

ter her father's death. The film centers on the vampire-ess (played by Gloria Holden) 's taste for beautiful young women. One notable scene features Holden seducing a nude female model before attacking her. Though the Motion Picture Production code of the time implicitly banned on-screen homosexuality, the filmmakers played with the obvious lesbian overtones in ads for the movie, which advised viewers: "Save the Women of London from Dracula's Daughter!" and "She Gives You That WEIRD FEELING!"

Horror, the genre of misfits, miscreants and all things taboo, was rapidly becoming a safe place to explore sexual and gender minority identities. The 1960's horror masterpiece *Psycho*, which earned director Alfred Hitchcock an Oscar nomination for Best Director, explored what was then known as "transvestitism" in a more direct and graphic way than viewers of the time were used to. If you're unfamiliar with the movie (spoilers ahead!), the antagonist of *Psycho* is a sweet and soft-spoken motel owner named Norman Bates who lives with his mother.

The only thing is, Norman's mother is long-dead and her preserved corpse is sitting upstairs. A dependent Norman takes on her persona, walking around the house in a wig and her robes, talking in her voice and punishing himself for being attracted to his unlucky female victim. By the film's end, he has been fully taken by her persona and refers to himself as "an old woman". Norman was played by actor Anthony Perkins, who at the time was struggling with his own bisexuality.

The enduring horror trope of the transgender serial killer (reappearing in such films as *Dressed to Kill* and *The Silence of the Lambs*) can largely be attributed to *Psycho*, but so too can the willingness of directors to reexamine gender-bending themes once considered beyond discussion.

Throughout the 1960's and 70's, a bevy of pulp B-Movies directed by queer men premiered in the genre. These directors included Andy Milligan (*Vapors*, *The Ghastly Ones*) and B-Movie king Ed Wood (*Plan 9 From Outer Space*, *The Sinister Urge*). During this period marked by The Sexual Revolution, which gave us sexploitation and exaggerated heterosexuality on film, ancillary queer characters began to pop up even in straight horror cinema as other sexual identities were explored in media. As The Gay Liberation Movement gained mainstream attention, horror cinema would duly respond.

Protests, "Rocky Horror", and queerer scares

In 1975, the intersection of queerness and horror was put on display like never before. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, probably the ultimate cult film, annihilates the lines between genders, sexualities and even species as it dances its way through some of the most classic iconography of the horror genre.

During this time, another cultural icon of LGBT and horror cinema was making his name: writer/director John Waters. Gay himself and often using