, his growing reputation bestowed a modest but intriguing bankability for New World Pictures. Based on his 1986 novella *The Hellbound Heart* – first published as part of Dark Harvest's third *Night Visions* anthology and edited by George R.R. Martin, and later published by HarperCollins as a stand-alone novella in the wake of its successful film adaptation – *Hellraiser* would prove to be the definitive reference point which would crystalise Barker in popular culture. Doug Bradley's 'Pinhead' became an iconic horror figure in late 1980s horror cinema, particularly due to the film's successful afterlife in the video rental market and its striking video-box cover of Pinhead holding the Lament Configuration.[4] A sequel was quickly planned (released within fifteen months) and scripted by Barker's long-time friend and fellow Dog Company member Peter Atkins, with Barker remaining on as executive producer, passing the directorial mantle to newcomer Tony Randel. *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* (1988) suffered from an enormous and unforeseen budget cut due to the financial shock of Black Monday in October 1987, when stock markets and currencies plummeted. A whole sequence exploring the inner world of Hell had to be abandoned as a result. This unforeseen budget issue certainly compromised some of the more ambitious elements of the film, but despite these difficulties, *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* is, on the whole, still considered the best of the *Hellraiser* sequels in the fan community. Some film critics were less generous in their appraisal – Roger Ebert of the *Chicago Sun-Times* famously loathed the films, describing *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* as 'simply a series of ugly and bloody episodes strung together one after another like a demo tape by a perverted special-effects man',[5] while his review of Barker's generally more critically favoured *Hellraiser* concludes on a particularly invidious note: 'Maybe Stephen King was thinking of a different Clive Barker.'[6] For critics

like Ebert, Barker's visions of sticky fleshy nightmares firmly supported the notion that he possessed a depraved vision, and that his films were simply the product of a particular schlocky gore aesthetic with little critical value, in an era known for the horror genre's commercial saturation. BBC's resident film critic Barry Norman equally disliked *Hellraiser* but, when directly questioned by Barker about his unfavourable review while shooting BBC's *Film 1988* on the set of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, he quietly admitted he really did not like the horror genre. Doug Bradley fondly recalls Norman appearing evidently uneasy when he encountered Bradley in full Pinhead make-up and costume in the back corridors at Pinewood studios in early 1988; Norman's genuine distaste for the aesthetics of 1980s horror and gore was quite palpable to the actor.[7] Despite the scathing critical derision of these divisive films – according to Hollywood trade paper *Variety*, *Hellbound* is 'a maggotty carnival of mayhem, mutation and dismemberment, awash in blood and recommended only for those who thrive on such junk',[8] – the first two instalments of the *Hellraiser* franchise remain firm fan favourites, particularly *because* of their distinctly bleak and abject imagery.

The *Hellraiser* sequels have been a mixed blessing for Barker; they not only launched his film career but also extended Barker's audience beyond his core readership. *Hellraiser III: Hell on Earth* (1992) relocates Pinhead to 1990s New York City, moving the material further away from its distinctly British setting and cast of character actors. The script and marketing strategy of *Hellraiser III* clearly attempted to align Pinhead alongside then lucrative American slasher villains such as Freddy Kruger, abandoning Barker's narrative rules and instead favouring Pinhead as nothing more than another unbound serial killer. This modification, coupled with the insertion of occasional wise-cracks, signals the tonal shift the later instalments of the franchise would take, altogether expending the dark vision of *Hellraiser* and *Hellbound* for dispensable one-liners. *Hellraiser: Bloodline* marks the end of Barker's direct involvement with the series and clearly demarcates the franchise's descent towards its current repository in direct-to-DVD sequel hell; its director, Kevin Yagher, an established special effects make-up artist known for his Freddy Krueger's make-up, insisted on an Alan Smithee credit,[9] and it was also the last of the films to be given a theatrical release. When one takes stock of the later films in the franchise, it gives the distinct impression that they are all at the expense of Barker's original tale, rather than furthering it. The franchise still has a cult following in horror circles today but it never regained the power of its exciting debut. The first three *Hellraiser* films were highly ambitious considering their frugal production budgets, and succeeded to dazzle with powerful use of make-up, bizarre yet beautiful creatures, and gothic storylines, remaining influential today for their mood and S&M-inspired design. As noted by *Hellraiser* expert Paul Kane, 'it is the look of [the Cenobites] that captivates. At the time, audiences had never seen characters like these.'[10] The problem, then, with the *Hellraiser* series has

largely been one of public perception; its visuals were tantalising for some and too extreme and disgusting for others. It is one of the more graphic and surreal horror films of the late 1980s, a Grand Guignol spectacle without the mordant wise-cracks of its contemporary slasher counterparts. It wasn't funny, it wasn't ironic, and it took itself very seriously. To those unfamiliar with Barker, the film's poster and video-box cover were striking, but may have severely stifled people's perception of him and his work. For many who found Barker through *Hellraiser*'s success (particularly on the VHS rental market – after all, Pinhead is one of the most recognisable horror icons in film), he would never really develop beyond this role as a gore maven, and was, like Wes Craven, distrusted when he tried.[11] Barker had personally moved on from the *Hellraiser* film franchise to focus on other creations that challenged his growth as a writer and artist. What he did next confounded all expectations.

