

## **ENG 400 Seminar**

**Winter 2020**

### **Monsters, Medicine, and Media**

**Kristin Kondrlik**

Fears of scientific progress and gaps in medical knowledge, coupled with social and cultural changes, have often manifested in the appearance of “monstrous” figures: from Frankenstein to Slenderman. These “medical monsters” have been shaped by the technological evolution of print, visual, and digital genres. Drawing on frameworks from print and digital culture studies, students will analyze how textual genres shaped and were shaped by society’s attitudes about medicine in the last two centuries. This course examines various genres, including novels, newspapers, medical journals, radio dramas, films, online forums, and even the design of haunted houses. We will read four novels (Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*, Otavia Butler's *Fledgling* and one additional "monster" novel that the class will select collectively), watch three films (Jordan Peele's "Get Out," Tod Browning's "Freaks," and Bong Joon Ho's "The Host"), and discuss interactions between medicine and print and digital media with relationship to “monstrous” figures such as Jack the Ripper. Students will be able to complete a research project on the “monster” of their choice.