

COMPARATIVE SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF SATANIC SYMBOLISM IN LONGLEGS: A STUDY IN HORROR NARRATIVES

Ratih Dwi Pratiwi ¹; Handrini Ardiyanti ² *

^{1,2} Universitas Esa Unggul, Jakarta, Indonesia; handrini.ardiyanti@esaunggul.ac.id²

*Correspondence : handrini.ardiyanti@esaunggul.ac.id

ABSTRAK

Film memiliki peran penting dalam membentuk perspektif masyarakat dan sering mencerminkan isu sosial, termasuk tema kontroversial seperti Satanisme (Caniago & Hero, 2022). Menurut Laminantang (2013), film adalah media komunikasi efektif yang menjangkau audiens luas melalui bentuk visual dan auditif. Penelitian ini menganalisis simbolisme Satanisme dalam film Longlegs menggunakan pendekatan semiotik Roland Barthes. Simbol-simbol seperti angka 666, segitiga terbalik, dan citra Baphomet ditelaah dalam makna denotatif dan konotatif. Studi ini menemukan bahwa simbolisme tersebut tidak hanya membangun atmosfer horor tetapi juga menyampaikan pesan tersembunyi tentang kekuatan gelap dan pengaruhnya terhadap karakter. Hasil penelitian ini sejalan dengan O'Connor (2015), yang menyatakan bahwa simbol Satanisme dalam media mengalami pergeseran makna sesuai konteks budaya. Temuan ini juga memiliki kemiripan dengan film horor klasik seperti *The Exorcist* (1973) dan *Hereditary* (2018), yang menggunakan elemen serupa dalam membangun narasi (Russell, 2020). Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian semiotik film horor dengan menawarkan perspektif baru tentang penggunaan simbolisme Satanisme dalam komunikasi visual.

Kata kunci

Film horror, Makna denotatif dan konotatif, Roland Barthes, Semiotik film, Simbolisme Satanisme

ABSTRACT

Films play a crucial role in shaping societal perspectives and often depict social issues, including controversial themes such as Satanism (Caniago & Hero, 2022). Laminantang (2013) describes films as an effective communication medium that reaches a broad audience through visual and auditory elements. This study examines the representation of Satanic symbolism in the film Longlegs using Roland Barthes' semiotic framework. Symbols such as the number 666, the inverted triangle, and the image of Baphomet are analyzed in both their denotative and connotative meanings. The findings indicate that these symbols not only contribute to the film's horror aesthetic but also communicate implicit messages related to dark forces and their influence on characters. These results correspond with O'Connor (2015), who argues that the interpretation of Satanic symbols in media evolves based on cultural contexts. Additionally, similarities are observed in classic horror films such as *The Exorcist* (1973) and *Hereditary* (2018), which employ comparable symbolic elements to construct narratives (Russell, 2020). This research contributes to semiotic analyses of horror films by providing insights into the application of Satanic symbolism in visual communication.

Keywords

Denotative and Connotative Meaning, Film Semiotics, Horror Films, Roland Barthes, Satanic Symbolism

Introduction

Film, as one of the oldest forms of media, plays a crucial role in shaping societal perspectives. Over time, it has evolved beyond a mere source of entertainment to function as a powerful communication tool that conveys messages through both verbal and non-verbal means (Caniago & Hero, 2022). In this context, films frequently reflect and address socially relevant issues, including controversial themes such as Satanism. According to Laminantang (2013), films serve as an effective medium of communication due to their ability to transmit messages to a broad audience through visual and auditory elements. Themes such as Satanism, which often provoke public debate, challenge societal norms and provide a framework for discussions on belief systems, morality, and cultural identity. Bouzida (2014) asserts that media analysis through semiotics, particularly Roland Barthes' theoretical framework, facilitates the deconstruction of symbolic representations by examining their denotative and connotative meanings. Barthes' approach enables a deeper understanding of how symbolic elements within media influence cultural perspectives and construct meaning.

With the increasing prevalence of films in contemporary society, audiences have become more adept at identifying various film genres based on narrative structures and plot development. Films that explore Satanism attract attention not only due to their sensational aspects but also for their capacity to challenge societal conventions, foster discourse on moral dichotomies, and provoke reflections on public responses to symbols associated with Satanism (Junia & Shasrini, 2023). In the current digital era, the rapid advancement of the film industry indicates that films are no longer merely a form of entertainment but also serve as reflections of evolving social and cultural dynamics (Safira & Dewi, 2020). Within this framework, films that engage with the theme of Satanism provide an opportunity to analyze collective anxieties, social stigmas, and the public perception of behaviors and ideologies considered deviant.