The all-consuming roles of the writer/director on *Hellraiser* did little to slow Barker's remarkable publishing pace: in 1988 Barker published the novella *Cabal* (which was quickly adapted to the screen and was the second film to be directed by Barker, re-titled as *Nightbreed* (1990)), and made a significant departure from the horror genre with the publication of two of his ambitious dark fantasy novels, *Weaveworld* (1987) and *The Great and Secret Show* (1989). This sharp transition from splatterpunk horror to dark fantasy affirmed Barker's desire to cast off his generic 'shackles', and emboldened him to embrace the transformative powers of dark fantasy, rather than merely attempt to replicate his earlier horror material. Barker's biographer Douglas E. Winter deems this generic hybridisation to be the genesis of Barker's route into 'anti-horror', which he claims is not to horrify readers but to invite them to imagine worlds beyond Manichean absolutes associated with horror fiction. Anti-horror is defined by Winter as 'pushing the reader into a realm of ambiguity, forcing us to confront the real world, outside and within – a place of possibilities, some dark and dangerous, others bright and beautiful, and all of them liberating.'[12] Barker's works do straddle this territory which questions rather than reinstates societal values and norms, but his works are certainly invested in the tactics of horror and gothic fiction; the horrific and the fantastical merge in his writing in order to offer unease, occasional disgust, and the necessary disruption of the status quo. In *Weaveworld*, Barker permits a glimpse of a fantastical hidden world secreted within the fabric of a forgotten carpet, its filigree detailing a realm populated with powerful races and hidden magical arts. This novel marks the successful transition into what would later become a signature strand in Barker's work – an artist's call for the human need for fantasy. In the contemporary moment of the 1980s, with its prevailing materialism and empty acquisitiveness, *Weaveworld* stands apart as a defence for the need to nurture one's own creative inner-world – to see the magical that is hidden in the everyday experience – and to reject the nihilism that attempts to extinguish its spark. His novella, *Cabal*, continues this thematic enchantment with the

fantastic as it disrupts the everyday world in its celebration of the creatures of Midian. In its refreshing vision of diverse gothic pluralism, it is the tyranny of the normal that ultimately destroys the shadow city of monsters. The monsters of Midian are driven underground by those who police the boundaries of society – psychiatrists, the police force, all of them instigators of societal rules and regulations – causing the Night Breed (the occupants of Midian) to rise up in this defiant celebration of queer difference. Barker is, and remains, firmly on the side of the expelled monsters.

For the next five years, Barker's fiction grew with an increased emphasis on the *dark fantastique* (as he terms it), creating and blurring multiple worlds of vast complexity. *The Great and Secret Show* (1989) and *Everville* (1994), the first two books of the Art (it has been projected as a trilogy awaiting conclusion), hinge upon existentialism and transcendance, debating rationality and evil in the pursuit of power, enabling fantastical leaps into imagined spaces and dreamy rivers of memories and magic, and culminating in an epic battle to ascend to a higher plane of power and philosophical enlightenment. Themes of reconciliation between fantastical dominions continued with Barker's self-proclaimed favourite novel, *Imajica* – a novel that divides his readership in its intense and densely layered universe and opaque narrative. Barker likes to reconfigure realities and completely immerse himself in a world of fantastic fiction, which some reviewers found difficult to bear, especially when many readers expected similar materials from a branded horror writer. During this exploration of dark fantasy material, Barker had numerous appearances on talk shows in early 1990 to promote *The Great and Secret Show*. These appearances include *People are Talking*, *Good Morning America*, and *What's Up, Dr. Ruth* (with special guest director, Wes Craven), during which, while trying to underscore his move away from his earlier works such as *Hellraiser* or *Books of Blood*, the discussion still largely emphasised his relationship with and ongoing contributions to the horror genre. For the uninitiated, it may have seemed confusing or even contradictory for an author to oscillate between two genres so readily. Barker may have begun the necessary work to erase such rigid generic boundaries in his fiction, but it did come at a critical price. Respected by both friends and critics for his commitment to his authorial vision over rigid publishing categorisation, he defended his generic fluidity when probed on the issue: 'my mind is not divided like a bookshop… What does the terminology matter? The urgency of the story is what drove me to write these passages in the first place. The rest is just packaging.'[13] Nevertheless, this new terrain led to mixed reviews and concerns about Barker's blurring of styles. In some reviews, critics espoused near-exhaustion in reading his complex vision of multiple layers of reality, enriched with riddles, contradictions, or philosophical quiddities. Ken Tucker, in his review of *The Great and Secret Show* for *The New York Times Book Review* praises elements of the novel for its breadth and 'its vast, loopy sprawl … it is nothing so much as a cross between "Gravity's Rainbow" and J.R.R. Tolkien's

"Lord of the Rings," allusive and mythic, complex and entertaining', [sic] but also calls for some restraint in his title, 'One Universe at a Time Please'.[14] For those who yearned for Barker the horror prodigy, Tucker succinctly articulated an evident and growing frustration.

