A City Made Strange: London on Screen in Horror & Science Fiction Cinema

COURSE DETAILS

Course Designator and Number: LNDN3266
Number of Credits: 3
Language of Instruction: English
Contact Hours: 45
Instructor: Dr. Francis Gooding and Dr. Sarah Joshi
Office Hours/Contact Info: fgooding@gmail.com and sjoshi@pitt.edu, by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

London has existed for more than two thousand years, and the ghosts of the recent and ancient past remain in its streets and its culture. This course aims to explore the deep funds of strangeness and otherness that permeate London's places and spaces, through examining films and television series that show the city as a brimming reservoir of past and future shocks.

The course will examine science fiction, horror, and noir/neo-gothic cinema and television from all eras, with a particular emphasis on works that take London itself as a major part of their story. These might be disaster or alien invasion films that see the city as a site of destruction or devastation, horror films which render a familiar city frightening and strange, or noir explorations of London's underbelly that expose sides of the city that are normally hidden.

The course will both present an alternative history of London on film and provide you with rich possibilities for the analytic study of film and television. Horror and science fiction are notorious as vessels for the expression of both social and political anxieties, and the selection of films would
encourage analyses of both psychological content and broader contexts (areas might include, for instance, Cold War-era fears, body horror, racial or class concerns).

Readings will be both critical and complementary, and hope to locate uncanny London on film in relation not only to American cinematic tropes in genres such as horror, but also to the large fictional and occult literature which features London as a place of archaic energies and occult forces.

All students develop their basic skills in analyzing film texts and will also develop a good grasp of long-trends and recent themes in British horror and science fiction cinema. You will gain insight into the ways that film can reflect and respond to contemporary social and political conditions and events, and the way that film and television relate to literature. You will gain an understanding of horror and science fiction as key genres in British film, and gain awareness of some key points at which these genres in British cinema and television differ from their counterparts in US film.

**Course Objectives**

As a result of this course you will:

a) understand and engage with the international history of cinema (as well as that of other visual media forms) and be able to place media texts within their social, political, cultural, and historical contexts.

b) have hands-on experience in at least one area of film and media production (e.g. photography, film, video, video installation, or digital imaging).

c) be able to write clearly, coherently and skillfully about the cinema (its history, theory, aesthetics, and/or social/cultural context).

**Methodology**

This course introduces you to modes of analysis appropriate to music, theatre, or the visual and plastic arts. It may take the form of a survey, the study of a genre or period, or may focus on a particular artist. Course readings and screenings inform the discussion-based approaches to this course.

**Required Readings/Materials**

Course readings will be made available in electronic format when possible; some texts must be borrowed from a library or purchased in advance (most can be found online for relatively cheaply). It is imperative that students complete the assigned readings before the tutorial for which they are assigned, as they will be required to discuss and evaluate these ideas in the sessions. Readings will be supplemented with screenings which are equally if not more critical to the course objectives. See course schedule below for assigned readings.

**Note:** Many of the films that we view this semester are rated “R” or unrated and contain what may be considered potentially objectionable violence, language, and sexuality. If you foresee an objection to viewing any of the scheduled films, then the instructor encourages you to see them immediately for alternate arrangements. We may use this potentially objectionable material as a platform for critical discussion.
Selected Web Resources

- Film Studies Resources @ Pitt: Getting Started
- Here you'll find information about how to find research materials like articles and books, how to locate films and videos to watch, and where to go to learn about what's going on in the Pittsburgh film community. Feel free to contact the Staff of Stark Media Services Center if you have any questions or suggestions, or if you require any additional assistance.

  - An American Werewolf in London film location guide: [http://www.movie-locations.com/movies/a/amwerewolf.html#.VZ0uhfIVhBd](http://www.movie-locations.com/movies/a/amwerewolf.html#.VZ0uhfIVhBd)
  - British Horror Film Locations, Derek Pykett, 2008
Grading

It is vital that students come to class having prepared fully and with ideas to contribute to the discussion. Screenings will be treated as classroom time: attendance is a course requirement. Class participation will be assessed according to the following guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A range</td>
<td>Excellent: consistent contributor; offers original analysis and comments; always has ideas on topics of discussion; takes care not to dominate discussion</td>
<td>Obviously has completed all course preparation and screenings; intelligently uses resultant understanding to formulate comments and questions for the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Very Good: frequent, willing, and able contributor; generally offers thoughtful comments based on the readings and screenings</td>
<td>Has done most of the preparation; provides competent analysis of the course materials and applies insights from class appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B / B-</td>
<td>Satisfactory: frequent contributor; basic grasp of key concepts but little original insight; comments/questions are of a general nature and does not relate to the readings and screenings often</td>
<td>Displays familiarity with some course material and related concepts, but tends not to analyze them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C range</td>
<td>Poor: sporadic contributor; comments/questions betray lack of understanding of key concepts; often digresses in unhelpful ways and makes little or no connection with the readings and screenings</td>
<td>Displays familiarity with few course materials; rarely demonstrates analytical thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D / F</td>
<td>Very Poor: rarely speaks or illustrates a lack of active listening and does not contribute to group discussion; merely quotes course content or repeats own comments or those of others with no connections made to the course materials</td>
<td>Little to no apparent familiarity with assigned material or application to relevant experience.</td>
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# Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Score or percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93–100</td>
<td>Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90–92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87–89</td>
<td>Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83–86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80–82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77–79</td>
<td>Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73–76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70–72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67–69</td>
<td>Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60–66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0–59</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of grade</th>
<th>Learning outcome (course objectives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>A, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia map</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A, B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map writeup</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>A, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall grade</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Details

Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. Assignments will be marked using specification grading. The rubric for written work will be available once assignments are set.

