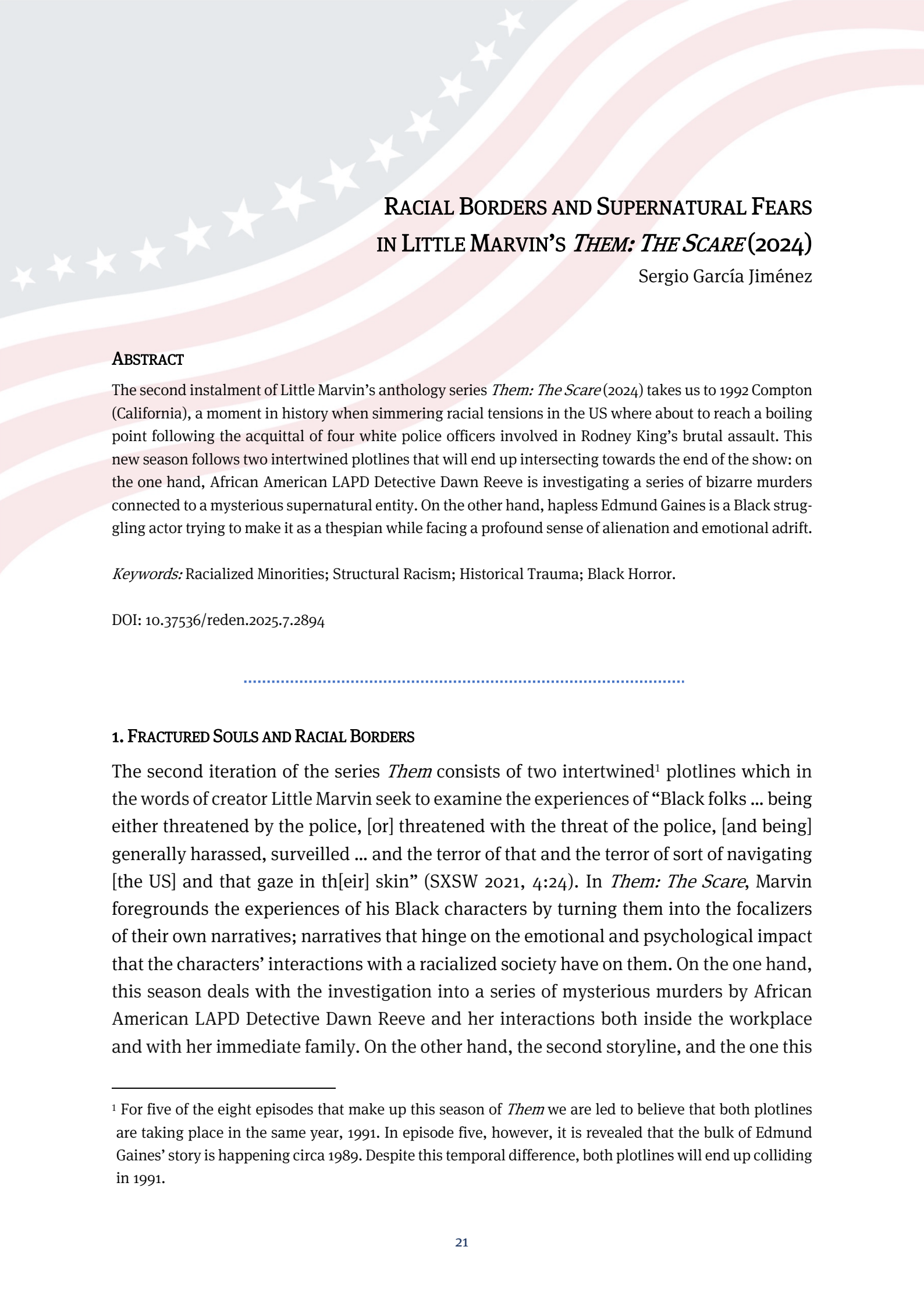




RACIAL BORDERS AND SUPERNATURAL FEARS IN LITTLE MARVIN'S *THEM: THE SCARE* (2024)

Sergio García Jiménez

ABSTRACT

The second instalment of Little Marvin's anthology series *Them: The Scare* (2024) takes us to 1992 Compton (California), a moment in history when simmering racial tensions in the US were about to reach a boiling point following the acquittal of four white police officers involved in Rodney King's brutal assault. This new season follows two intertwined plotlines that will end up intersecting towards the end of the show: on the one hand, African American LAPD Detective Dawn Reeve is investigating a series of bizarre murders connected to a mysterious supernatural entity. On the other hand, hapless Edmund Gaines is a Black struggling actor trying to make it as a thespian while facing a profound sense of alienation and emotional adrift.

Keywords: Racialized Minorities; Structural Racism; Historical Trauma; Black Horror.

DOI: 10.37536/reden.2025.7.2894

1. FRACTURED SOULS AND RACIAL BORDERS

The second iteration of the series *Them* consists of two intertwined¹ plotlines which in the words of creator Little Marvin seek to examine the experiences of “Black folks ... being either threatened by the police, [or] threatened with the threat of the police, [and being] generally harassed, surveilled ... and the terror of that and the terror of sort of navigating [the US] and that gaze in th[eir] skin” (SXSW 2021, 4:24). In *Them: The Scare*, Marvin foregrounds the experiences of his Black characters by turning them into the focalizers of their own narratives; narratives that hinge on the emotional and psychological impact that the characters' interactions with a racialized society have on them. On the one hand, this season deals with the investigation into a series of mysterious murders by African American LAPD Detective Dawn Reeve and her interactions both inside the workplace and with her immediate family. On the other hand, the second storyline, and the one this

¹ For five of the eight episodes that make up this season of *Them* we are led to believe that both plotlines are taking place in the same year, 1991. In episode five, however, it is revealed that the bulk of Edmund Gaines' story is happening circa 1989. Despite this temporal difference, both plotlines will end up colliding in 1991.

section will focus on, revolves around Edmund Gaines, a hapless Black aspiring actor who is going down a spiral of increasing alienation and emotional torment.

Throughout the series, Marvin uses storytelling as a political tool, as a “praxis of resistance” (Goessling 2018, 649), by bringing to the fore the voices of those groups that have been relegated to the “boundaries of the mainstream” (Delgado 1989, 2412). The series’s choice of making Black characters’ perspectives central is a form of “discursive subversion” (Montoya 2002, 244) that calls attention to subjugated narratives that tell a story of a “highly racialized social order: a story where social institutions and practices serve the interest of White individuals” (Lopez 2003, 85).