By late 1989, Barker had his own frustrations too. His new film *Nightbreed* (1990) was eviscerated in the editing suite by 20th Century Fox, who demanded Barker's original cut be shorn from a lengthy 150-minute running time down to an overly lean (and narratively confusing) 90-minute film. This prompted the film's editor Richard Marden to leave the project in protest. While contending with studio demands and losing support to complete his film, and having run considerably over-budget, Barker became increasingly frustrated with the process of filmmaking on the whole. At each turn, *Nightbreed* was failing to materialise as desired, and suffered in part because Fox studios resolutely objected to Barker's central premise that the monsters were the heroes of the film. This friction between author/director and studios Morgan Creek and Fox caused needless narrative confusion in the theatrical cut of the film, and ultimately damaged their film product. The film also received a list of cuts from the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America), which necessitated further trimming to achieve a contractually obligated R-rating. To add insult to injury, upon release in February 1990, Fox studios erroneously branded *Nightbreed* as a slasher film rather than a dark fantasy film in its promotional material. The film, caught up in a series of bitter arguments between director and studio executives, in the end also failed to find its intended audience at the box office. It was a war between corporate branding and an idealistic filmmaker, provoking the fair question if the studios had actually understood the script at all beyond the author's brand name. This was a particularly difficult period for Barker as he discovered the limitations and committee demands of making a film under the control of a major Hollywood studio. The film, in Barker's view, had been compromised from all sides, leaving him with a sour aftertaste about the industry. Barker's film would later be resurrected and re-edited to include a rough-cut restoration of lost footage and key scenes, which screened at numerous film festivals in 2012, and was retitled as *Nightbreed: The Cabal Cut*. In 2014, following international interest in *The Cabal Cut*, Barker supervised the release of his definitive version under the title *Nightbreed: The Director's Cut*.[15]

Following his grievances with the original production and release of *Nightbreed* (which Barker believed was amplified by his distance from the machinations of Hollywood as a then London resident), he decided to commit fully to his film career by permanently relocating to Los Angeles. Consequently, to increase his stake in future film projects and to have a controlling and influential voice, Barker also began his own production company, Seraphim Inc. Opting to produce rather than direct his next film project, an adaptation of 'The Forbidden' from *Books of Blood*, Volume 5, retitled as *Candyman* (1992), the film also relocated the urban legend tale from a dilapidated council estate in Liverpool

to the infamous Cabrini-Green housing project in Chicago, injecting Barker's English version of the tale with a distinctly American flavour. Directed by Bernard Rose, *Candyman* achieved generally favourable critical reviews and strong commercial success, with Barker's name boldly brandished on the marketing material. *Candyman*, as with *Hellraiser*, would also go on to suffer inferior sequels led by marketing demands, again without input from its author.

Barker also opened up his work to a younger audience in the 1990s. This foray into young adult literature with the publication of *The Thief of Always* (1992), a highly imaginative fable that shimmers with Barker's signature dark creations, was certainly a diverse passage for the established horror/dark fantasy author; more importantly, this opportunity fulfilled a long-held personal desire. Barker had previously attempted to write a young adult fantasy novel, *The Candle in the Cloud*, before embarking upon his studies at the University of Liverpool in the early 1970s, and wrote another young adult novel *The Adventures of Mr. Maximillian Bacchus and His Travelling Circus* later in the decade but to no immediate avail (it was eventually published in 2009). Despite his experiments to break free from his status as a caged horror writer since the late 1980s, held in a strange stasis by the expectations of fans and readers desperate for him to return to the violent creations of splatterpunk, Barker nurtured the creative opportunity to finally publish a young adult novel. A highly unusual move at the time, HarperCollins was also hesitant of this venture, and, predicting massive losses on the project, bought the licensing for $1.[16] Published with Barker's own ink-on-paper illustrations, demonstrating his enviable ability to convey a dreamscape and touching tale through two distinct art forms on the same page, *The Thief of Always* pared back his more ambitious visions of other worlds and philosophical transcendence in favour of a simple but haunting fable. The novella would prove to be one of his finest tales. This softening of Barker's horrors neither dampened his vision nor compromised his material; if anything, the young adult fiction spark that began with the success of *The Thief of Always* would inform the next fifteen years of his work in writing and painting for his ambitious *Abarat* series (2002; 2004; 2011–).

Following the commercial success of Bernard Rose's film *Candyman* (on which Barker served as executive producer), Barker was prompted to direct what would become his final feature film. *Lord of Illusions*, based on his short story 'The Last Illusion' from *Books of Blood*, Volume 6, achieved moderate critical and commercial success with his film noir gothic tale of a magician and a cult leader whose shared Faustian pact entwines their fate in a nihilistic dance of magic and immortality. Featuring a strong cast including Scott Bakula, Famke Janssen and Kevin J. O'Connor, the film was nevertheless compromised by the studio (MGM/United Artists), though not to the same wounding extent as the scarring tussle over *Nightbreed*. The studio feared the film was too marginal, too generically hybrid as a film noir horror, and therefore lacking the desired 'Barker' commercial horror angle upon which they sought to profit. The resulting

requested cuts (carried out by Barker) were less jarring to the tone of the film, but nonetheless recall the compromising conditions which seemed to dominate his involvement with film studios. It was another clash between artistic vision and economic projections, which Barker knew he couldn't win if he wanted to secure a theatrical release. It was agreed that they would release an unexpurgated director's cut of the film for the Laser Disc/DVD (and eventually Blu-Ray) markets. Pressed for more of the same *Hellraiser*-style gore, his film adaptations as a director all intended to serve horror fans. The problem clearly lay in his bifurcated public roles as a moderately successful horror director, and as an author and artist whose generic shift beyond the shackles of horror fiction had left him somewhat adrift. In sum, casual horror audiences struggled with Barker the novelist who occasionally worked within the genre, but was not willing to simply repeat similar material. Deciding to remain within the creative field of filmmaking largely as a producer, Barker continues to be an active collaborator, working on diverse films – including Bill Condon's Oscar winning *Gods and Monsters* (1998),[17] a drama based on *Frankenstein* (1931) director James Whale – within and beyond the field of horror cinema.