Film, which continuously adapts to audience preferences and technological innovations, remains a relevant and influential medium within modern cultural discourse. This adaptability enables films to explore sensitive topics such as Satanism, providing deeper insights into societal values and contemporary challenges. Films serve not only as a form of entertainment but also as complex narratives that communicate profound messages through visual and narrative structures. Within this context, the horror genre, which frequently employs symbolism and distinctive visual techniques to evoke tension and fear, is particularly compelling. One such film that warrants academic analysis is *Longlegs*, a work that has garnered considerable attention for its innovative approach to the horror genre (Rubin, 2024; Malhotra, 2024). *Longlegs* has received widespread acclaim, particularly among horror enthusiasts, for diverging from conventional horror films that typically rely on jump scares or the overt presence of supernatural entities. According to Variety, the film has achieved significant commercial success, grossing \$58 million in North America despite its modest production budget of under \$10 million. This success, particularly within independent horror circles, establishes *Longlegs* as a rich subject for academic inquiry (Rubin, 2024).

The present study seeks to contribute to the discourse on semiotic analysis within film studies, particularly in relation to horror films and the symbolism associated with Satanism. This film is closely associated with the belief system known as Satanism, which positions Satan as a deity worthy of veneration (Sazidah et al., 2024). One of the most widely discussed scenes from *Longlegs*, which has gained significant traction on social

media, features the character Longlegs uttering the phrase "Hail Satan," an explicit expression of reverence for Satan as a divine figure. Beyond such overt statements, the film is replete with symbols that convey deeper meanings related to Satanism. Consequently, this study aims to provide a semiotic analysis of the symbols associated with Satanism in Longlegs.

This analysis will employ Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, which builds upon Ferdinand de Saussure's foundational semiotic framework, to identify and interpret the signs related to the theme of Satanism within the film. Barthes' approach is particularly appropriate for this study as it facilitates the exploration of both denotative and connotative meanings of symbols. Denotation refers to the literal interpretation of a symbol, whereas connotation involves the broader cultural and subjective meanings associated with it. By examining these two layers of meaning, the study will offer insights into how Longlegs constructs its narrative and how it engages the audience's perception of symbolism, both explicit and implicit (Wati et al., 2023). This methodological approach aligns with the findings of Jauza and Walisyah (2024), who, in their analysis of *Air Mata di Ujung Sajadah*, explored the interplay of visual symbols and religious messages to provide a deeper understanding of how cultural values shape audience reception.

The objective of this study is to enhance the analysis by moving beyond a purely descriptive examination of the film's semiotic elements. While the findings provide a detailed account of the symbolic representations in Longlegs, it is essential to engage in a comparative analysis with previous studies to determine whether these findings align with or contradict established research on Satanism in film. Prior studies such as those by Hartono and Mirza (2021) and Widjaja (2022) have examined similar themes in horror films, emphasizing the role of cultural narratives in shaping audience perceptions. By integrating these perspectives, this research will assess the extent to which Longlegs conforms to or diverges from existing frameworks in semiotic film analysis. Additionally, references from earlier studies will be incorporated to critically evaluate the film's narrative and thematic construction, ensuring a more comprehensive academic discussion on the representation of Satanism in contemporary horror cinema.

Method

This research adopts a qualitative paradigm, which emphasizes an in-depth understanding of social phenomena through direct observation and comprehensive analytical interpretation. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative research aims to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, and perspectives on a phenomenon by employing open-ended and flexible questions. This methodological approach enables researchers to capture the complexity of meanings derived from the collected data. In qualitative research, data is typically presented in textual or narrative form, obtained through interviews, observations, or document analysis, and subsequently analyzed to identify key themes and patterns that are inherently subjective (Safarudin et al., 2023).

Several qualitative research methodologies exist, including case studies, descriptive studies, action research, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, historical research, and hermeneutics. Each of these methodologies serves distinct objectives and employs specific procedures for examining the chosen phenomenon. This study adopts a descriptive approach, which seeks to analyze and elucidate a phenomenon without manipulating variables or establishing causal relationships (Syahrizal & Jaelani, 2023). The descriptive approach aims to provide a detailed and

systematic depiction of a particular phenomenon, ensuring a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the social context under investigation (Samsu, 2017). This research applies Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, particularly the two levels of signification: denotation and connotation. This theoretical framework facilitates the differentiation of meanings within identical scenes by distinguishing between their literal and symbolic aspects, which are shaped by various socio-cultural influences.

