

“Blood-Soaked on Lunar Island”

Neo Newell

December 2nd, 2025

Pacific Northwest College of Art, Willamette University

Thesis Proposal

For my thesis, I am proposing a 52-page gothic horror graphic novel titled *Blood-Soaked on Lunar Island*. The story focuses on a young man named Ira who takes an awful corporate job with awful corporate people. He reluctantly agrees to go on a business trip to a mysterious island in hopes of getting a promotion. Little does he know, a werewolf named Cassius has set the whole thing up as one big bloody trap, and Ira's world is soon turned upside down with the supernatural. The question I've been focusing on while making this project has been, "What does it mean to be a monster?". This book is the first in a 3-part series, which will address themes of queer identity, class differences, the patriarchy, and familial relationships as a way to challenge the audience's idea of morality.

Although queer romance isn't at the forefront of this book, it does play a large role in the rest of the story, so I'm setting up those ideas now. I've chosen the gothic genre to support this because one of its common tropes is the sympathetic monster. Many gothic stories feature monsters who are othered and treated poorly simply because of how they were born or made. This heavily relates to the queer experience because it mirrors real-life bigotry and prejudice against queer people. Because of this, many people in the LGBTQ+ community (myself included) relate to these monsters and sympathize with their stories. In Laura Westengard's *Queer Gothic Literature and Culture*¹, she writes about how representation through monsters can be a double-edged sword because although they are relatable, they're oftentimes given a violent end, which enforces harmful ideas. To break away from that problem while still using the trope of sympathetic monsters, this story will have an ending that respects and celebrates the queer community. On a similar note, werewolves have been used as a popular analogy for bisexuality because they demonstrate the duality between two parts of a being while still falling under one category. The analogy was popularized on Tumblr by the user @favouriteghost

¹ Westengard, Laura. "Chapter 16: Queer Gothic Literature and Culture." In *Twentieth-Century Gothic An Edinburgh Companion*, ed. Sorcha Ni Fhlainn and Bernice M. Murphy, (Cambridge University Press, 2022), 259-272.

and further discussed on Reddit², but this is not the only way werewolves have been seen as queer-coded. In Emily Vega's article *Werewolf characters are queer coded*³, they write about how having to hide part of your identity correlates to being in the closet. I'll be using these ideas and pulling from personal experiences to ensure I'm creating an accurate representation because normalizing queer identities is extremely important in a political climate that is focused on silencing marginalized voices.

The other key issues I'm looking at in this story are class differences and the patriarchy, which are commonly connected through white male privilege under capitalism. The movie *American Psycho*⁴ has been a vital inspiration for both of these issues, and although the landscape of that privilege has definitely changed in recent years, the bottom line is the same. The privileges of the ruling class are highly relevant in a time when there's a large wealth disparity in our country, so I'm connecting that with questions of morality. My main characters come from different class demographics, which will be big parts of their character arcs and affect the way they interact with each other.

Although I think the lessons in my book are something many people could benefit from, my target audience is queer young adults ranging from ages 18 to 30. I am bisexual and genderfluid, and I grew up in a home where I wasn't always listened to or understood, which, unfortunately, lots of people can relate to. Writing characters who get the chance to do something about their situations is a cathartic experience and a sort of literary revenge. I hope the people who read this and relate feel listened to and understood.

My book is heavily inspired by the Gothic, which includes mystery, the unknown, and abstraction from reality, so I want the visual language of my graphic novel to reflect that. Of course, there are still rules I need to follow for readability and suspense, but changing the border and page colors to match the mood, adding

² alphaguara27. "Werewolves and Bisexuality." *Reddit*, 2020.

https://www.reddit.com/r/tumblr/comments/hqjglg/werewolves_and_bisexuality/

³ Vega, Emily. "Werewolf Characters Are Queer Coded." *BU Pipe Dream*, February 16, 2023. <https://www.bupipedream.com/opinions/werewolf-characters-are-queer-coded/134459/>.