This article will argue that the second season of *Them* uses the creature The Scare as a layered metaphor for the harm wrought on the minds and bodies of racialized minorities by an oppressive racially biased system. For that reason, the article will explore the intertwined stories of Edmund Gaines and Dawn Reeve and analyse them as clear examples of the ravages of racism. To that aim, Edmund’s psychological struggles will be addressed from the perspective of the criminalization and distortion of Black men by the media and, also, from the lens of historical trauma. Dawn’s plotline will be examined through the perspective of institutional racism in the LAPD, as well as from the point of view of the intersectional bias she faces.

Edmund Gaines is a character seriously afflicted by the cumulative effects of trauma exposure. As a baby he was put up for adoption by his biological mother and ended up experiencing serious physical and psychological abuse inside the foster care home where he was placed. In addition, two different adoptive families later rejected him, the last incident taking place when he was twelve years old, with his foster parents citing Edmund’s problematic behavior and emotional instability as the reasons for their decision² to give him up. Adoption trauma can help develop symptoms of anxiety and anger that “often stem from fears of loss, rejection, [and] not belonging” (Shafir 2024, n.p.). The experiences of abandonment and unfitness that Edmund has been exposed to in his formative years have contributed to the character’s internalization that there is something faulty and inadequate inextricably attached to his identity which makes him “struggl[e] with rejection and self-doubt” (Hernon 2024, n.p.) during adulthood. This cumulative

² The Gaineses, a White wealthy family, are confronted by Edmund, who wishes to reconnect with them due to his increasing sense of isolation, in episode four. Inquiring about why he was rejected by the family, Edmund is told by his foster father that his difficulty to control his emotions and the fact that he was reaching puberty made the Gaineses wary of the dangers Edmund could pose to their biological daughter, Edmund’s foster sister; an explanation that conjures up the “old ‘dangerous Black male’ stereotype” (Sharman 2020, n.p.). Ultimately, Edmund is asked to leave the Gaineses’ house and told not to come back.

trauma is coupled with the racial microaggressions³ that Edmund directly experiences inside the movie industry he strives to enter, as well as with the belittlement⁴ he is subjected to in his job as a mascot at a children's arcade.

The way Edmund is first introduced in the first episode of *Them: The Scare* provides significant insight into the vulnerable state he is in. About to start his shift at the arcade, we find him all by himself inside a darkened locker room, half-naked, slouching over a bench, listening to the words from an audiotape that try to instil confidence and encourage him to get rid of the fear that drives his life while he takes deep breaths and exhales slowly, trying to relax. The next scene shows Edmund inside his pig costume dancing around a crowd of kids that cheer for him. The apparent banality of Edmund's job position at the arcade hides a deeper metaphor from which parallels can be drawn with the everyday reality of the character. Trapped inside his cartoonish and expressionless pig-faced costume, Edmund feels how his profound yearning⁵ for recognition slips away. This furthers his sense of marginalization. At the same time, it causes him to suffocate as he tries to resist inside the stifling confines of the dehumanized limited role that society has assigned to him: that of a one-dimensional caricature. This condition is enhanced by his experiences in the acting profession.

Edmund is unable to land any acting roles due to the ubiquitous pigeonholing of Black actors as drug dealers, thugs or a combination of both, a particular niche for which his acting skills are rather inadequate. The situation in the movie industry presented in the series is reflective of a larger tradition in the United States that links Blackness with criminality. Michelle Alexander has argued that the "the meaning of blackness" in US America is that "black people, especially black men, are [seen as] criminals" (2010, 244), and Edmund's repeated rejections evidence the persistence of this association. Industry data underscores this point: *Vox* carried out a study in 2016 in which they looked at

³ Racial microaggressions can be defined as "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group" (Sue et al. 2007, 273). Researchers have argued that "the additive nature of these interpersonal and institutional microaggressions makes them tremendously burdensome" (Bridges 2019, 189) on those at the receiving end. Racial microaggressions abound in the everyday lives of characters like Edmund Gaines and Dawn Reeve as the paper will explore.

⁴ Most of the microaggressions that Edmund experiences at work come from his manager; for instance, after Edmund, in his pig costume, dances in hip hop style with some of the kids at the arcade, he is upbraided by the manager and instructed never to do that again as, in his view, it is dangerous, casting the spell of Black culture being a "dangerous vector" (Muhammad 2020, n.p.) for Whites. On a separate occasion, Edmund is ridiculed after telling his manager that he has booked an audition for a movie role and he is told that someone who looks like him will never be taken seriously in the industry.

⁵ As Luke James, the actor who portrays Edmund Gaines in the series, has mentioned in regard to the character, Edmund is "a man who feels alone in this world, and [is] looking to be seen, looking for a sense of purpose" (Kristen Anzelc 2024).

26,000 films with 160,000 acting credits in them. The study found that “62 percent of all actors who were credited as gang member are black. Related credits—‘gangster’ (61 percent black), ‘gangbanger’ (60 percent), and ‘thug’ (66 percent)—drew similar results” (Crockett 2016, n.p.), reinforcing exactly the kind of narrow casting Edmund faces. Likewise, a 2023 Pew Research Center study⁶ reported on how a majority of Black Americans “see racist or negative depictions and a lack of effort to cover broad segments of their community” (Bauder 2023, n.p.) in the media.

In line with these ideas, a most illuminating scene takes us to one of these auditions where Edmund is painfully striving to sound convincing as a thug while the camera operator taping his performance cackles at Edmund’s futile efforts to look threatening and speak fluent Ebonics. At one key point, Edmund, mortified, looks directly into the lens of the camera filming him, revealing a shot of his upside-down distorted reflection on the lens. When looking at this shot it is difficult not to be reminded of the illustration that accompanied the 1982 *Los Angeles Times* article, “The media’s treatment of Blacks: A story of distortion,” which included an illustration by Richard Milholland of a Black man’s face completely disfigured and artificially altered; a direct way of addressing the notion that “the white-owned media ... still routinely distort the fabric of black life—when they aren’t neglecting it altogether” (Scott 2021, n.p.). On his way out of the casting agency, Edmund goes past rows of African American actors waiting for their turn to be called in; they all look the same, disguised as thugs with their dark shades, durags and golden chains, they are all a flat note, a mere caricature of “their identities [crushed] as one-dimensional” (Nielsen 2024, n.p.).