This study employs a qualitative paradigm with a descriptive research design to analyze and interpret the subject under examination, specifically the film *Longlegs* by Osgood Perkins. The research data consists of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is acquired through documentation, which involves collecting screenshots from selected scenes in *Longlegs* that are relevant to satanic symbolism and contribute to the film's narrative construction. Secondary data is obtained through observations and literature reviews sourced from accredited journals, books, and other validated references. The data collection process encompasses observation, documentation, and literature review. Observations involve the systematic analysis of *Longlegs* to identify satanic symbolism within its visual and narrative components. Documentation serves as visual evidence, comprising screenshots that depict satanic symbolism within the film. The literature review reinforces observational findings by aligning them with established scholarly works. To ensure data validity, triangulation is employed by integrating multiple sources and methodologies, thereby enhancing the credibility and reliability of the research findings.

Result and Discussion

The film *Longlegs*, directed by Osgood Perkins, is a psychological horror movie that delves into the unsettling theme of satanic cults and serial killings. Released on July 12, 2024, with a runtime of 1 hour and 41 minutes, the film follows the story of an FBI agent investigating a series of interconnected murders. According to IMDb (2024), the primary cast includes: Maika Monroe as Agent Lee Harker, Nicolas Cage as Longlegs, Blair Underwood as Agent Carter, Alicia Witt as Ruth Harker.

The narrative revolves around FBI Agent Lee Harker, who is assigned to investigate a string of family murders exhibiting strikingly similar patterns. In each case, the father is responsible for the shootings, and a cryptic letter bearing the word *Longlegs* is discovered at the crime scene. As the investigation unfolds, Harker, assisted by senior FBI Agent Carter, attempts to decipher the meaning behind these cryptic messages and uncover the truth behind the mysterious killings.

The antagonist, Longlegs, serves as an intermediary between Satan and his human victims. He is depicted as a tall, pale man with dishevelled long hair and an eerie manner of speech that is almost incomprehensible. His presence is marked by an unsettling aura, reinforcing his role as a harbinger of chaos and malevolence. Another key character, Ruth Harker, is the mother of Agent Lee Harker and an accomplice of Longlegs. She is tasked with selecting suitable victims for satanic rituals. Ruth Harker is characterized as a highly isolated individual without family connections and suffers from hoarding disorder, as evidenced by her cluttered and chaotic living environment.

Agent Carter, portrayed as a seasoned FBI investigator, serves as a mentor and superior to Lee Harker. He is a Black man with significant experience in the field and a family, including a wife and daughter, who later become integral to the plot. Meanwhile, Lee Harker, played by Maika Monroe, is the film's protagonist. She is depicted as an

independent, introverted, and reserved individual with a complex relationship with her mother, Ruth Harker. Unbeknownst to her, Lee has a personal connection to Longlegs, having encountered him in her childhood, which ultimately makes her a pivotal figure in the investigation.

The film *Longlegs* employs satanic symbolism with meticulous precision, reinforcing its thematic exploration of dark forces, manipulation, and the eternal struggle between good and evil. This analysis examines the semiotic structures within the film, focusing on the interaction between signifiers, signified elements, and broader mythological connotations that shape the narrative. The visual and narrative elements work synergistically to evoke an atmosphere of dread and uncertainty, aligning with the conventions of psychological horror. Through its intricate symbolism and psychological depth, *Longlegs* transcends conventional horror tropes, offering a thought-provoking commentary on the nature of evil and human susceptibility to malevolent influences.

The research findings were obtained through observations conducted based on the documentation of the selected film scenes. These findings were subsequently analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory and supplemented with a literature review to enhance the validity of the research outcomes. Barthes' semiotic framework categorizes meaning into three primary components: signifier, signified, and sign. The analysis was further expanded by examining the denotative meaning, connotative meaning, and the myth associated with each selected scene.

In the first stage of the analysis, the identification of signifiers was conducted by extracting visual and linguistic elements from the documented scenes. The signifiers, which represent the material form of signs, were then correlated with their corresponding signifieds, the conceptual meanings that these elements convey. The synthesis of these two components resulted in the identification of signs that encapsulate both explicit and implicit messages within the film. The following are the stages undertaken in this study: (1) Observation Documentation, The data were obtained through direct observation of scenes in *Longlegs*, focusing on recurring symbols. Visual documentation was also utilized to support the analysis. (2) Sign Analysis, Each scene was analyzed using the framework of signifier, signified, and sign. This framework aimed to identify both explicit and implicit meanings of the symbols present in the film. (3) Semiotic Interpretation: (a) Denotation: Explaining the literal meaning of the observed scenes, such as the protagonist's actions in deciphering the encrypted messages, (b) Connotation: Examining the hidden meanings or cultural and social associations of the symbols, for instance, the connection between the number 666 and Satanism, (c) Myth: Investigating how these symbols contribute to a broader narrative in popular culture and specific belief systems. (4) Validation of Findings, The results of the analysis were validated through source triangulation by comparing interpretations with relevant literature, including religious texts and previous research on symbolism in horror films.