⁴ Harron, Mary, dir. *American Psycho*. 2000; Santa Monica, CA: Lionsgate, 2000. DVD

lots of inset panels, and gothic decorative elements will complement the overall feel of the story. Some visual inspiration for these ideas include *The Girl from the Sea*⁵ by Molly Ostertag, in which the page colors change to reflect emotionally charged scenes, and Jan Brett's children's books⁶, which include elaborate borders to show little details and other parts of the story. By obscuring typical layouts, I will reflect the mysteriousness and strangeness of the gothic genre while adding extra details for audiences to notice on a second read.

To create this book, I started with a 30-page comic script I wrote in a previous semester. Once I finished brainstorming about the entire trilogy, I added several scenes and more characters to help set up the plot for future books. I rely a lot on visuals to help articulate my ideas, so I sketched page layouts and panel thumbnails as I wrote the script. This process allows the images to drive the story, which is important for media that conveys most of the information through illustrations rather than words. After graduation, I intend to finish this book and submit it to publishing companies, but because of the time constraints of our thesis term, my goal is to have the entire script written with 10 pages illustrated and colored. The illustrations will be derived from my pencil sketches and put into Procreate to be cleaned up and colored. After that, I'll be using Adobe InDesign for formatting and lettering. Graphic novels provide a beautiful middle ground between literature and illustration, which is why I've chosen this format to represent my ideas.

In conclusion, I'll be addressing the question, "What does it mean to be a monster?" in my gothic horror graphic novel by looking at class differences, toxic family relationships, queer experiences, and the patriarchy. I will be writing and partially illustrating this book using detailed drawings that stray from conventional comic layouts to mimic the mysteriousness of the gothic genre.

⁵ Ostertag, Molly. *The girl from the sea*. Scholastic Inc., 2021

⁶ "Jan Brett." Penguin Random House. Accessed April 4, 2025.
<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/authors/3201/jan-brett/>.

Artist Statement

Neo (any pronouns) is a queer, mixed artist located in Oregon. In the Spring of 2026, they will receive their BFA in Animated Arts, and minor in Game Design from PNCA. Her work uses a mix of digital and traditional mediums and aims to be very imaginative and illustrative. They typically include monstrous and gothic themes with dreamlike embellishments to create vivid illustrations and narratives. His current project, *Blood-Soaked on Lunar Island*, is a gothic thriller graphic novel featuring werewolves and queer romance. In the future, she hopes to work in the cinematic animation industry after publishing her book.

Creative Brief

Blood-Soaked on Lunar Island is a gothic horror graphic novel. It follows a young man named Ira, who takes an awful corporate job with awful corporate people. He reluctantly agrees to go on a business trip to a mysterious island in hopes of getting a promotion. Little does he know, a werewolf named Cassius has set the whole thing up as one big bloody trap, and Ira's world is soon turned upside down with the supernatural. This book is a literal eat-the-rich story about what it means to be a monster.

My target audience is adults ranging from ages 18 to 30, although this story could be enjoyable to a wider age range as well. This book is written with queer people in mind, because my characters are all young, queer adults finding their place in the world.

This graphic novel is made by combining both analog and digital art. The thumbnails and page layouts are all done with pencil, which is then edited, lined, and colored in Procreate. The lettering will all be done in Adobe InDesign.

The key issues I'm looking at in this story are class differences and the patriarchy, which are commonly connected through white male privilege under capitalism. The movie *American Psycho* has been a significant inspiration for both of these issues, and although the landscape of that privilege has changed in recent years, the bottom line is the same. Another source for inspiration has been *Supernatural*, because of the way the show addresses issues of morality and humanity.

Blood-Soaked on Lunar Island is currently a 54-page graphic novel, which is the first in a three-part series. I intend to create a Kickstarter at the end of this semester to help fund this book, which I will finish over the next year. After it's done, I hope to have the series picked up by a publishing company, but I am open to self-publishing as well.

Oral Defense Speech

Good afternoon everyone, thank you all for coming to my Thesis Presentation! It may seem obvious based on my title, but I would like to give everyone a fair warning that there will be blood, violence, and mentions of drug use in this presentation. I'm Neo, I'm an animated arts major, minoring in game design, and for my thesis project, I'm creating a graphic novel. Before I get too far into the details of my book, I'd like to give a brief overview of who I am as an artist and where this project came from.