Continuous personal and professional rejection “aggravate[es] [Edmund’s] loneliness, pushing him to the verge of the breaking point” (Solanki 2024, n.p.) that appears after the opportunity to audition for the role of a serial killer⁷ in a slasher movie presents itself. In preparation for the audition, Edmund tries on different costumes and makeup. In a terrifying scene, he paints his face in dark and red colours and covers it using a nylon

⁶ Over two decades earlier, Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr. and Shanto Iyengar’s 2000 study “Prime Suspects: The Influence of Local Television News on the Viewing Public” found that local TV stations “rarely present nonracial attributes of criminal suspects,” thereby “cultivat[ing] misperceptions and prejudice” (572). Likewise, Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley’s 1997 article “Public Perception of Race and Crime: The Role of Racial Stereotypes” concluded that “race and crime can be, and often are, conflated ... by the media” (396). Katheryn Russell-Brown’s *The Color of Crime* ([1998] 2009) explores this conflation with the concept of “the myth of the *criminalblackman*,” through which the media “create[s] a menacing caricature of young Black men” (107). Ed Guerrero’s *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film* (1993) ranges from the “antiblack depictions and systematic, overt racism” (11) of the early days of cinema to Hollywood’s later, “more subtle and masked forms of devaluing African Americans on the screen” (70).

⁷ Yet another example of typecasting and negative representation of Black characters within the movie industry.

stocking tied around his neck which creates a tight, compressed effect, distorting his facial features and exaggerating his appearance. The misshapen reflection he sees in the mirror is reminiscent of that of the camera lens at the audition. Giving free rein to his inner turmoil and in a manifestation of what Karen D. Pyke (2010) refers to as internalized racial oppression, Edmund looks admiringly at his grotesque new self while grimacing and grinning, as if stopping resisting the impulse to counter the racist dehumanization that surrounds him and giving in to the incessant pull that calls for the concealment of his true identity and the embrace of his warped image, a process magnified by the sense of inadequacy he bears from his unresolved childhood trauma and the media's constant "demonization and criminalization of ... Black men" (Smiley and Fakunle 2016, 2). In doing so, he is tragically succumbing to "the mystifications of the very racist ideology which imprison and define [African Americans]" (Hall 1986, 26), creating a sense of deviancy around them and contributing to sully their reputation. In addition, by stepping into the shoes of a killer Edmund discovers that he can fulfil his longing for being seen and, what's more, even feared, something he immediately takes pleasure⁸ in, since he has usually been the one accosted by fear. This new persona also helps the character channel the pent-up anger that has been growing inside him for decades.

2. SUPERNATURAL THREATS AND TORTURED BODIES

Them: The Scare situates itself within the Black Horror tradition, using the conventions of the genre to confront "the all-too-real fear of walking through America in a Black body" (Bellot 2021, n.p.). The series achieves this by layering its supernatural terrors with storylines that call attention to Blackness—its history, ideologies, experiences, politics, language, humor, esthetics, style, music—a hallmark of Black Horror narratives (Coleman 2023, 8).⁹ In this sense, the show exemplifies Tananarive Due's claim that "Black history is Black horror" (Burgin 2019, 4:03), as its supernatural, terrifying imagery becomes

⁸ Some examples of Edmund's overt enthusiasm when terrorizing others can be found in the scene at the arcade when, disguised as the pet mascot, Edmund grabs a knife and walks among the children while they and their parents run away in panic. Another chilling moment occurs during his date with the casting agency's receptionist, Rhonda, at his home: excusing himself to go to the bathroom, Edmund leaves Rhonda alone in the den only to reappear moments later, sneaking up behind her clad in his killer costume. Edmund armed with a knife makes Rhonda believe he is actually going to kill her, when she starts pleading for her life he breaks up in laughter and does not stop doing so even as she leaves the house quite distressed.

⁹ Scholar and Texas A&M University Professor, Robin R. Means Coleman has written extensively on the concept of Black Horror. According to her conceptualization, this subgenre refers to those productions that, albeit influenced by many of the same "denotations of horror films, such as disruption, boundary violation, and provoking fear," are primarily characterized for "hav[ing] an added narrative focus that calls attention to racial identity, in this case, Blackness—Black culture, history, ideologies, experiences, politics, language, humor, esthetics, style, music, and the like" (2023, 8).

inseparable from the racial trauma it dramatizes. For *Them*'s creator, Little Marvin, Black Horror¹⁰ lends itself perfectly to this kind of storytelling because it “has this tremendous capability of couching really complex and nuanced social conversations in a package that is palatable” (Radish 2021, n.p.). By combining Black historical and cultural realities with a genre built on “disruption, boundary violation, and provoking fear” (Coleman 2023, 8), *Them: The Scare* transforms horror into both a reflection of racialized experience and a means of reckoning with it.

This section will focus on the titular entity, The Scare, which embodies the supernatural in this season of *Them*. To understand The Scare's encroachment on Edmund Gaines, first we must look at Gaines's emotional state at the end of his journey in the 1989 plotline. Edmund's descent into the abyss accelerates after being rejected for the serial killer audition he had been working on due to growing suspicions from members of the casting agency, especially after his bizarre date with the receptionist Rhonda, about the frailty of his mental health. In a fit of rage, Edmund ends up kidnapping, torturing, and killing the camera operator who had laughed at him in a previous audition, and dumping his body in the desert. Knowing the police will soon be onto him, Edmund is about to flee when he receives a call from child and family services that gives him a key piece of information: the whereabouts of his twin sister.

It is revealed that Edmund has a sister and that they got separated during the adoption process when they were small children. Edmund has been looking for her all his life. Determined to reconnect, Edmund shows up at the Compton home of LAPD Detective Dawn Reeve, his sister, and the character on which the next section of this paper will focus. Despite Edmund's good intentions, his demeanor and nervous attitude make Dawn suspicious and she asks him to leave her home before being able to tell her about their connection as siblings, something she has no recollection of. Upon arriving at his apartment, Edmund records himself venting his frustration towards Dawn: “[y]ou're normal. You've got your job, your family. Ever since I left your house all I see is blood” (Navarro 2024, 23:45).

The Scare can be understood as “a manifestation of all ... [of Edmund's] rage and pain,” an entity “that feeds on that loneliness, that despair, that anger, that pain, that heartache” (Milheim 2024, n.p.) that Edmund harbours. The first time Edmund sees the entity, he is lying on the floor of his apartment in a foetal position after having been asleep, The Scare rests at his feet, emulating Edmund's posture. There is a kind of symbiotic connexion emanating from their physical entanglement, as if they were two sides of the same coin, and, in a peculiar way, they are. The Scare represents a point of no return

¹⁰ For more on Black history and its representation in cinema see Leab (1975) and Cripps (1993). For more on how Blackness has been portrayed in the horror genre see Pinedo (1997), Coleman and Harris (2023), and Bailey (2024).

in Edmund's downfall, the last stage in the transformative process already glimpsed with that assertive look in the bathroom mirror when he was clad as a serial killer, in preparation for his audition. The Scare entices Edmund to completely surrender to the grotesque caricature¹¹ of Blackness he has grown accustomed to. Taking advantage of his deep-seated feelings of self-loathing and inadequacy compounded by decades of personal and professional rejection and neglect, the entity tells Edmund that there is no sense in resisting or clinging to a humanity he does not possess since he is worthless and not even his own flesh and blood cares about him. Instead, The Scare vows, by joining forces with it, Edmund will be able to avenge the wrongs caused to him by those he loved and he will finally be seen and acknowledged.