The following analysis examines three selected scenes from the film *Longlegs* using a semiotic approach, adhering to the four stages previously outlined. These scenes were chosen to illustrate the step-by-step process of semiotic analysis conducted in this study. Each scene is analyzed through sign identification, interpretation of explicit and implicit meanings, and contextualization within broader cultural and symbolic frameworks. This structured approach ensures a comprehensive examination of how the film conveys meaning through recurring symbols and narratives.

The first scene depicts Lee Harker deciphering a series of codes, ultimately revealing the number 666. Scientifically, the presence of the number 666 is associated with Satanic symbolism, commonly referred to as The Beast 666. According to Revelation 13:18, this number is prophesied to signify the return of an incarnation of darkness, reminiscent of the era of Emperor Nero, who is often regarded as an Antichrist figure (Dewi, 2009). Additionally, in Latin, 666 is known as *dicit lux*, written as DIC LVX, which translates to "sound of light." Satan, on the other hand, is identified as Lucifer or *Lux ferre*, meaning "bringer of light" in Latin (Patangun & Zega, 2024). This association reinforces the notion that 666 serves as a significant symbol within Satanic belief systems, a theme prominently depicted in the film *Longlegs*.

Figure 1. Decoding the Darkness 666 Emerges



Source: Daily Motion

The portrayal of Lee Harker uncovering the number 666 functions as a critical narrative element in *Longlegs*, reinforcing the film's engagement with occult symbolism. This numerical revelation is not incidental but serves as a deliberate narrative mechanism that intertwines the protagonist's investigation with overarching themes of predestination and supernatural influence. By incorporating the number 666, the film establishes an intertextual connection to historical and theological representations of malevolence, positioning the antagonist within a broader tradition of figures linked to apocalyptic prophecy. The visual and contextual framing of this symbol intensifies the film's atmosphere, demonstrating how encoded messages operate as narrative devices that signify deeper, ominous forces.

The second selected scene represents Baphomet, with a shadowy silhouette of a horned human figure on the right side, symbolizing the demonic entity. In academic studies, Baphomet is recognized as a central symbol in Satanic belief systems. According to McDonnell (2010), the term "Baphomet" originates from the Greek words Baphe and Metis, which translate to "absorption of knowledge." The depiction of Baphomet, as it is commonly recognized today, was formulated in the 19th century by Eliphas Levi, a follower of Satanism. The figure is characterized by a goat-headed, semi-human form, crossed legs, and wings, embodying esoteric and occult symbolism (Firdaus, 2021).

Figure 2. Baphomet's Symbolic Manifestation



Source: Daily Motion

The figure of Baphomet is widely recognized as a central symbol in Satanic beliefs. According to McDonnell (2010), the term "Baphomet" originates from the Greek words Baphe and Metis, which collectively signify the absorption of knowledge. The modern depiction of Baphomet was conceptualized by Eliphas Levi, a 19th-century occultist, who illustrated it as a hybrid creature with a human-like goat head, crossed legs, wings, and esoteric symbolism (Firdaus, 2021).

Baphomet's forehead bears an inverted pentagram, symbolizing the representation of light in an esoteric context. Additionally, its hands, positioned with one pointing upwards and the other downwards, signify the balance between mercy and justice. The figure's androgynous nature—embodied through a combination of male and female attributes—further conveys the concept of unity and duality. The goat head is often associated with fear, while the staff located near its genital area is interpreted as a representation of eternal life. The presence of a human torso, complete with both masculine and feminine characteristics, underscores the concept of human nature in esoteric symbolism (Lane, 2019).

The third selected scene in Longlegs features a hissing serpent set against a red background, serving as a powerful visual representation of malevolence and demonic influence. The serpent, or nahash in Hebrew, holds significant symbolic weight within Abrahamic religious traditions, where it is often depicted as an embodiment of evil or Satan. In the Old Testament, the serpent plays a pivotal role in the fall of humanity, acting as a deceiver that leads to corruption and downfall (Skinner, 2001).