The last time I made a comic book, I was in 5th grade and obsessed with superheroes. I made 20 of those, and they were all bad, but I loved making them. Going from something like that to a full graphic novel has been quite the jump. My whole life, I've loved monsters and horror, so when I took Jason's script-writing class in 2022, I knew exactly what sort of story I wanted to write. At the time, my only focus was creating a fun story for myself, but as I continued thinking about my characters and the world I had created, it soon became something much bigger than that. The original script for Blood-Soaked on Lunar Island was only 24 pages long, but since then, it has nearly doubled.

This semester, I am taking Jason's Graphic Novel class, and my art has improved a lot since 5th grade. I've learned so much from that class, and I wish I had taken it sooner because of how much my art has evolved over the course of 3 months. This is the autobiographical comic I made for an assignment. I started making the pages for my thesis before I started taking this class, so I think you'll see evidence of that evolution in my work. Now we'll get into my actual thesis project, titled Blood-Soaked on Lunar Island. This is currently a 56-page graphic novel, which is the first in a three-part series. It is a gothic horror and quite literally, an eat-the-rich story.

It starts with a young man, Ira, who has been forced to take on an awful corporate job to help pay for his younger sister's hospital bills. Everyone he works with

has rancid personalities and constantly disrespect him. Despite being new at the company, Ira's coworker, Ryan, invites him on a mysterious business trip. Obviously, he doesn't want to go, but Ryan implies that he won't be eligible for a promotion if he skips out. After some consideration, Ira reluctantly decides to join. This page is right after he decides to go on the trip and boards the boat. It's the first page I drew for this story, and it's meant to show the calm before the storm. These pages come immediately after and give a little more characterization to Ira's coworker, Marc. Here, Marc is conversing with the ship captain, who curiously says the same phrase as the new secretary at their work. These are all of the coworkers: Marc, Bryce, Ryan, and their boss, Harvey. When they get off the ship, they arrive at a giant mansion in the woods.

Then, we meet two of the characters who have invited everyone to the island, Cassius and Tanvi. They've specifically chosen Ira's coworkers for their nefarious plans, so Ira's attendance catches them by surprise. Assuming he is of the same character as the rest of the group, Cas and V decide to continue on as normal. Once on the island, Ira goes to explore the house and stumbles upon a stack of files with the names of his coworkers. Cassius interrupts him before he gets a chance to look at them, and they have some flirty tension before Cas invites him to dinner. The dinner party is a disastrous whirlwind of Ira's coworkers getting completely wasted. Cassius has planned for this and he then tells everyone that there's a treasure hidden somewhere on the island. They're all competitive and this being a "business trip" means there are bound to be team building exercises. They head out to the woods and split into two groups. Ira and Ryan, and Marc, Bryce, and Harvey.

Bryce, now very out of it, decides he's going to head off by himself. Marc and Harvey hear screams and find his flashlight covered in blood. This is my big reveal page, and the first time we see the werewolf (apart from the cover). After this, there are several very bloody pages where Marc and Harvey are ripped to shreds. After their massacre, we cut to Ryan and Ira, who are speculating about what the treasure could be. Ryan asks for the time and sees Ira's lock screen with a picture of him and Miriam on it and then proceeds to make some disgusting comments about her. As Ira is yelling

at him, Ryan steps back into a snare. He is yanked up into the trees by his ankle and screams for Ira to help him. Ira turns his back on Ryan, but then the werewolf steps out of the bushes and gets right up in Ira's face. When he thinks he's about to die, the werewolf lunges past him toward Ryan instead. He bites down with a sickening crunch, and by the end of the page, all that's left is a leg swinging from the trees.

Ira runs back to the house and starts frantically packing his bag. He goes into the library to grab the files from earlier, but he's interrupted by Cassius behind him, who is reclining on a chair half-naked and covered in blood. Cas confirms he's the werewolf and shows Ira that the files are filled with the crimes of his ex-coworkers. They've all been kept quiet or paid off for some reason or another. This is the section where we get some werewolf lore during Cas's explanation. Ira ends up staying at the house and the next day, he meets Tanvi and Maliah, a vampire and a shapeshifter, who explain their roles in the operation. He learns that he's already met Mal in the office as the secretary and on the boat as the captain. Cas explains they need a human as an inside man, and Ira now freshly out of a job, agrees.