The Scare's physical depiction is "tied directly to Edmund's previous trauma" (Zachary 2024, n.p.), as its "beefed-up Raggedy Anne doll" (Milheim 2024, n.p.) appearance evidences. Raggedy Anne and Andy are sibling dolls and characters created in the early 20th century by American writer Johnny Gruelle. The dolls have a complicated history of minstrel genealogy since Gruelle modelled his creations after "three blackface minstrel-infused sources" (Bernstein 2011, 158); thus turning Raggedy Anne and Andy into a "preserve of racism" (Almore 2012, n.p.). The fact that The Scare, a manifestation of Edmund's inner turmoil, takes the shape of a cultural artefact "founded upon the enactment of demeaning stereotypes of black people" (*Race* 2018, n.p.) speaks to the character's previously explored struggles with self-hate. It also connects with the insidiousness of historical trauma.

In *Them: The Scare* the concept of trauma,¹² which can be translated as "wound" according to its Greek origin, goes beyond individual suffering. The series frames the struggles of the Edmund and Reeve as a continuation of the broader history of Black suffering under systemic oppression; thus highlighting the weight of historical trauma,¹³

¹¹The grotesque caricaturing of Blackness in U.S. cinema traces back to the silent era, when films would portray African Americans as "[c]hicken-stealing, irresponsible, crap-shooting, lazy, watermelon-eating, tortured, dancing servants" (Butters 2002, 63). D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), adapted from Thomas Dixon Jr's "pro-White supremacy" (Coleman 2023, 22) novels *The Leopard's Spots* (1901) and *The Clansman* (1905), "constitutes the grammar book for Hollywood's representation of Black[ness]" (Diawara 1993, 3). Its racist imagery "plants the idea that that which is Black is horrifying and monstrous" and presents as truth "that blacks are uncivilized" (Rocchio 2000, 50). Michelle Alexander notes that stereotypes of Black men as "aggressive, unruly predators" originated after the Civil War and abolition of slavery, when Whites feared that "an angry mass of Black men might rise up and attack them" (2010, 28).

¹² Dr. Gabor Maté explains that trauma studies usually deal with how our "woundedness [...] dictates much of our behavior, shapes our social habits, and informs our ways of thinking about the world" (2022, 30).

¹³ Traditionally, historical trauma has been studied in relation to the experiences of Native Americans and Jewish survivors of the Nazi Holocaust. In recent decades, the term has started being applied to the African American experience (Williams-Washington 2010, 32). Just as Native American and Jewish communities

focusing on its “cumulative emotional and psychological [effects], [which span] over a lifespan and across generations, [and which] emanat[e] from massive group trauma experiences” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart 2003, 7).

Edmund has kept a Raggedy Andy doll since childhood. In the last episode of this season, it is revealed that his biological mother, when putting Edmund and his sister up for adoption inside a foster care home, left both children with a Raggedy Andy and Anne doll, respectively. Edmund’s mother is Ruby Lee Emory, the oldest daughter of the Emorys, the Black family whose journey from North Carolina to East Compton in the 1950s was recounted in the first season of *Them*. The Emorys fled from the horrors¹⁴ of Jim Crow hoping to find solace in sunny California. However, they encounter a fierce backlash from their White neighbours who are not willing to share their suburban space with Black folks, as well as from the sinister entities that dwell inside their haunted new home. The real and supernatural racial terrors the family faces are deeply scarring and trauma-inducing.¹⁵ As the character Ruby Emory puts it in a flashback when saying goodbye to her children before leaving them at the foster care home: “I am not right. What I went through as a kid, it never left me” (West 2024, 27:10). The Raggedy Andy doll establishes a direct link with the trauma of Edmund’s ancestors; a trauma that is “embedded ... within [his] family’s blood” (Milheim 2024, n.p.), and goes beyond “the burden of historical [wounds]” by being perpetuated through the cycle of “daily race-based stressors” (Conner 2020, n.p.) he has to navigate.

Despite its resemblance to the Raggedy doll characters, The Scare is a tall, muscular, and physically menacing creature. Its aggressive looks and the violent actions that it will perpetrate are tied to Edmund’s crave for visibility and recognition, all bottled up inside an entity that, unlike Edmund, cannot be ignored by those it chooses to haunt. The fusion of Edmund and The Scare occurs after the former commits suicide and completely surrenders to the distorted version of himself encouraged by the entity, turning into a vessel of supernatural violence. During 1991, the year LAPD Detective Dawn Reeve’s storyline takes place, The Scare, carrying Edmund’s spirit inside, starts committing a series of grotesque murders. On a superficial level, the killings and those who are targeted

have historically suffered from policies of forced displacement, persecution, genocide and ethnic cleansing, African Americans have also faced similarly traumatic circumstances “considering their multigenerational history of slavery, race-based segregation, racism, prejudice, and discrimination”, thus “meet[ing] [the] criteria for historical trauma” (Williams-Washington & Mills 2018, 247).

¹⁴ The Emory family leaves their North Carolina home after Lucky Emory, the mother, is gang-raped and his newborn child killed by her attackers while her husband and two daughters are away at the movies.

¹⁵ The trauma of the Emory family spans, as documented in the series, at least three generations; with parents (Lucky and Henry), children (Ruby Lee and Gracie) and grandchildren (Edmund Gaines and Dawn Reeve) being afflicted by it.

by them are The Scare's way to draw Dawn's attention to her past¹⁶ and to lead her towards Edmund, her twin brother, whom she does not remember. On the other hand, it is inevitable not to see the murders for something deeper and more layered: a metaphor for the pernicious consequences that racial boundaries erected around people of colour inflict upon their minds and bodies.

The bodies left behind by The Scare are torn, crushed and broken down as if an obliterating force had devastated them. Significantly enough, all of its victims are racialized minorities; namely, African Americans, Latinx and Asian immigrants. Their limbs and bones are twisted and turned in impossible ways; their contorted faces have traces of anguish and despair imprinted on them, and their mangled bodies are usually placed inside tiny and confined spaces, like under a sink or inside an exhibition showcase. The mutilated corpses of The Scare's victims render visible the "obliterating force of racism" (Patell 2011, 373) whose mere anticipation "breaks the body [of those who suffer it] down" (Silverstein 2013, n.p.), and they also materialize the rupturing that Black Americans experience by having "two warring ideals in one dark body whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (Du Bois 1903, 4).