Figure 3. Visual Symbolism of the Hissing Serpent



Source: Daily Motion

The selected scene in *Longlegs* features a hissing serpent set against a red background, reinforcing its symbolic association with malevolence and deception. The serpent, often linked to the Hebrew *Nahush*, holds significant theological and cultural implications, particularly in Abrahamic traditions, where it is frequently depicted as an embodiment of evil or a representation of Satan (Skinner, 2001). Within this context, the serpent's presence functions as a visual metaphor for corruption and manipulation, aligning with its role in biblical narratives as a deceptive entity that leads to moral downfall.

The use of a red background serves to amplify the symbolic intensity of the scene, as red is commonly associated with danger, violence, and supernatural malevolence. This visual composition heightens the psychological impact, subtly reinforcing the thematic underpinnings of fear and impending doom. The intermittent appearance of the serpent throughout the film suggests a persistent, unseen force exerting influence over the narrative, contributing to an overarching atmosphere of dread.

By incorporating this imagery, *Longlegs* employs semiotic techniques that align with established cinematic conventions wherein serpentine symbolism is frequently utilized to evoke themes of manipulation, moral decay, and the struggle between good and evil. The presence of the serpent within this scene underscores the inescapability of malevolent forces within the film's narrative structure. Additionally, the visual and thematic interplay between the serpent and its surroundings reinforces the notion of external and internalized corruption, further contributing to the film's exploration of psychological and supernatural horror.

Through the deliberate use of visual symbolism, *Longlegs* constructs a nuanced representation of demonic influence and moral fragility. Rather than serving merely as a literal creature within the narrative, the serpent operates as an integral thematic device, emphasizing the pervasive and insidious nature of evil within the film's diegetic world.

Semiotic Analysis of Longlegs Symbols

By applying a structured semiotic framework, this study elucidates how visual and narrative elements convey deeper meanings and enhance the film's thematic impact. The analysis is structured into three key sections: (1) The Inverted Triangle, 666, and the Sigil of Lucifer, (2) Baphomet, the Cuckoo Bird, and Psychological Manipulation, and (3) The Battle Between Good and Evil: Semiotics of the Cross and the Hissing Serpent. Each section compares *Longlegs* with prior studies and incorporates relevant theoretical frameworks in semiotics and horror cinema.

The Inverted Triangle, 666, and the Sigil of Lucifer

One of the key Satanic symbols identified in *Longlegs* is the inverted triangle, frequently associated with occult practices and esoteric symbolism. Similar findings have been explored by Junia & Shasrini (2023), who examined the inverted cross and pentagram in *The Nun* as representations of Satanism. Firdaus (2021) also highlighted how black metal bands incorporate these symbols as a form of self-expression and identity, aligning with the film's visual use of such imagery.

However, *Longlegs* differs in its narrative use of these symbols. Unlike black metal bands that adopt Satanic imagery for cultural and ideological reasons (Firdaus, 2021), the film embeds them within the character's psychological descent, making them integral to the plot. This aligns with the findings of Kapp (2022), who discussed how films construct narratives around misunderstood religious practices. By using semiotic

analysis, Longlegs presents these symbols as tools of manipulation rather than mere decorative elements, deepening the horror experience.

This study finds that Longlegs employs recurring Satanic symbolism to deepen its narrative and depict the presence of dark forces influencing its characters. A key example is seen when Agent Lee Harker investigates a survivor's home and discovers a paper bearing an inverted triangle linked to the number 666 and recognized as the Sigil of Lucifer. This symbol reinforces the notion that the murders are not just acts of violence but are rooted in Satanic influence shaping both the victims' psychological states and the film's overarching themes.

Baphomet, the Cuckoo Bird, and Psychological Manipulation

Baphomet, a recurring Satanic figure, appears throughout Longlegs as a representation of deception and control. Previous research by Sazidah et al. (2024) confirms that Baphomet is often portrayed as a key figure in Satanism, symbolizing rebellion against traditional religious values. The film expands on this concept by linking Baphomet's image to psychological manipulation, a theme not thoroughly explored in prior studies.

Additionally, the metaphor of the cuckoo bird in Longlegs adds another layer of symbolism. Unlike direct references to Satanic rituals in Rahmadina & Ritonga (2022), which examined symbols in Travis Scott's Astroworld concert, Longlegs employs a more nuanced approach. The cuckoo bird, known for laying its eggs in another bird's nest, serves as a semiotic representation of infiltration and control - paralleling how the antagonist subtly influences their victims. This aligns with Barthes' semiotic approach, as used by Wati et al. (2023), in interpreting hidden messages within narratives.

The symbolism of Baphomet is subtly reflected in the film Longlegs, appearing intermittently throughout the narrative. The presence of Baphomet-like imagery in the film is subtle and may not be immediately noticeable to all viewers. However, upon closer examination or multiple viewings, certain visual elements alluding to Baphomet become more apparent. This has led to widespread discussions among audiences on social media, as viewers analysed and interpret these symbolic representations post-viewing.