Now I'm going to talk about the process of developing this story. I gravitate heavily toward character-driven stories, so I spent a lot of my brainstorming on how to make likeable and relatable characters without making them too much of a clean slate. This ended up boiling down to two categories: dialogue and visualizing their personalities. One of the splash pages that comes early in the story, but I have not yet drawn, is of Ira's apartment. The point of this page is to show the audience who Ira is when he can be himself, away from work. In my sketch, I have lots of details pertaining to how he decides to decorate to show what he values. His keychain, for example, has a matching friendship bracelet, as the one we see on his sister, Miriam.

When I felt like I knew my characters better, I created story beats and then broke those into smaller pieces until I had a plan for each page. These got changed around a bit as I added pages and more characters, but they provided the base for my script. I'm a very visual person, so I made really rough thumbnails for each page based on those

beats before I wrote it out. Dialogue has been one of the biggest challenges for me while in the writing stage, and although it's there, I feel as though a lot of it is still in the drafting stage and will change as I keep working. I have all of my page thumbnails in order in a sketchbook so I can see what they'll look like together. Here is an example of what those thumbnail pages look like.

As I'm working on the panel layouts, I think about the goal of the page to figure out everything that needs to be included. I use a lot of sticky notes to move my panels around and redraw layouts, so I'm preserving my original ideas in case I try something and decide a different version was better. I also include a lot of notes and silly comments for myself because they help me remember what's going on when my drawings are very loose.

After I'm happy with the general layout, I put a picture of the page into Procreate and make rough sketches. Then I ink and color it. The inking process is what takes most of my time because I have to find references and make my illegible sketches into full illustrations. After I have a base for my drawing, I vary the line weight to add visual interest and depth. Increasing the intensity of my lineart is something I'm still working on, but I feel as though I've improved a lot during this process. I color everything with base colors first and then add lighting and texture at the end. Coloring and rendering in a consistent style is something I felt inexperienced with at the beginning of this semester, so I ended up changing my coloring style partway through. You can see this with page 13, which looks very different from the other pages. I also haven't made anything for print before, so it was really surprising to me how dark they ended up printing at first, and I needed to do a lot of color editing.

Here is page 28 from the thumbnail, to the pencils, to the inks, to the final page. As you can see, I started with a very loose sketch of where I wanted the characters to be and have my little notes about the tone of the page. I looked at a lot of other people's werewolf art to figure out what the final pose would look like, and then compared it to my cover art to make sure the shapes were consistent. For the characters in the

foreground, I used a 3D posing app on my iPad, called Magic Poser, to get a reference from the angle I wanted. After the lineart was done, I colored it and went over it several different times until I was happy with the lighting and the blood texture.

I often am a little too close to my work to feel like I'm seeing it accurately after a while, so it's been really helpful to get feedback during the drawing process. Both from Jason, who has context for my work, but also from my 10 year old brother, who can give me blind feedback so I can see how it might be interpreted by someone who doesn't know what I'm going for yet.

The question that has shaped this entire project, and really the whole point of the series, is what does it mean to be a monster? My thesis deals with themes of queer identity, class differences, the patriarchy, and toxic familial relationships. Several of my main characters are literal monsters, but they are the protagonists, and the audience is meant to be rooting for them. The antagonists are just people, so it really boils down to the question of whether people are born or made bad. Character and morality are demonstrated through actions, rather than inherent traits. This relates to queerness, race, and class because the idea that anyone is inherently "less than" because of uncontrollable circumstances is wrong. Goodness is something anyone can have, but it's shown through their choices, not their demographics.

I've always been fascinated by the gothic and monstrous things, and I think some of that fascination stemmed from being queer and not having the language to articulate my experiences or feelings. I had always felt like I was outside the binary gender boxes, so nonhuman characters were what I related to the most. I liked the idea of being a little creature better than being a little girl. With monstrousness, there are also opportunities for morally grey characters, which is how my main theme came about and why I think this is so compelling. Putting characters in dire situations forces them to reveal personal truths and truths about humanity, which audiences can relate to in a sincere way.