The physical contortion of the bodies wrecked by The Scare is also reminiscent of the manufactured distortions about racialized minorities, especially African Americans, which "seem permanently engraved in American culture" (Scott, 1982) and that were an intrinsic part of Edmund Gaines' mental struggles. Furthermore, it is found out during the police investigation that, in the hours leading up to their deaths, many of the victims would cover their mirrors and, in fact, any objects where they could see their reflection; their reservations to confront themselves in the mirror can also be understood as a reference to the already mentioned notion of internalized racial oppression and to how racialized minorities sometimes struggle to reconcile their own self-perception with the tainted image of themselves and their communities that is largely projected onto society by the White gaze. A gaze that has historically confiscated the Black body, trapped it and "fixed [it] within its own procrustean frame of reference" (Yancy 2017, 4), a process not dissimilar from The Scare's *modus operandi*.

Apart from its choice of victims and the ways in which their bodies are tortured, another element that adds to the double nature of The Scare is the invisibility cloak it seems to wear and its ability to cross racial boundaries and not be perceived except by those it directly preys upon; The Scare manages to act with impunity, leaving no DNA

¹⁶ The Scare targets, among others, Ms. Mott, the abusive woman in charge of the foster care home where Edmund and Dawn were placed as kids. It also kills a couple of Asian American twin sisters and a Latino immigrant boy whose brother had previously left the country leaving him alone with his grandmother; this draws parallels with Edmund and Dawn's relationship as twins and also with their separation. Ultimately, The Scare goes after Dawn's step mother and his son, Kelvin.

prints or eyewitnesses of its forays into minority neighbourhoods. This quality of the demonic entity functions as an allegorical representation of racism's ability to operate as an "invisible norm ... concealed in systems, practices, policies, and laws that ... disadvantage racialized persons" (Aiken 2007, 62). These subtler, more systemic expressions of a racially biased society are no less damaging than more explicit manifestations of it, and their burden on people of colour is underscored by *The Scare's* unseen but still powerfully felt deeds.

3. ARE YOU SCARED?

"Fear is pain arising from the anticipation of evil" (Macneill 2024, 0:20). This quote from Greek philosopher Aristotle ushers us into the first episode of *Them: The Scare*, which soon after offers a close-up of LAPD Detective Dawn Reeve waking up in 1991 Los Angeles in her home to the images of Rodney King's¹⁷ beating on her TV. There is a certain tension in her look from the moment she opens her eyes, a kind of nervous apprehension that will accompany her throughout the eight episodes of the season. Reeve is Black, a woman, and a police officer in one of the most prominent hubs of civil and racial unrest in US America: Compton, in South Central Los Angeles. As this section will explore, navigating this time and space in her skin is painful and involves anticipating evils that sometimes will be supernatural, but at other times will be very much grounded in reality.

Suspensions around the long history of the LAPD's infamous policing culture and its officers' attitudes towards racialized minorities were confirmed in the Christopher Commission Report (1991), which offers relevant insight into the workplace Reeve inhabits in the show. The report found that a "significant number of officers in the LAPD ... [would] repetitively use excessive force against the public" (iii), something "aggravated by racism and bias" (xii) existing inside the force. The bias exhibited by the officers was not, however, restricted to the public; it was also "directed to fellow officers" who were "members of racial or ethnic minority groups" (xiii) and who, "too frequently", had to endure "racist slurs and comments and ... discriminatory treatment within the Department" (xiii). The report also notes that, in most cases, these behaviors were not sanctioned by the Department, giving the impression that they were tolerated by it.

¹⁷ In March 1991 the recorded vicious attack of Black motorist Rodney King by four White police officers was released to the public. This event would end up triggering the 1992 Los Angeles riots, after the policemen involved were acquitted of assault by an almost entirely White jury. Undoubtedly, the images of King writhing on the ground while being beaten over fifty times by the officers towering over him with their batons effectively galvanized large segments of the African American community and others sympathetic to their plight. A year later, the infamous verdict caused the county of Los Angeles to "erup[t] into several days of civil unrest, protests and violence that resulted in thousands of people injured and more than 50 people dead" (Miller 2022, n.p.).

Rodney King's assault offered a glimpse into the seedy underbelly of an institution tarnished by a broader pattern of embedded racial discrimination. The environment of permissiveness inside the LAPD, the nonchalance with which the officers would spew disturbing racial remarks via their mobile data terminals (MDTs), and the lack of accountability for excessive use of force against racial minorities, all tie into the notion that "racism is ordinary, not aberrational"; it is, in fact, "the usual way society does its business" (Delgado and Stefanic 2017, 20). Michelle Alexander argues that, usually, "[o]ur understanding of racism is ... shaped by the most extreme expressions of individual bigotry, not by the way in which it functions naturally, almost invisibly ... when it is embedded in the structure of a social system" (2010, 183–4). In an interview with *Indiewire*, *Them*'s creator Little Marvin commented on the way this season's depiction of racial violence pivots more around subtle, cumulative, everyday occurrences which are "less overt, but no less toxic in its own way" and how the tension they foster "i[s] not so much in your face but you can kind of feel it, and that ickiness is always kind of out there and skirting around the edges" (Kholza 2024, n.p.).

Many of Dawn's incidents inside the police force are illustrative of the real tensions and challenges permeating 1990s Los Angeles. The first time we see her at the workplace, protesters are surrounding the police department chanting in discontent over Rodney King's assault. The in-betweenness that comes with Dawn being "stuck between public [and] fellow officers" (Reuters 2017, n.p.), between racial identity and professional duty, crystallizes on various occasions; for instance, when she is walking toward the entrance building she glances shyly at the protesters before averting her eyes and looking down. Similarly, her expression of disgust is also revealing when, in yet another example of Blackness "described in monstrous terms" (Coleman 2023, 25), King is called a "beast" by some White officers standing next to Reeve, or when at a crime scene a group of, mainly Black, South Side bystanders are referred to as "animals" by the officers discussing the situation with her. But, perhaps, the scene that most clearly depicts Dawn's conflicting position inside the LAPD occurs when she witnesses her partner, McKinney, brutalise a young Black man inside his home. In the scene, which makes a point of showing that Rodney King's assault was not the exception, but rather part of "a pattern of brutality on the part of the LAPD" (Allsop 2022, n.p.), Dawn, holding the man's baby in her arms, stands between McKinney, beating senselessly at the man, and a group of officers who look idly at the assault without interfering, while she alone passionately pleads with McKinney to stop.