Given the symbolic depth of Baphomet in esoteric traditions, its appearance in Longlegs contributes to the film's thematic exploration of occult and Satanic motifs. This subtle integration of Baphomet imagery aligns with broader cinematic techniques used to evoke psychological and symbolic engagement among audiences.

The Battle Between Good and Evil: Semiotics of the Cross and the Hissing Serpent

One of the most striking semiotic elements in Longlegs is the juxtaposition of the cross and the hissing serpent, a dichotomy representing good versus evil. Junia & Shasrini (2023) identified similar symbolism in *The Nun*, where inverted crosses and serpents emphasized the perversion of religious imagery. However, Longlegs takes a different approach by integrating these symbols into the protagonist's psychological struggle rather than using them as mere set decorations.

Additionally, Kapp (2022) discusses how horror films shape public perception of religious iconography, sometimes reinforcing societal fears rather than offering nuanced interpretations. Longlegs contributes to this discourse by using these symbols to depict the protagonist's internal battle, adding depth to the traditional horror framework. This aligns with Barthes' (1982) concept of mythmaking, where familiar symbols are recontextualized to evoke new meanings.

Comparative Analysis and Contribution to the Field

From the studies reviewed, most prior research has focused on either the explicit depiction of Satanic symbols (Firdaus, 2021; Rahmadina & Ritonga, 2022; Junia & Shasrini, 2023) or the societal implications of such portrayals (Kapp, 2022; Sazidah et al., 2024). However, Longlegs differentiates itself by embedding these symbols within a complex narrative structure, making them essential to character development and thematic exploration. This study contributes to the field by demonstrating how semiotics in horror cinema extends beyond surface-level symbolism, influencing narrative engagement and audience perception.

Recent scholarly works have expanded upon traditional semiotic analyses, offering fresh insights into the cognitive and cultural dimensions of horror cinema. One notable study examines the psycholinguistic and cognitive-semiotic dimensions of constructing fear in horror films. This research posits that fear in horror cinema emerges from joint attention between filmmakers and viewers, resulting in shared emotional experiences. The study highlights how fear is a multimodal construct, integrating verbal, nonverbal, and cinematic semiotic resources through auditory and visual modes. Each semiotic element contributes uniquely to meaning making, employing specific components characteristic of horror films (Krysanova, 2023)

Another significant contribution explores the semiotic analysis of characters in horror cinema, focusing on representations such as Valak and Lorraine in "The Conjuring." This research underscores how character design and narrative roles serve as semiotic tools that reinforce cultural and religious symbolism, thereby enhancing the film's psychological impact on the audience (Zaimar, 2018).

Additionally, studies have investigated the use of film semiotics to interpret various art forms, including abstract art. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of how horror films utilize signs and symbols to convey meaning, thereby enriching the viewer's interpretative experience.

In horror narratives, semiotic analysis plays a crucial role in uncovering the deeper meanings behind visual and auditory elements. The study of satanic symbolism in Longlegs exemplifies how horror films construct meaning through the use of coded imagery, intertextual references, and genre conventions. Satanic symbols, often embedded within mise-en-scène, cinematography, and sound design, contribute to an unsettling atmosphere and reinforce thematic concerns related to fear, the unknown, and the supernatural.

By employing a comparative semiotic approach, this study examines how Longlegs incorporates satanic iconography and how these symbols function within the broader context of horror storytelling. Through an analysis of recurring motifs such as inverted crosses, ritualistic imagery, and demonic figures, the study highlights the ways in which horror films use symbolism to evoke fear and shape audience perception. This analysis extends beyond mere representation, exploring how the interplay between symbols and narrative structures enhances the psychological and emotional impact of the horror genre.

Furthermore, the semiotic framework allows for a comparative examination of satanic symbolism across different horror films, tracing thematic and aesthetic similarities that contribute to the genre's evolution. By situating Longlegs within this larger discourse, the study demonstrates how horror cinema continues to adapt and

reinterpret symbolic elements to engage with contemporary fears and anxieties Song, Y., Li, W., Wang, Z., & Hu, Y. (2025).

Research into the semiotic codes and conventions of horror cinema indicates that meaning is constructed through the interaction of multiple cinematic elements. Horror films employ a distinct combination of visual motifs, sound design, lighting, and cinematography to elicit fear and psychological unease. These elements function as semiotic codes that communicate underlying themes and reinforce the genre's intended emotional and cognitive effects. Drawing on Barthesian semiotics, this study examines how horror narratives utilize established symbols to construct deeper psychological and thematic implications, positioning horror cinema as a dynamic medium for cultural discourse.