Although queer romance isn't at the forefront of this book, it does play a large role in the rest of the story, so I'm setting up those ideas now. I've chosen the gothic genre to support this because one of its common tropes is the sympathetic monster. Many gothic stories feature monsters who are othered and treated poorly simply because of how they were born or made. This heavily relates to the queer experience because it mirrors real-life bigotry and prejudice against queer people. Because of this, many people in the LGBTQ+ community (myself included) relate to these monsters and sympathize with their stories. In Laura Westengard's *Queer Gothic Literature and Culture*, she writes about how representation through monsters can be a double-edged sword because although they are relatable, they're often given a violent end, which enforces harmful ideas. To break away from that problem while still using the trope of sympathetic monsters, this story will have an ending that respects and celebrates the queer community. On a similar note, werewolves have been used as a popular analogy for bisexuality because they demonstrate the duality between two parts of a being while still falling under one category. The analogy was popularized on Tumblr by the user @favouriteghost and further discussed on Reddit, but this is not the only way werewolves have been seen as queer-coded. In Emily Vega's article, *Werewolf characters are queer coded*; they write about how having to hide part of your identity correlates to being in the closet. I am using these ideas and pulling from personal experiences to ensure I'm creating accurate representation.

Graphic novels are a visual medium, so to merge the gothic themes with the aesthetics of my book, I took a lot of inspiration from horror movies and tried to work in classic gothic tropes. Apart from the obvious connection to horror and the gothic through monsters, gore, and a giant mansion, I'm adding subtleties that connect to the staples of the genres. For example, a big part of the Gothic is power dynamics. To put that idea into a visual format, I emphasize the things that have power in my drawings with my shot choices. I make both the mansion and the werewolf loom over the other characters, and they take up a huge portion of their respective splash pages. This changes the power dynamics and balances the story

as the typical conduits of power (rich, white men) become closer and closer to becoming dinner.

This project is a piece of sequential art that expands upon the traditional style of American comics and graphic novels. There are standard formats for panels and panel transitions, but this being a gothic piece, it is fitting to break those norms to complement the genre. Gothic relies heavily on the unknown, mystery, and abstraction from reality, so I want the visual language of the story to reflect that. Of course, there are still rules I need to follow for readability and suspense, but there are things that can be tweaked, like the colors and added decorative elements. One of those decorative elements is a lunar calendar that I'm still working on, but will be added at the very end when all my pages are finished. You can see the gap for that at the bottom of pages 14 and 27. As Ira gets further away from his regular life, and we progress further in the story, the colors get darker and more dramatic. A graphic novel that displays this well is *The Girl from the Sea* by Molly Ostertag. In one of the scenes where a character is having an intense emotional reaction, the gutters of the page are black, contrasted with the illustration colors to reflect this internal struggle. As I mentioned previously, I haven't made a story of this scale before, and after having learned a lot more about comics this semester, I intend to change several things in my pages to better align with this goal and aesthetic for the whole book.

So far, I've talked a lot about the gothic with the tropes of sympathetic monsters and how that relates to queerness, but there are several other important themes in my story. These being class differences and the patriarchy, which are commonly connected through white male privilege under capitalism. The movie *American Psycho* has been a vital inspiration for both of these issues, and although the landscape of that privilege has definitely changed in recent years, the bottom line is the same. The privileges of the ruling class are highly relevant in a time when there's a large wealth disparity in our country, so I'm connecting that with questions

of morality. My main characters come from different class demographics, which are big parts of their character arcs and affect the way they interact with each other.

Another big source of inspiration for me has been the TV show *Supernatural*, which, despite having some truly awful writing choices, does a fantastic job of creating morally grey characters that the audience still roots for. The main characters are constantly riding the line of morality, which connects to my question of “what does it mean to be a monster,” while being complemented by American Gothic aesthetics in the first 5 seasons.

So what is my role in this project? I define myself both as a writer and an artist, but all altogether, a storyteller. The way I visualize and create my work is often a series of roles, and they change as I move through a project. For my thesis, I started with being a writer and a sort of director as I imagined my story as a movie. When it started growing, I saw myself more as an artist and a sculptor of the world-building. During this last semester, I’ve been much closer to being an illustrator and comic artist as I focus on all of the visual aspects of my book, and it solidifies in its final format. As the series progresses, I would like to eventually be a published author, but I will forever be a storyteller.