Dawn's experiences as a Black woman in the series reveal how race and gender bias cannot be separated, since the hostility she faces from co-workers stems from the ways

these identities are bound together. As Kimberlé Crenshaw¹⁸ argues, different dimensions of oppression are not additive but thoroughly intermeshed and inseparable (Jenkins 2019, 264–5). There are many instances that showcase this synergy; for example, we witness the biases at play in the “devaluing of the work that Black women do” (Frye 2019, n.p.) and in their exclusion from “assuming leadership roles” (Cirincione-Ulezi 2019, 719) when Reeve is accused of being too emotional and getting too involved in her investigations. Her reports and ideas on the serial killer case are not taken seriously by her lieutenant in spite of their plausibility, and despite holding the rank of detective she is forced to follow the lead of officer McKinney, someone with ties to White supremacist groups and known for his unorthodox methods. On other occasions, harassment comes in the form of degrading insults or threatening pictures like the one showing a dead body with a tag bearing Dawn’s name on it that she finds on her desk. However, one of the clearest examples of “the intersectional face of hate” (Fugardi 2021, n.p.), when misogyny and racism are at work, takes place in episode three, during a confrontation between Dawn and McKinney.

A slightly drunk McKinney finds Dawn all by herself working in the office at night. First, he tries to make an awkward pass at her, when he sees her rebuff he uses profanity and questions whether she is “an affirmative action hire” (Carolyn 2024a, 26:09). Then, his abusive behaviour takes an even more menacing turn; McKinney, sitting on Reeve’s desk and inching closer and closer, picks up a picture of Dawn and her son that she keeps on her desk and asks: “what’s the boy do by himself all night while you’re working around the clock?” (Carolyn 2024a, 26:29). Dawn, who remains seated, backs away and reaches for her gun, telling McKinney to stop and go home, to which he replies: “are you scared?” (Carolyn 2024a, 26:39).

The query “Are you scared?” is a leitmotif employed frequently in this season of *Them*; it is the bridge that joins together supernatural threats with grounded social commentary. The question is posed by the entity The Scare to some of its victims, as well as by bigoted characters like McKinney to Dawn or to her son Kelvin when he deliberately targets and arrests him for marijuana possession. Fear “is one of the dominant emotions of the black experience,” as the renowned author Ta-Nehisi Coates has pointed out (PBS 2015, n.p.). In a scene at the end of the first episode, Dawn gets under the sink in her kitchen, trying to emulate the placement of the body of Ms. Mott, The Scare’s first victim. As she does so, Reeve listens to the tape she recorded during her visit to the crime scene.

¹⁸ In “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex” Crenshaw rejects the single-axis analysis, that is, focusing exclusively on gender or race dimensions, when it comes to Black women’s employment experiences in race discrimination cases. As an alternative to the limited legal framework afforded to those who are marginalized in multiple ways, Crenshaw develops the concept of intersectionality.

Once under the confining space of the sink, a powerful montage cuts together shots of Ms. Mott's limbs being torn by the mysterious entity and of Dawn's own extremities collapsing; as if the trauma experienced by one body were passed on to the other, forming an invisible bond between Dawn's real, oppressive placement inside a lopsided system that suffocates her with its deeply entrenched racial bias, and Ms. Mott's attack by a supernatural force with a might capable of annihilating every fibre of her being. Suddenly, the audio from the tape recorder cracks and an ominous voice asks Dawn if she is afraid, blending together the horrors of the paranormal and those more grounded in reality.

Dawn's direct confrontation with The Scare or with his long-lost twin brother Edmund, since they have become entangled in a single being, takes place in the last minutes of the final episode of the season. The entity, through Edmund, leads Dawn to Ms. Mott's foster care home, where they were both placed as babies before being separated a few years later. There, Edmund shows Dawn visions of their past in the house, the abuse they experienced under Mott's care, and the emotional toll it took; things she does not remember at all. Dawn has come to understand that her stepmother made her forget about Edmund's existence by telling her that he was nothing more than an imaginary friend and with time she blocked all memories of her life before being adopted.

Edmund wants to be finally reunited with his sister Dawn, teasing her to turn into a supernatural being just like him; The Scare, on the other hand, just wants another tormented soul to possess and feed off of. Seeing her own warped Scare avatar walking slowly toward where she is, Dawn understands that the only way to get through to Edmund and free him from the grip of The Scare is "through forgiveness and acknowledgment ... recogniz[ing] his true identity and apologiz[ing] for forgetting him" (Zachary 2024, n.p.). Dawn tells Edmund that she loves him, and she acknowledges him as her brother, finally offering him the recognition he had longed for all his life. "Edmund, what you've become, what you've given yourself to, is not you" (West 2024, 31:35), she tells him, trying to counter the deep-seated beliefs he harbours that disregard his full humanity. Only by this act of love is The Scare defeated and Edmund's soul can finally rest.

The lives of Edmund and Dawn signal the significance of "building support network[s]" and having "communit[ies] for [individuals] to lean on" (Bryant and Arrington 2022, 130). Both twins suffered abuse during their childhoods and, as grownups, had to deal with the oppressiveness of a system marked by its hostility and bias towards minority groups. Nevertheless, Dawn found a support system in her adopted family, who nurtured her, instilled self-respect in her, and offered a safe haven against the ravages of racism; conversely, Edmund lacked that crucial foundation and was left feeling insufficient, unacknowledged, and uncelebrated. This allowed for "a kind of emotional rot [to] cree[p] in, a psychic mould. Left untreated, that mould can spread, infecting its host with an array of maladies" (Carolyn 2024b, 1:30).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The second instalment of the anthology series *Them*, *Them: The Scare*, grounds some of its most bizarre and inexplicable moments in the real-life structural racism, the ensuing trauma, and the different ways to process it by Black Americans. The series follows the tradition of the Black Horror genre that provides a platform for Black voices to address real-life societal issues and struggles faced by racialized minorities through the prism of the supernatural. *Them* is skilful in its combination of the “everyday fears that communities facing discrimination experience constantly” with gruesome elements of “body horror” and “psychological terror” (Medina 2024, n.p.). Specifically, this season deals with police brutality, intersectionality, the media’s distortion of Blackness, internalized racial oppression, and historical trauma. Through its depiction of the entity The Scare, the show plays with the double nature of a killer that can be understood as a mere demonic force or as a more layered portrayal of the devastation inflicted by a racially biased system on people of colour. In addition, Dawn and Edmund storylines ponder on the ways racial inequalities are cyclically perpetuated through interlocking mechanisms of everyday microaggressions and systemic oppression to devastating effects for those on the receiving end. The series also emphasizes the importance of community building, developing support systems, and giving preeminence to the voices of racialized communities to confront these deeply embedded bigoted practices.