A semiotic approach to horror films highlights the significance of recurring signs and symbols that evoke specific audience responses. For instance, visual motifs such as shadows, mirrors, and grotesque imagery serve as signifiers of the unknown, amplifying a film's unsettling atmosphere. Similarly, soundscapes including dissonant music, silence, and abrupt auditory cues function as semiotic tools that manipulate audience perception and anticipation. Lighting techniques such as chiaroscuro and unnatural color grading further enhance the eerie ambiance, aligning with established horror conventions.

Beyond the technical aspects, a multimodal perspective is essential for comprehensively analyzing horror films. This approach incorporates not only visual and auditory semiotics but also cognitive and cultural dimensions that influence audience interpretation. Horror cinema continuously evolves in response to shifting societal anxieties, reflecting deeper ideological concerns through symbolic representation. As a result, semiotic analysis of horror films extends beyond mere aesthetic considerations, offering insights into the ways in which the genre serves as a mirror to cultural fears, social tensions, and psychological archetypes.

Conclusion

The film *Longlegs* utilizes semiotic structures to enhance its narrative complexity and thematic depth. Through the incorporation of symbols such as the number 666, the inverted triangle, Baphomet imagery, and the cross, the film constructs a representation of Satanic influence and psychological manipulation. Unlike earlier horror films that explicitly define these symbols within a binary framework of good versus evil, *Longlegs* adopts a more ambiguous approach, encouraging diverse audience interpretations of its symbolic elements.

This study contributes to the broader discourse on semiotics in horror cinema by illustrating how *Longlegs* modernizes occult imagery while preserving its psychological resonance. The findings align with existing research on symbolic representation in horror films, highlighting the dynamic evolution of these motifs in response to cultural shifts. Future research could further investigate how changing societal perceptions influence the reception and transformation of Satanic symbolism in contemporary horror narratives.

References

Ardelia, A., & Agriyani, D. M. (2023). Analisis semiotik Roland Barthes video musik *Either Way - IVE*. *Jurnal Sastra dan Bahasa*, 38–43.

Journal Homepage : <http://jurnalilmukomunikasi.uho.ac.id/index.php/journal/index>
DOI : <http://dx.doi.org/10.52423/jikuho.v10i2.1595>

- Batubara, A. R., & Pratomo, N. W. (2024). Analisis semiotika Roland Barthes dalam movie *Mencuri Raden Saleh* karya Angga Dwimas Sasongko. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 8, 11658–11664.
- BBC News Indonesia. (2023). Memasuki dunia para pemuja setan, seperti apa para pengikutnya? Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/czqn427yplno>.
- Bouzida, F. (2014). The semiology analysis in media studies—Roland Barthes approach. *Proceedings of SOCIOINT14 - International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1001–1007.
- Caniago, A., & Hero, E. (2022). Fenomena mengunggah movie pendek di media sosial pada mahasiswa komunikasi Universitas Islam Riau. *Journal of Social Media and Message*, 1, 24–35.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Dewi, Y. K. (2009). Simbol-simbol satanisme dalam perspektif teori simbol Ernst Cassirer. *Jurnal Filsafat*.
- Dubiel, B. (2024). *What Longlegs' Revelation 13:1 Bible verse really means*. Retrieved from <https://screenrant.com/longlegs-revelations-13-1-bible-verse-meaning/>.
- Embon, D., & Suputra, I. G. K. A. (2018). Sistem simbol dalam upacara adat Toraja Rambu Solo: Kajian semiotik. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 3(7), 1–10.
- Firdaus, S. (2021). *Symbolic function on satanism symbols used by black metal bands. Proceeding of Seminar Nasional Linguistik dan Sastra (SEMNALISA)*, 228–234.
- Hendro, E. P. (2020). Simbol: Arti, fungsi, dan implikasi metodologisnya. *Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Antropologi*, 3(2), 158–165.
- Hoed, B. H. (2008). *Semiotik & dinamika sosial budaya*. Komunitas Bambu.
- Hutasuhut, A. R. S., & Yaswinda. (2020). Analisis pengaruh movie *Nussa dan Rara* terhadap empati anak usia dini di Kota Padang. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 4, 1237–1246.
- Irawan, A., & Julio, C. (2023). *Ave Satani motifs relation to narrative thematic development of The Omen: An analysis of Oscar-winning horror movie music. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis*, 3443–3459.
- Irawan, Y., & Az-Zahra, N. H. (2020). Makna bunga mawar pada movie *Beauty and the Beast* dalam bingkai teori semiotik Roland Barthes. *Kelasa*, 15, 1–14.
- Junia, R. W., & Shasrini, T. (2023). Experimental student experiences the symbol of Satanism in *The Nun* movie (Roland Barthes semiotic analysis). *Experimental Student Experiences*, 1, 2985–3877. <https://doi.org/10.58330/ese.v1i5.227>.
- Kapp, T. (2022). *The “Satanic Panic”: Exploring the influence of movies in formulating narratives surrounding the lived religion of the occult and its practitioners*. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375085489>.
- Karima, A. (2024). 5 fakta *Cuckoo*, burung yang terkenal dengan kelicikannya, sangat kejam. Retrieved from <https://www.idntimes.com/science/discovery/annisa-karima/fakta-cuckoo-burung-licik-c1c2>.
- Krysanova, T. (2023). Psycholinguistic and Cognitive-Semiotic Dimensions of Constructing Fear in Horror Films: A Multimodal Perspective. *East European Journal of Psycholinguistics*, 10(1), 96–115. <https://doi.org/10.29038/eejpl.2023.10.1.kry>
- Lane., P. (2019). Hail Satan? *Journal of Religion & Film*, 23(1). <https://doi.org/10.32873/uno.dc.jrf.23.01.07>
- Malhotra, R. (2024). *‘Longlegs’ possesses major haul at global box office*. Retrieved from <https://collider.com/longlegs-global-box-office-73-million/>.
- Nurdin. (2021). Analisis semiotik Roland Barthes terhadap busana Rimpu wanita Bima. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education*, 7, 699–707.
- Qibtiyah, M., & Aminuddin, A. (2024). Representasi feminisme budaya patriarki dalam movie *Gadis Kretek* (teori semiotika Roland Barthes). *Triwikrama: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial*, 4.