Between now and my graduation, I will be creating a Kickstarter to fund this project while I finish it. I am going to break up my book into short chapters to release periodically as the story continues. This will help grow my audience, and I’ll also be posting a lot on my other social media accounts to really propel that growth. My hope is that this will help gain the attention of publishers, but once the book is done, I will also be submitting it to publishing companies with the hopes that they’ll pick up the entire trilogy. I would prefer not to be in charge of distributing, but I am still open to self-publishing regardless.

One of the goals for this project is to normalize queer identities. So often, queer characters are put in stories where their gender or sexuality is made the main

focus. Although coming-out stories are important, I think they can sometimes be counterproductive by making caricatures of queer people. The graphic novel *Cosmoknights* by Hannah Templer inspires my book in the way the characters are written. Templer shows queer relationships in a casual way that doesn't paint their sexuality or gender as a singular character trait, or have other characters in the story dramatically react over that information. This is a refreshing way to normalize representation and uses showing rather than telling to convey the message. On a similar note, a lot of queer stories that end tragically rely on exploiting trauma for shock value rather than substance, or are left up to audience interpretation because of censorship laws and/or catering to straight audiences. This project will not be doing that, and I think that is extremely important in a political climate that is focused on silencing marginalized voices. The article *Queer representation in media: the good, the bad, and the ugly*, written by Tessa Kaur, does a great job of summarizing these different categories of representation and their effect on the community.

My target audience is adults ranging from 18 to 30, although I think this story could be enjoyable to a wider age range as well. This book is written with queer people in mind, but there are lessons included that I think a lot of people could benefit from. My main characters are all young, queer adults finding their place in the world, so hopefully others in that group can relate to them.

I started the process of making this story 3 years ago, so it has changed quite a lot since then. Since the first script, I've added new characters and nearly twice the amount of pages, with more to come as I keep thinking of ways to solidify the story that I'm trying to tell. I've changed the opening scene three times already, and as I continue to grow as a storyteller, my book grows too. I expect that the outlines for the next two books will evolve a lot as well as I figure out satisfying endings for my characters and their arcs.

Putting together a project of this size has been a completely new challenge for me, and I've learned an enormous amount this year, but this semester especially. Despite the similarities in sequential storytelling, as an animator, the way that I visualize stories is very different from a comic book artist. I've had to learn a lot and change the way I think about my project and how it will look as a graphic novel rather than a movie. I've been studying my favorite graphic novels and comics to compare my pages to ones at a professional level. The hardest thing for me at the moment is trying to stray away from realism to push my story and style in ways that complement the genre and medium. Even though I have five completed pages, I don't think all of them fit my intentions to the best of my ability. Because of that, I intend to redraw a few of them and continue to push myself as I complete the rest of this book. My midterm review was very eye-opening for me, as I had the privilege of meeting with an artist with an incredible portfolio, Justin Greenwood. He gave me really great feedback on my work and was very honest about what I need to improve upon. Both that experience and the feedback I've received in Jason's class regarding my comic work with a very different style have refocused my energy toward growing as an artist. Facing professional comic book artists and comparing my work to theirs has shown me a new standard for success that I am striving to achieve.

Both me and my thesis have grown so much in the past year, and I'm really excited to continue working on this story. I've had incredible support from my mentor, Jason, and I really couldn't have done it without him. I hope that as I finish this book and my academic career, I keep getting to meet amazing artists who push me and my skills. Thank you all again for attending my presentation!

Annotated Bibliography

Luckhurst, Roger. *Gothic: An Illustrated History*. Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2021.

This book addresses several aspects of the Gothic, from architecture to film to monsters. This makes it a great resource for visual inspiration, but also for understanding the history and reasoning behind common tropes in Gothic media.

Westengard, Laura. "Chapter 16: Queer Gothic Literature and Culture." In *Twentieth-Century Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion*, ed. Sorcha Ni Fhlainn and Bernice M. Murphy, (Cambridge University Press, 2022), 259-272.

This article describes the relationship between queer identities and gothic literature while including a history of the genre. It points out the issues of representing queer characters to maintain the status quo, thus creating a blueprint as to how we can be represented well in Gothic literature.

Vega, Emily. "Werewolf Characters Are Queer Coded." BU Pipe Dream, February 16, 2023.

<https://www.bupipedream.com/opinions/werewolf-characters-are-queer-coded/134459/>.

