



# Apocalyptic Dread: American Film at the Turn of the Millennium (Sunny Series, Horizons of Cinema)

*Kirsten Moana Thompson*

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In *Apocalyptic Dread*, Kirsten Moana Thompson examines how fears and anxieties about the future are reflected in recent American cinema. Through close readings of such films as *Cape Fear*, *Candyman*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *Se7en*, *Signs*, and *War of the Worlds*, Thompson argues that a longstanding American apocalyptic tradition permeates our popular culture, spreading from science-fiction and disaster films into horror, crime, and melodrama. Drawing upon Kierkegaard's notion of dread that is, a fundamental anxiety and ambivalence about existential choice and the future Thompson suggests that the apocalyptic dread revealed in these films, and its guiding tropes of violence, retribution, and renewal, also reveal deep-seated anxieties about historical fragmentation and change, anxieties that are in turn displaced onto each film's particular monster, whether human, demonic, or eschatological."

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