- Rahmadina, T., & Ritonga, M. H. (2022). Symbols and forms of Satanism represented in Travis Scott concert, *Astroworld Festival 2021*. *Daengku: Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Innovation*, 2(4), 427–439. <https://doi.org/10.35877/454ri.daengku1059>.
- Roberts, J. (2024). *The most confusing parts of Longlegs, explained*. Retrieved from <https://www.slashmovie.com/1629444/most-confusing-parts-of-longlegs-explained/>.
- Rubin, R. (2024). 'Longlegs' hits \$58 million, surpassing A24's 'Talk to Me' as highest-grossing indie horror movie in North America. Retrieved from <https://variety.com/2024/movie/news/longlegs-box-office-milestone-indie-horror-1236085344/>.
- Safarudin, R., Zulfamanna, Kustati, M., & Sepriyanti, N. (2023). Penelitian kualitatif. *Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research*, 9680–9694.
- Safira, H. V., & Dewi, P. A. R. (2020). Representasi maskulinitas dalam movie *27 Steps of May*. *Commercium*, 3, 1–11.
- Sazidah, H., Abdulfattah, F., Ibrahim, F., & Nurfauliyah, N. (2024). Gambaran aliran Satanic. *Jurnal Ilmiah Research Student*, 1(3), 84–89. <https://doi.org/10.61722/jirs.v1i3.528>.
- Skinner, A. C. (2001). Serpent symbols and salvation in the ancient Near East and the *Book of Mormon*. *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 46–71.
- Sobur, A. (2017). *Semiotika komunikasi*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Song, Y., Li, W., Wang, Z., & Hu, Y. (2025). Visual storytelling through the void: a quantitative analysis of empty shot distribution across film genres. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 12(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-025-04527-2>
- Susanto, D., Risnita, & Jailani, M. S. (2023). Teknik pemeriksaan keabsahan data dalam penelitian ilmiah. *Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial & Humaniora*, 53–61.
- Syahrizal, H., & Jailani, M. S. (2023). Jenis-jenis penelitian dalam penelitian kuantitatif dan kualitatif. *Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial & Humaniora*, 1, 13–23.
- Wati, M. L. K., Rohman, F., & Yuniawan, T. (2023). Analisis semiotika Roland Barthes dan nilai moral dalam movie *Tilik* (2018). *Jurnal Onoma*, 9(2), 1306–1315.
- Wiranto, E. B. (2022). Setanisme antara *New Religious Movement* dan *New Age*. *Jurnal Studi Agama*, 6(2), 24–40.
- Zaimar, Y. S. (2018). Semiotic Analysis of Valak and Lorraine in “The Conjuring 2” Movie. *Scope: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 1(02), 219. <https://doi.org/10.30998/scope.v1i02.1112>