WORKS CITED

- Aiken, Sharryn J. 2007. “From Slavery to Expulsion: Racism, Canadian Immigration Law, and the Unfulfilled Promise of Modern Constitutionalism.” In *Interrogating Race and Racism*, edited by Vijay Agnew, 55–112. University of Toronto Press.
- Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press.
- Allsop, Jon. 2022. “The coverage of Rodney King and unrest in LA, Thirty Years On.” *Columbia Journalism Review*, May 6, 2022. https://www.cjr.org/the_media_today/rodney_king_unrest_la_thirty_years.php.
- Almore, Alexandra L. 2012. “Exploring racism in overlooked objects: Arts: The Harvard Crimson.” *Arts / The Harvard Crimson*, February 21, 2012. https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2012/2/21/racial_innocence_panel/.

- Bailey, L. B. 2024. "How Horror Films Constructs Blackness: Examples of White Supremacist Media's Enforcement of Necropolitics in Genre Film." *Feminist Media Studies* 25 (5): 1229–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2358098>.
- Bauder, David. 2023. "Majority of black Americans see racist or negative depictions in news media, new study finds." *PBS*, September 27, 2023. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/majority-of-black-americans-see-racist-or-negative-depictions-in-news-media-new-study-finds>.
- Bellot, Gabrielle. 2021. "How black horror became America's most powerful cinematic genre." *The New York Times*, November 10, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/t-magazine/black-horror-films-get-out.html>.
- Bernstein, Robin. 2011. *Racial Innocence*. New York University Press.
- Bridges, Khiara M. 2019. *Critical Race Theory: A Primer*. Foundation Press.
- Bryant, Thema, and Edith G. Arrington. 2022. *The Antiracism Handbook*. New Harbinger Publications.
- Burgin, Xavier, dir. 2019. *Horror Noire: A History of Black Horror*. Philadelphia: Stage 3 Productions. Shudder.
- Butters Jr., Gerald, R. 2002. *Black Manhood on the Silent Screen*. University Press of Kansas.
- Carolyn, Axelle, dir. 2024a. *Them: The Scare*. Season 2, episode 3, "The Man With the Red Hair." Aired April 25, 2024, on Amazon Prime Video.
- Carolyn, Axelle, dir. 2024b. *Them: The Scare*. Season 2, episode 3, "Happy Birthday, Sweet Boy." Aired April 25, 2024, on Amazon Prime Video.
- Christopher Commission. 1991. *Report of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department*. Christopher Commission.
- Cirincione-Ulezi, Nasiah. 2020. "Black Women and Barriers to Leadership in ABA." *Behavior analysis in practice* 13 (4): 719–24. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-020-00444-9>.
- Coleman, Robin R. Means. 2023. *Horror noire: A History of Black American Horror from the 1890s to Present*. Routledge.
- Coleman, Robin R. Means and Mark H. Harris. 2023. *The Black Guy Dies First*. Saga Press.
- Conner, Kyalen O. 2020. "Why historical trauma is critical to understanding Black Mental Health." *Psychology Today*, October 1, 2020. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/achieving-health-equity/202010/why-historical-trauma-is-critical-understanding-black-mental>.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1 (8): 139–67. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429500480-5>.
- Cripps, Thomas. 1993. *Slow Fade to Black: The Negro in American Film, 1900–1942*. Oxford University Press.
- Crockett, Zachary. 2016. "'gang member' and 'thug' roles in film are disproportionately played by Black Actors." *Vox*, September 13, 2016. <https://www.vox.com/2016/9/13/12889478/black-actors-type-casting>.
- Delgado, Richard. 1989. "Storytelling for oppositionists and others: A plea for narrative." *Michigan Law Review* 87: 2411–41. https://scholarship.law.ua.edu/fac_articles/375.
- Delgado, Richard, and Stefanic, Jean. 2021. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. New York University Press.

- Diawara, Manthia. 1993. "Black American Cinema: The New Realism." In *Black American Cinema: Aesthetics and Spectatorship*, edited by Manthia Diawara, 3–26. Routledge.
- Dixon, Jr. Thomas. 1902. *The Leopard's Spots*. Doubleday, Page & Co.
- Dixon, Jr. Thomas. 1905. *The Clansman*. Grosset & Dunlap.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. 1903. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Chicago A.C. McClurg & Co.
- Frye, Jocelyn. 2022. "Racism and sexism combine to shortchange working black women." *Center for American Progress*, January 19, 2022. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/racism-sexism-combine-shortchange-working-black-women/>.
- Fugardi, Rachel. 2021. "Misogyny, racism, and the intersectional face of hate." *Women in War and International Politics*. <https://www.wiwiip-kcl.com/misogyny-racism-and-the-intersectional-face-of-hate>.
- Gilliam, Franklin D., and Shanto Iyengar. "Prime Suspects: The Influence of Local Television News on the Viewing Public." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (3): 560–73. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2669264>.
- Goessling, Kristen P. 2018. "Increasing the Depth of Field: Critical Race Theory and Photovoice as Counter Storytelling Praxis." *The Urban Review* 50 (4): 648–74. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-018-0460-2>.
- Griffith, D. W., dir. 1915 *The Birth of a Nation*. Epoch Producing Co.
- Guerrero, Ed. 1993. *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film*. Temple University Press.
- Hall, Stuart. 1986. "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity." *The Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10 (2): 5–27.
- Hernon, Alison. 2024. "Are You Scared? A Deep Dive into 'THEM: The Scare' — PhotoBook Magazine." *PhotoBook Magazine*, June 9, 2024. <https://www.photobookmagazine.com/features/are-you-scared-a-deep-dive-into-them-the-scare>.
- Hurwitz, Jon, and Mark Peffley. 1997. "Public Perceptions of Race and Crime: The Role of Racial Stereotypes." *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (2): 375–401. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111769>.
- Jenkins, Katharine. 2019. "Conferralism and Intersectionality: A Response to Ásta's *Categories We Live By*." *Journal of Social Ontology* 5 (2): 261–72. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jso-2020-2004>.
- Khosla, Proma. 2024. "How little Marvin rebooted 'THEM' into a Certified Fresh Horror Anthology." *IndieWire*, June 13, 2024. <https://www.indiewire.com/awards/consider-this/consider-this-little-marvin-them-the-scare-prime-video-1235012407/>.
- Kristen Anzlec. 2024. "Luke James Scared Himself in Prime Video's Horror *THEM: THE SCARE* (Interview)." *YouTube Video*, 9:45. Posted April 26, 2024. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLF0XUb-fFLg&t=121s>.
- Leab, Daniel J. 1975. *From Sambo to Superspade: The Black Experience in Motion Pictures*. Houghton Mifflin Company.
- López, Gerardo R. 2003. "The (Racially Neutral) Politics of Education: A Critical Race Theory Perspective." *Educational Administration Quarterly* 39 (1): 68–94. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X02239761>.
- Macneill, Craig W, dir. 2024. *Them: The Scare*. Season 2, episode 1, "Are You Scared?" Aired April 25, 2024, on Amazon Prime Video.
- Maté, Gabor. 2022. *The Myth of Normal*. Avery.