Barker spent the remainder of the 1990s writing three very different and timely novels, with an evident biographical influence. In the personal and moving *Sacrament* (1996), he withdraws from the more mythological elements of earlier works to emphasise the complexities and the importance of our place in the world at the precipice of ecological crises and human pandemics. It is also considered to be Barker's first openly gay novel, though this came as little surprise to those familiar with his works, and it was not a facet of his personal life that was hidden or suppressed. Barker explores themes of extinction and ecology, celebrations of individuality and the complexity of family life, the pain of loss, and the AIDS crisis. Though *Sacrament* is not considered one of his most lucrative titles, it is often regarded as one of his most emotive and personal. This was quickly followed by *Galilee* (1998), a sprawling saga concerning two warring families, the Gearys and the Barbarossas, charting their stormy, jealous, and fantastically entwined fate. The novel's quixotic mixture of phantasmagoria, prophecy, sexual trysts, and supernatural romance, enveloped in a strange family narrative recalls the Mayfair Witches trilogy by Anne Rice; their similarities lie in the gothic roots of family sagas imbued with secrets, birth rights, sacred knowledge, and the erotic magnetism of their central mysterious male characters – Rice's spectral and mysterious Lasher, and the titular black Adonis Galilee (inspired by Barker's then spouse, the photographer David Armstrong).

By the late 1990s, with so many published books, films, and tie-in products which carried his unique brand name (like Stephen King, Barker became an established brand in his own right through his market visibility), the BBC commissioned *Clive Barker's A-Z of Horror*, a six-part television series broadcast in late 1997/early 1998 which focused on the history and themes of the genre.

The series was hosted by Barker and was visually strong in scope and content, giving rise to a comprehensive tie-in book (featuring Barker's art) compiled by Stephen Jones. It remains a cultish series for Barker fans as it has never been made available on DVD. Soon after this, HarperCollins published an anthology of Barker's material, collecting both well-known and unknown passages and musings by the author. Part homage and part celebration of his literary diversity, the narrative compendium, *The Essential Clive Barker* (1999), is thematically arranged to unveil his broad appeal across his extensive body of work. The move was ultimately a clever marketing decision; in its unification of thematic touchstones throughout Barker's fiction, the book evidenced Barker's maturation in a fluid and broad manner, eliding his firm roots in horror fiction to the more liminal material of the *dark fantastique*. For both publishing and promotional purposes, this mosaic of extracts from novels, short stories, and plays sought to successfully overcome Barker's multiplicity by marrying his authorial imprint with universal thematic concepts, complete with each segment introduced by Barker. Though it is a collection almost entirely comprised of previously published material, it is best understood when considered as a Barker primer, providing a veritable map to navigate his terrain.

Contrary to many prolific authors in the digital age, Barker writes all of his novels by hand, believing that each word must earn its place on the page. It is staggering to believe that, as the author of numerous lengthy novels, he would continue this practice throughout his career. Alongside these voluminous handwritten manuscripts, he has become increasingly devoted to crafting accompanying paintings and sketches for his works; he was always been a talented and privately compulsive artist but in the terrain of young adult fiction, this skill is explicitly showcased and celebrated. The bold and colourful paintings which would chart the world of the Abarat, a magical archipelago filled with wondrous creatures, revealed the enormous undertaking each book demanded of Barker as both an artist and author. The *Abarat* series eschews some of his earlier darkness in favour of hope and discovery, as heroine Candy Quackenbush ventures into this mysterious land to trace her mystical origins and to vanquish the forces of evil that threaten this hidden kingdom. At present, the three books of the series, *Abarat*; *Abarat: Days of Magic, Nights of War*; and *Abarat: Absolute Midnight*, in turn explore the richness of this fantastical and dense terrain – in every corner or crevice of the island world, there are strange new sights or creatures at which to marvel. Currently awaiting completion with two more instalments in the series (recently expanded from a quartet to a quintet), *Abarat* was critically praised upon publication in 2002 and the rights were promptly purchased by Disney for a film franchise. The film project at present appears to be all but abandoned, and, in hindsight it may have proven to be simply too strange and demanding a vision for Disney studios. The other issue could be Barker's own pace in producing the books, which was too slow for a film franchise investment. For the young readers enthralled by the *Harry*

Potter saga during the same period, Rowling's ability to publish her series at a staggering rate proved that children would foster a deep love for the novels, growing up reading all of her beloved books in quick succession throughout their adolescence. Barker's pace, in contrast, bred impatience in some corners of his fandom. Reviewing the first book for the *Guardian* in 2002, China Miéville warmly notes its curious beauty as a novel, and as a piece of Barkerian art: 'Above all, [*Abarat*] is a deeply lovely catalogue of the strange. Islands carved into colossal heads, giant moths made of coloured ether, words that turn into aeroplanes, tentacled maggot-monsters: they dance past like a carnival, a true surrender to the weird, vastly more inventive than the tired figures that visit some bespectacled boy-wizards.'[18] *Abarat* could never contend with J.K. Rowling's boy wizard Harry Potter, precisely because it is too sublime and odd when compared to the boarding school adventures of a young boy wizard. Rowling's series had a distinctive hook, a source of narrative pattern recognition underpinned by a Manichean prophecy and English school-days nostalgia, and was humorously set in parallel with reality; Barker delights in abandoning reality from the outset in his series.