A look into werewolves and their symbolism in the LGBTQ+ community relating to coming out. This analogy is helpful context for formulating ideas about what I'm trying to say with my monster characters, especially when shaping their backstories.

Kaur, Tessa. "All Types of LGBTQ Representation in Media: A Comprehensive List." Heckin' Unicorn, October 14, 2023.

<https://heckinunicorn.com/blogs/heckin-unicorn-blog/queer-representation-in-media-comprehensive-list-breakdown-lgbt?srsltid=AfmBOorGSCvVntTYMD5kSeFHnyLEhSYuoi4KpLHfgOJuEvZScJ8eSy21¤cy=USD>.

This article breaks down the common types of LGBTQ+ representation in mainstream media and explains how many of them are harmful. I'll be using this to steer my story in a positive direction and avoid cliches.

alphaguara27. "Werewolves and Bisexuality." *Reddit*, 2020.

https://www.reddit.com/r/tumblr/comments/hqjglg/werewolves_and_bisexuality/

This Reddit post responds to a popular Tumblr post regarding harmful stereotypes directed towards bisexual people and how those can be combated by using werewolves as an analogy. It brings some comedy to otherwise hurtful statements and is another connection between gothic monsters and queer identities.

Templer, Hannah. *Cosmoknights*. Top Shelf Productions, 2019.

A graphic novel with colorful illustrations and a team of queer characters. This book provides visual inspiration for a strong color script and story inspiration in the way that it casually normalizes queer identities.

James, Alice. *Lavington Windson Mysteries*. Solaris, 2020-2023.

This series has a multitude of supernatural creatures and twists classic vampire lore in a new and interesting way. I'm inspired by the power/magic system that's been put in place and will be looking back to these books when I work more on the worldbuilding in the rest of my series.

Alfageeh, Sara, and Nadia Shamas. *Squire*. Quill Tree Books, 2022.

This graphic novel does a fantastic job of quickly establishing cultural and class differences while focusing on the story of an individual. I am going to read this at least one more time to take note of the little details that really bring the world-building to life. Also, the line quality in the art is very aesthetically pleasing

and the fashion was carefully thought out in a way I aspire to accomplish in my book.

Ostertag, Molly. *The girl from the sea*. Scholastic Inc., 2021

A short graphic novel about young sapphic love, which does a great job of making distinct characters and their personalities. The story in this book is wonderful, but I am mostly focusing on the colors and how they represent the mood of the characters. I will be using a similar technique of changing the page and border colors to complement internal and external conflict.

Mylod, Mark, dir. *The Menu*. 2022; Los Angeles, CA: Searchlight Pictures, 2023. DVD.

In this movie, there are some classic horror tropes that overlap with my story such as isolation, a villain with more to them than it seems, gory killings, and a chase scene through the woods. By looking at the aesthetics and common elements in horror movies, I can create better suspense and tension in my book.

Harron, Mary, dir. *American Psycho*. 2000; Santa Monica, CA: Lionsgate, 2000. DVD.

I was inspired by the exaggerated corporate awfulness in this film and want to be able to recreate a similar effect in my story. This movie focuses on misogynistic killings and white male privilege under capitalism, which are things I'll be covering as well, especially in the rest of the series.

Johnson, Rian, dir. *Knives out*. 2019; Santa Monica, CA: Lionsgate, 2020. DVD.

The look of this movie has been a huge inspiration for me, with the vibrant colors, a large cast of ridiculous characters, and, most importantly, the Gothic revival architecture. The details are also really important because they give audiences a reason to come back to the story. I am striving to add details in a similar way, and incorporate gothic aesthetics into a modern setting.

Kripke, Eric. *Supernatural*, The CW, 2005-2020. TV.

This show is one of my favorites and does a wonderful job of giving characters long-running arcs and distinct motivations. Using those character motivations to inspire my own has been incredibly helpful in mapping out my series as a whole and foreshadowing things properly.

Kretchmer, John T, dir. *White Collar*. Season 1, episode 8, "Hard Sell." Aired January 19, 2012, on USA Network. TV.

In this episode, the main character goes undercover and is forced to interact with a lot of gross, misogynistic, money-focused men. I am taking inspiration from this to fuel the beginning of my book and make a semi-realistic corporate environment.