- Medina, Joel. 2024. "This Underrated Prime Video Series Reinvents Television Horror." *Collider*, October 19, 2024. <https://collider.com/them-season-2-the-scare-horror-tv-show/>.
- Milheim, Russ. 2024. "Them star Luke James confirms what we all suspected about 'The scare' demon." *The Direct*, May 22, 2024. <https://thedirect.com/article/them-the-scare-luke-james-demon>.
- Miller, Jenesse. 2022. "USC scholars reflect on legacy of 1992 L.A. uprising and police beating of Rodney King." *USC Today*. April 28, 2022. <https://today.usc.edu/like-a-stick-of-dynamite-usc-scholars-reflect-on-legacy-of-1992-l-a-uprising-and-police-beating-of-rodney-king/>.
- Montoya, Margaret E. 2002. "Celebrating Racialized Legal Narratives." In *Crossroads, Directions, and a New Critical Race Theory*, edited by Francisco Valdes, Jerome McCristal Culp and Angela P. Harris, 243–51. Temple University Press.
- Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. 2020. "America's refusal to address the roots of violence." *The New York Times*, October 5, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/05/books/review/a-peculiar-indifference-el-liott-currie.html>.
- Navarro, Guillermo, dir. 2024. *Them: The Scare*. Season 2, episode 5, "Luke 8:17." Aired April 25, 2024, on Amazon Prime Video.
- Nielsen. 2024. "Black audiences are looking for relevant representation in advertising and content." *Nielsen*, February 6, 2024. <https://www.nielsen.com/insights/2024/black-audiences-are-looking-for-relevant-representation-in-advertising-and-media/>.
- Patell, Shireen. R. K. 2011. "'We the People,' Who? James Baldwin and the Traumatic Constitution of These United States." *Comparative Literature Studies* 48 (3): 356–87. <https://doi.org/10.5325/complitstudies.48.3.0356>.
- PBS. 2015. "Ta-Nehisi Coates on fear and the Black Experience." *PBS*, November 20, 2015. <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/2015/11/20/ta-nehisi-coates-fear-black-experience/27488/>.
- Pinedo, Isabel C. 1997. *Recreational terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing*. State University of New York Press.
- Pyke, Karen D. 2010. "What is internalized racial oppression and why don't we study it? Acknowledging racism's hidden injuries." *Sociological Perspectives* 53 (4): 551–72. <https://doi.org/10.1525/sop.2010.53.4.551>.
- "Race, culture expert shares history and why blackface and other cultural appropriation at Halloween is inappropriate." 2018. *Media and Public Relations / Baylor University*, October 25, 2018. <https://news.web.baylor.edu/news/story/2018/race-culture-expert-shares-history-and-why-blackface-and-other-cultural>.
- Radish, Christina. 2021. "Little Marvin explains why Amazon's 'them' is a horror series, not straight drama." *Collider*, April 29, 2021. <https://collider.com/little-marvin-interview-them-amazon/>.
- Reuters. 2017. "Black cops in St. Louis stuck between public, fellow officers." *Voice of America*, September 19, 2017. <https://www.voanews.com/a/black-cops-saint-louis-stuck-between-public-fellow-officers/4035823.html>.
- Rocchio, Vincent F. *Reel Racism*. 2000. Routledge.
- Russell-Brown, Katheryn. (1998) 2009. *The Color of Crime*. New York University Press.

- Scott, Austin. 2021. "The media's treatment of blacks: A story of distortion." *Los Angeles Times*, October 3, 2021. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/story/2021-10-03/the-medias-treatment-of-blacks-a-story-of-distortion>.
- Shafir, Haley. 2024. "Adoption trauma: What it is & how to cope." *ChoosingTherapy.com*, May 2, 2024. <https://www.choosingtherapy.com/adoption-trauma/>.
- Sharman, Russell. 2020. *Moving Pictures: An Introduction to Cinema*. University of Arkansas.
- Silverstein, Jason. 2013. "How racism is bad for our bodies." *The Atlantic*, March 11, 2023. <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/03/how-racism-is-bad-for-our-bodies/273911/>.
- Smiley, Calvinjohn and David Fakunle. 2016. "From 'brute' to 'thug:' the demonization and criminalization of unarmed Black male victims in America." *Journal Of Human Behavior In The Social Environment* 26 (3-4): 350-66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2015.1129256>.
- Solanki, Swati. 2024. "Transgenerational Trauma, Racism & A Serial Killer! A niche recipe of Pure Horror!" *Medium*, May 16, 2024. <https://medium.com/@addu7454/transgenerational-trauma-racism-a-serial-killer-a-niche-recipe-of-pure-horror-3f3f0fbe761e>.
- Sue, Derald W., Christina Capodilupo., Gina Torino, G., Jennifer Bucceri., Aisha Holder., Kevin Nadal, and Marta Esquilin. 2007. "Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice." *American Psychologist* 62 (4): 271-86. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.62.4.271>.
- SXSW. 2022. "Amazon Prime Video Terror Anthology Them, Q&A." *YouTube* video, 49:52. Posted April 19, 2022. <https://youtu.be/LYIydIYERnQ?si=UluBVamfrY1LY9US>.
- Them*. 2021-present. Created by Little Marvin. Produced by Dominic Orlando and Michael Nelson. Amazon Prime Video.
- West, Ti, dir. 2024. *Them: The Scare*. Season 2, episode 8, "The Box." Aired April 25, 2024, on Amazon Prime Video.
- Williams-Washington, Kristin N. 2010. "Historical Trauma." In *Handbook of African American Health*, edited by Robert L. Hampton, Thomas P. Gullotta, and Raymond L. Crowel, 31-51. The Guilford Press.
- Williams-Washington, Kristin N. and Mills, Chmaika P. 2018. "African American Historical Trauma: Creating an Inclusive Measure." *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development* 46: 246-63. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12113>.
- Yancy, George. 2017. *Black Bodies, White Gazes*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Yellow Horse Brave Heart, Maria. 2003. "The historical trauma response among natives and its relationship with substance abuse: A Lakota illustration." *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 35 (1): 7-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02791072.2003.10399988>.
- Zachary, Brandon. 2024. "Them Season 2 ending explained." *ScreenRant*, May 1, 2024. <https://screenrant.com/them-season-2-the-scare-ending-explained/>.