Alongside the intense creative period dedicated to crafting the *Abarat* series, Barker also authored a gothic *roman-à-clef* ghost story and scathing critique of Hollywood. *Coldheart Canyon* would ultimately prove to be a literary catharsis, a Boschian nightmare of sex and illusion, a sub-textual articulation of Barker's frustration with and deep love for the film industry and its complex, and often distasteful, history. Its cast features incorrigible players in any salient Hollywood nightmare: immoral publicists and heads of studios; drug-addicted actors; ruthless agents; entitled prima-donnas; complete with a taste for sexual sadism and depravity, horrific plastic surgery, and vying for the limelight by any means necessary. The novel is a rare creation in Barker's fiction; it is a hybrid fever-dream, rooted in gothic excess, erotic hallucination, and celebrity satire.

Above all, the act of writing is, for Barker, both compulsion and catharsis – he *needs* to write. Following *Coldheart Canyon*, which did not gain the expected critical traction it deserved, Barker returned to creating the flourishing world of the *Abarat* books and paintings, while editing an enormous 4,000 page handwritten manuscript for *The Scarlet Gospels* (2015).[19] With so many projects now demanding his attention, Barker suspended the process of completing the (then) final edit of *The Scarlet Gospels* to finish the short novel *Mister B. Gone* in time for a Halloween release in 2007. It is evident from the novel's epigraph that Barker is mired in a cycle of creation and destruction – 'Burn this book', its opening pages instructs the reader. It is reasonable to imagine that the act of continually rewriting and editing *The Scarlet Gospels* inspired the 'demon-in-the-book' narrative, complete with its destructive opening instruction and the power of the printing press, all of which feed into the tale of Jakabok Botch, the first-person demon narrator of a forbidden and dangerous tale. Trapped within the pages of the novel itself, Jakabok demands that the book be destroyed,

lest its words utterly corrupt the reader. The power of writing is central to this novel; the underestimated lasting influence and magical qualities of the printed word captured via Gutenberg's printing press provide a means of immortality. The forbidden gothic book becomes a metafictional form of amusement and contamination in *Mister B. Gone*; addressing the reader directly, we hold the forbidden object in our hands, through which Barker's storyteller directly calls out to us to insist upon his destruction. The idea speaks to the frustrations and rewards found in the act of creation – an author can live eternally through the text, and be damned by it. With the business of Hell requiring completion, Barker finally returned to the book that had been troubling him since the late 1990s – the evolution of his tale of Hell itself, *The Scarlet Gospels*.

When Barker was designing and pitching his *Books of Abarat* series to Harper Collins in the late 1990s, he simultaneously began planning and pitching a short story collection of violent, pseudo-pornographic tales entitled *The Scarlet Gospels*. His long-time publishers, HarperCollins, were enthralled by the pitched *Abarat* series, but feared that the extremely strong and graphic content in his outline for *The Scarlet Gospels* would backfire, and subsequently declined to publish the proposed collection. This version of the book was to be extremely erotically charged in both content and artwork, arranged around Biblical themes and illustrated by Barker, but was put on indefinite hold. Determined to return to write the tale of Pinhead's demise, albeit with a manuscript that shifted significantly in scope and word count over the following decade, Barker relentlessly pressed on: the title tale morphed from a short story within a collection of tales, only to be later revised as a mammoth manuscript focusing on this one story, which was eventually edited down into a fully realised novel. In all, it took close to fifteen years, numerous rewrites and exhaustive drafts before *The Scarlet Gospels* was eventually published with St. Martin's Press in 2015. *The Scarlet Gospels*, in its final published form, does read as a truncated novel stemming from a much grander vision, but its publication was nevertheless largely welcomed by critics who hailed the return of their prodigal son back into the fold of horror fiction.[20] In late 2015, reassuring his fans that he still has much to say about horror in the contemporary world, Barker informed fans via his social media outlets that he intends to work on web-based horror site material inspired by Creepy Pasta and its viral urban legends, including Slenderman, for a series of short films. Once again, Barker adapts with new technology and media to interrogate contemporary dark fantasies.

Barker's contribution to fiction, film, and the arts has produced a rich tapestry, ripe for scholarly analysis. In comparison with other authors, such as Stephen King, it is odd to note that Barker has been strangely fixed and glossed over in academic circles. It is tempting to speculate that this subdued scholarly response has been in part due to Barker's desire to focus his works through different media while oscillating between the genres of horror and the *fantastique*, and publishing for both adult and young adult audiences. To

be a pioneer in this terrain has cost Barker many of the accolades he so richly deserves. Scholars who have championed Barker's work in the 1990s laid the foundations for many of the authors in this collection. Gary Hoppenstand's book *Clive Barker's Short Fiction* (1994) is an exceptional work on Barker's *Books of Blood* and serves as an exemplary scholarly primer on Barker's themes and metaphors. Linda Badley's excellent studies on horror fiction and film – *Film, Horror and the Body Fantastic* (1995) and *Writing Horror and the Body: The Fiction of Stephen King, Clive Barker, and Anne Rice* (1996) – strongly emphasise Barker's influence in popular horror studies, prizing his reading of the body as a text in horror fiction, and equating his importance with more established American gothic and horror authors Stephen King and Anne Rice. At the time of Badley's second publication in 1996, Barker's academic inclusion in its subtitle felt wholly justified; it would have been entirely within reason to predict a surge in Barker studies following his meteoric rise in horror studies. Since then, however, the massive shift in Barker's work has resulted in academic analyses of his material featuring sporadically in scholarly circles, garnering occasional analysis in articles and books, and of those published, most tend to favour analyses of his earlier fiction and films. The web-based Barker archive (www.clivebarker.info), run by dedicated Barker archivists and authors Phil Stokes and Sarah Stokes, has proven to be an invaluable resource for research, and for its meticulous inclusion of interviews, exhibitions, and images spanning Barker's whole career. To date, this new collection is the only book that completely dedicates itself to the scholarly analysis of Barker's works since Hoppenstand's analysis of the *Books of Blood*. This book builds upon the excellent foundational scholarly work by Hoppenstand and Badley, Douglas Winter's detailed biography, and others who have published on his work in spite of overwhelming scholarly neglect, and boldly aims to present and provoke new critical horizons in Barker's multiple arenas of creation. Barker has moved on in his creative voyage, and as scholars in the field, we must chart his new discoveries too.

This re-evaluation is not exhaustive, nor does it aim to be – this book begins the process of opening up spaces of enquiry, interrogating new ideas and scholarly engagement with Barker through his multiple and often difficult works rather than merely cataloguing their inception and reception. Barker has been so exhaustive in creating books and sagas, paintings, sketches, working with new media, comic books, video games, and other recent material, including his fluid meditation on time *Chiliad: A Meditation* (2014) and erotic poetry collection *Tonight, Again* (2015), that it would be simply impossible to analyse all of his creative outlets in one volume. His origins in art-theatre have also not been included in this study, remaining an interesting facet of inquiry for other critics to explore. Furthermore, to be completist is not the aim of any scholar in this work; it is the interrogation of Barker's valuable contributions – his ideas, his most influential materials, and continued multi-faceted engagement with horror

and *fantastique* fiction and film since the *Books of Blood* – that warrants our critical attention. There is much to admire in this book's diverse and occasionally contradictory readings of Barker and his texts, as these selected critical interrogations yield multiple interpretations. This approach also foregrounds Barker's complexity; his works endure because of the debates and disruptions they present for numerous scholars, critics, and readers.

In the first part of the book, which examines Barker's earlier fiction and its place within British horror fiction and socio-cultural contexts, Darryl Jones' chapter '"Visions of another Albion": the *Books of Blood* and the horror of 1980s Britain' explores Barker's particular manifestations of 1980s British cultural anxieties, examining how selected tales from the *Books of Blood* are exemplary in their response to the frustrations and political radicalism of the period. Ripped from the headlines of Thatcher's divided Britain, Jones captures the vivid and contemporaneous essence of Barker's stunning debut. Kevin Corstorphine, in his chapter '"Marks of weakness, marks of woe": the *Books of Blood* and the transformation of the weird' examines several of Barker's seminal short stories within the context of the weird tale, and the liminal expression through which Barker distinctly marks his own horror style. Indebted to his roots in the theatre and to the Grand Guignol, Corstorphine traces Barker's own interest in subversive transformations, and how this is uniquely expressed in his horror stories from *Books of Blood*. Edward Timothy Wallington carefully unpicks the subtle stitching of Barker's second novel *Weaveworld* in his chapter 'When fantasy becomes reality: social commentary of 1980s Britain in Clive Barker's *Weaveworld*'. Through close reading and political analyses, Wallington finds palpable cultural anger directed at Thatcher's Britain and explores the novel's core themes of dark magic, enslavement, and 1980s materialism, heralded by the forces of evil in the thinly veiled guise of Mrs Thatcher and her government. Aiming to rally those who stand defiant of Thatcher's polarising vision of neoliberal British conservatism, *Weaveworld* is revealed to be a savage indictment of 1980s British politics, and the power of fantasy as critical social commentary.

Part II explores Barker's transition from author to filmmaker, and how his vision has been translated, captured, and occasionally compromised in its adaptation from page to the screen. As an author-turned-director, and author of adapted material for the screen, Barker's own relationship with the filmmaking process, according to Harvey O'Brien in his chapter 'The joyless magic of *Lord of Illusions*' is a complex source of artistic compromise and growing frustration. O'Brien explores Barker's last film as a director and as his explicit farewell to cinema; a rejection of its limitations and empty illusions, reading Barker's anxieties and disillusionment about the filmmaking process, and the human condition, through Nix, the film's antagonist. O'Brien considers whether Barker has truly found his artistic happiness through painting rather than the compromised medium of cinema to realise his vision. Bernard Perron, in his chapter,

'Drawing (to) fear and horror: into the frame of Clive Barker's *The Midnight Meat Train* and *Dread* comic and film adaptations', explores two adapted Barker works that focus on the power of observation and the act of looking. The framing of the films mirror those of graphic novels in their construction, and invite the viewer to consider and explore the explicit framing of the film and its comic adaptations. In these adaptations of Barker's work in comic book form, Perron finds there is freedom to create images wholly beyond the limitations of film. Brigid Cherry's chapter, 'Beauty, pain and desire: gothic aesthetics and feminine identification in the filmic adaptations of Clive Barker', argues that Barker's pleasurable brand of horror cinema affects female viewers in a very specific way, and, using fan testimony to critique Barker's unique contribution to horror cinema and fan culture, Cherry demarcates specific traits in Barker's inspiring works which hold considerable sexual appeal. Indeed, as Cherry proposes elsewhere, 'Barker's work contains features which can be potentially read as feminine and queer, positioning them within traditions of the Gothic, the melodrama and the fantastic (primarily in the shape of the fairy tale)',[21] which actively contributes to such strong responses from his female fans and audiences.

In Part III of the book, Barker's works are examined through the critical lenses of queer culture, desire, and brand recognition. In his chapter 'Clive Barker's queer monsters: exploring transgression, sexuality, and the other', Mark Richard Adams explores Barker's contributions to positive queer representations in the horror film, and the evident symbolic coding for monsters and otherness in Barker's films. In exploring Barker's three films as director – *Hellraiser*, *Nightbreed*, and *Lord of Illusions* – Adams analyses the films through their unique codifications of queered otherness, the proud rallying call for a queer community, and the complex expression of homosexual romance, within this informal Barkerian trilogy. Tony M. Vinci interrogates the metaphysical expressions of blackness and the power of race and transformative flesh in 'Breaking through the canvas: towards a definition of (meta)cultural blackness in the fantasies of Clive Barker'. Exploring the political and cultural revolution frequently expressed in fantasy fiction, and Barker's unique contribution to this field in *Imajica* (1991), Vinci's chapter critiques the socio-cultural function of fantasy fiction as a means to explore dissatisfaction with the contemporary moment, and, through his analysis of *Imajica*, offers insight into the subversive and transformative nature of blackness as a shifting signifier for radical change and revision within Barker's fantasies. Concluding Part III, Gareth James' '"A far more physical experience than the cinema affords": Clive Barker's Halloween Horror Nights and brand authorship', explores Barker as an auteur and horror brand. His horror installations at Universal Studios, *Freakz* (1998), *Hell* (1999), and *Harvest* (2000), specifically enabled Barker to call upon his previous artistry in the theatre to create an auteur-led interactive environment, including Barker's preoccupation with mazes (as filmic, literary, and literal spaces), to generate

an affective horror experience for the theme park visitor. James also explores how this installation series contributes to Barker's branding more generally in horror culture.

The final part of this collection, 'Legacy', considers Barker's complex and multi-layered marks in the field, exploring and re-evaluating his works. In so doing, all three authors evaluate his specific place and unique contributions as an author addressing the fissures between modernity and postmodernity, realism and non-realism, splatterpunk and 'anti-horror', and finally between horror, fantasy, and the gothic mode. In '"What price wonderland?": Clive Barker and the spectre of realism', Daragh Downes considers an evident and frustrating thread in Barker's fiction from the *Books of Blood* to his later epic fantasies, plus the author's disregard or abandonment of his gripping realist frameworks in favour of non-realist secondary worlds and magical sensationalism. Barker's storytelling, for Downes, becomes evidently flawed once he embarks upon the fantasy epic, where his descriptive vagaries become exhausting and problematic conflations of the *fantastique*. For Downes, this is Barker's own weakness as an author, and one which articulates the precise issues Barker has grappled with in a vast career spanning genres and publication labels, and confounding readers' expectations. At the expense of realist strategies, Downes finds Barker has escaped into the hall of mirrors of fantasy and missed the opportunity to express his true excellence in a more realist mode. Analysing Barker's more recent fiction through Douglas Winter's framework of 'anti-horror', Xavier Aldana Reyes contends in his chapter, 'Clive Barker's late (anti-)horror fiction: *Tortured Souls* and *Mister B. Gone*'s new myths of the flesh', that Barker's central preoccupation remains focused on the body as the site for transformation and transcendence in recent works. In his detailed study of the novelette *Tortured Souls* (2014) and *Mister B. Gone*, Aldana Reyes posits the transformation of the body in *Tortured Souls* extends the metaphysical flesh-as-text for which Barker is celebrated, while *Mister B. Gone* transmutes the body of its trapped demon protagonist into the very leaves of a cursed book, extra-diegetically authored by Barker (breaking the 'fourth wall') through the diegetic voice of the cursed demon Mister B. The body and the book become sites of transformation, subjectivity, and power. The final chapter in this collection, 'The Devil and Clive Barker: Faustian bargains and gothic filigree' by Sorcha Ní Fhlainn, claims that Barker's obsession with revisiting, rereading, and reusing specifically dark and disturbing authorial patterns, posits his work firmly within the gothic mode. For Ní Fhlainn, many of Barker's works – *The Damnation Game*, *The Hellbound Heart*, *The Thief of Always*, *Coldheart Canyon*, and *The Scarlet Gospels* – explicitly invoke that most gothic of arrangements, the Faustian pact. For Barker, the infernal is ever-present, and enables him to reimagine gothic eruptions which break through the surface of everyday banality, in turn revealing a hybridisation of gothic and fantasy fiction. Despite seldom describing his own fiction as nearing the gothic form, save for one novel, Ní Fhlainn contends that Barker consistently calls upon

and is narratively indebted to the gothic mode, its aesthetics and rich literary tradition.

The aim of this volume, and the work of its contributing scholars, is to provoke and excite, and to invite you to (re)discover, explore, and address Barker's works filtered through a range of critical and often diverse lenses. Many authors disagree or contradict one another, giving rise to a rich multi-focal reading of Barker's fiction and films. Across his multi-faceted, polymathic career, Barker's material, artistic modes, and cultural influence has changed, uniquely demanding academic scrutiny. This book is an invitation, a Barkerian doorway, a path towards understanding Barker's own place within popular fiction and popular culture, examining the power, the contradictions, and occasional limitations of his own unique brand. There is much to discover about this dark imaginer; 'we have such (in)sights to show you!'

Notes

1 Clive Barker, *Open to Question*, BBC Two, 8 December 1987, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOqaKgrbjfQ. Date accessed: 15 December 2015.
2 Douglas E. Winter, *Clive Barker: The Dark Fantastic* (London: Harper Collins, 2001), p. 13.
3 This infamous endorsement came about, according to Douglas Winter, at the World Fantasy Convention in Ottawa, Canada, in October 1984. King was reacting to new and emerging writers in the field and commented that perhaps Clive Barker was the future of horror. King later formally endorsed Barker on publications with 'I've seen the future of horror … and his name is Clive Barker'. For more on this, see Winter, *Clive Barker: The Dark Fantastic*, p. 171.
4 As a child who frequented video stores a lot in the 1980s, the video box for *Hellraiser* was a source of genuine intrigue and terror – the cover captured my imagination and burrowed under my skin, leaving an indelible impression. In later years, as a university student working in a video store, I used to give *Hellraiser* pride of place in the classic horror section. Today, the famed poster adorns the wall of my study.
5 Roger Ebert, Rev. of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* (Dir. Tony Randel, New World, 1988), 23 December, 1988. *Roger Ebert Online Archive*. www.rogerebert.com/reviews/hellbound-hellraiser-ii-1988. Date accessed: 15 January 2016.
6 Roger Ebert, Rev. of *Hellraiser* (Dir. Clive Barker, New World, 1987), 18 September, 1987. *Roger Ebert Online Archive*. Available at: www.rogerebert.com/reviews/hellraiser-1987. Date accessed: 15 January 2016.
7 Doug Bradley recalls Barry Norman's visit to the set and his encounter with Barker on the set of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, in the exhaustively detailed documentary *Leviathan: The Story of Hellraiser and Hellbound: Hellraiser II* (Dir. Kevin McDonagh, Cult Film Screenings, 2015). The documentary also includes brief clips of Norman's reviews of *Hellraiser* and *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* on his BBC Film series.
8 Variety Staff, Rev of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* (Dir. Tony Randel, New World, 1988), *Variety*, 31 December 1987. http://variety.com/1987/film/reviews/hellbound

-hellraiser-ii-1200427565/. Please note: Dates on this website are incorrect as published by *Variety*. *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* was not released until December 1988 in USA.

9 Alan Smithee (or Allen Smithee) was the official pseudonym used by film directors (from 1968 to 2000) who wished to publicly disown their film project. In order to officially use the credit, they had to evidence to the Directors Guild of America (DGA) that their creative control over the film had been compromised.

10 Paul Kane, *The* Hellraiser *Films and Their Legacy* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006), p. 40.

11 This is not the only instance when a horror director tries to shift genres and is distrusted for it. Wes Craven, a celebrated horror maestro known for the *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Scream* series, directed the moving drama *Music of the Heart* (1999), proving that typecasting can be broken. Craven noted in interviews that he had to fight hard to direct the project because of his reputation as a horror director.

12 Winter, *Clive Barker: The Dark Fantastic*, p. 191.

13 Clive Barker, 'An Introduction: Private Legends,' *The Essential Clive Barker* (London: Harper Collins, 1999), pp. 5–6.

14 Ken Tucker, 'One Universe at a Time Please,' Rev. of *The Great and Secret Show* by Clive Barker, *The New York Times Book Review*, 11 February 1990. www.nytimes.com/1990/02/11/books/one-universe-at-a-time-please.html. Date accessed: 14 January 2016.

15 *Nightbreed: The Cabal Cut* (2012) restored scenes and sequences that were feared lost, but unfortunately varied in quality (some scenes were sourced from VHS, others from degraded film stock). This full restoration composite, with a running time of 155 mins, was completed by Russell Cherrington and Mark Miller, which provided audiences with a completist version of *Nightbreed* and screened at numerous international film festivals. Following the rekindled desire to save and re-distribute *Nightbreed* as Barker intended, a modified, restored, and recut version (which differs from *The Cabal Cut*) was released in 2014, adding 20 mins to the 102 min theatrical cut.

16 Winter, *Clive Barker: The Dark Fantastic*, p. 354.

17 In his Oscar acceptance speech for Best Adapted Screenplay (71st Academy Awards held in March 1999), writer and director Bill Condon thanked Clive Barker, who served as Executive Producer on *Gods and Monsters*, for his support in making the film.

18 China Miéville, 'Candy and Carrion,' Rev. of *Abarat* by Clive Barker, *Guardian*, 19 October 2002. www.theguardian.com/books/2002/oct/19/sciencefictionfantasyandhorror.clivebarker. Date accessed: 1 March 2016.

19 Phil and Sarah Stokes, 'A Spiritual Retreat: The Seventeenth Revelatory Interview,' 26 March 2007. www.clivebarker.info/intsrevel17.html. Date accessed: 14 January 2016.

20 Michael Marshall Smith gave *The Scarlet Gospels* a gleeful review for the *Guardian* upon publication (Rev. published 13 May 2015), welcoming Barker back to the horror fold, and praising his ability to remain at the peak of his generic form.

Unfortunately, Horror fan sites subsequently featured reviews which differ in opinion, with many expressing their disappointment with the uneven novel.

21 Brigid Cherry, 'Imperfect Geometry: Identity and Culture in Clive Barker's "The Forbidden" and Bernard Rose's *Candyman*,' in Richard J. Hand and Jay McRoy (eds), *Monstrous Adaptations: Generic and Thematic Mutations in Horror Film* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 51.