Short Essay & Long Essay
Written assessment will be in the form of one short essay and one long essay. Essay topics will be determined in tutorial sessions, but you will be asked to choose films which have not been part of the in-class viewing.

Each student will complete one short essay of five pages, and one long essay of ten pages. The first, short paper must take as its subject one of the films that the class has watched. You may focus on any aspect of the film that interests you and you must discuss it critically. References are not required, nor are they prescribed: In this paper you are encouraged to think independently and write an analysis without limiting your imaginative engagement with the film. You may focus on formal cinematography, character development, plot, direction, acting, even a single shot, or single frame. You are encouraged to think openly, and papers are marked according to the quality of ideas regarding the chosen subject, clarity and detail of observation, and coherence of critical analysis. You are given detailed written feedback on this paper with your mark. The paper is an exercise in independent film analysis, without a strictly academic requirement for references, and it is intended to allow students who may not have written critically about film an open space in which to explore ways of thinking and writing about the subject.

The longer paper is also an open assignment, and you are encouraged to select your own subject. You may select any area of the general subject—the city made strange—that is of interest to you, and you are not limited to films that have been watched in class. However, it is recommended that you use films viewed in class as a starting point. It is possible to restrict the subject to a single film, as in the first paper, but in this paper you are also encouraged to go beyond the restricted remit of the first paper and to think more broadly—you may, for instance, examine the work of a director across several films; compare films on similar subjects or with similar themes; present a close or
A comparative analysis of formal or thematic features in a given film or films; and so on. This paper requires academic referencing and evidence of independent research. All students are required to attend an individual tutorial to confirm and discuss your chosen subject. Papers should be analytical rather than descriptive and based on a clearly stated thesis. Whilst the primary source will be student’s analysis of their chosen film, written analysis must be supported by a minimum of five secondary sources, which should be cited in the text and in a final bibliography. Please refer here for citation guidelines: http://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp/mla8tedition You may not reuse material from your short essay in your long essay, and it is advised you choose a different film and subject from that of your short essay.

Relevant resources can be found in the CAPA Resource Centre and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Central Library, as well as through your institutional online access to scholarly journals.

**Multimedia Map Assignment & Writeup**
You will also undertake practical work using Google My Map. The assignment over the term is to create your own interactive map of London. Your geographic scope must be London or a portion of London. Your thematic choice is your own; however, we ask that you create a theme and multimedia content that speaks specifically to the question of the city made strange or a subset of that topic in London.

For this assignment, we want you to physically explore this space. We expect you to create:

- At least six map pins in your interactive map, all of which should make use of content that you create yourself, unless previous approval received to use pre-existing material
- The film clips for each pin should have a minimum length of 10 sec each, with no maximum length
- No GIFs can be used to fulfill the six map pins
- You should certainly include any of the following:
  - Audio interviews
  - Photographs
  - Panoramas
  - Other layered effects as you choose

You will be required to attend a tutorial to discuss your thematic map choice in advance.

Two of your pins will be due after the first month of class, two at midterm, and the final two or more pins and finished map by the end of term. Relevant dates are listed in the class schedule below.

A three-page summary, providing a description of your map and contextualizing the pins, will be due along with the map at the end of term.

You will be required to have or create a Gmail account in order to create a Google My Map. You will then have to add both instructors as editors so we can view your maps remotely. If you need any assistance with this process, please ask one of the course instructors.

As part of your participation mark, in addition to taking part in class discussions, you will be required to participate in an online blog with you on the Secret Pittsburgh course. You must make the required posts by the assigned deadlines. Details of the blog and posting assignments will be shared with you in a separate document/course Web posting.

It is vital that you come to class having read the set texts carefully and with ideas to contribute to the discussion. Screenings will be treated as classroom time: Attendance is a course requirement. The attached syllabus should be understood as a provisional plan for what we will do in class.
COURSE CONTENT

Unit 1

Introducing the City Made Strange
Introduction to the course, themes, concepts
- **Screening:** *An American Werewolf in London*, dir. John Landis (1981)
- **Readings:**
  - Freud, Sigmund, *The Uncanny*, 1919
- Short essay assignment distributed

Unit 2

Occult Bloomsbury & the British Museum
This session examines twin currents of dark and light magic, and central London's swirling history of the occult and esoteric. The British Museum is the storehouse of thousands of sacred, ancient, and contested objects, removed to London from their original homes during the years of British imperial expansion and exploration. Their combined presence makes the British Museum the locus of unresolved and restless historical energies. The most talismanic colonial mystery of all, the curse of Tutankhamun's tomb, can be explored by examining how the myth of “the Mummy's Curse” was presented on screen in the classic horror film *The Mummy.*
- **Clip Reel:** *The Mummy* (Terence Fisher, 1959); *The Mummy* (Karl Freund, 1932); *Night at the Museum* (Shawn Levy, 2006)
- **Readings:**
  - Plomer, William. *The Case is Altered,* Hogarth Press, 1932, pp. 170-177
Unit 3

Murder Most Foul
From labyrinthine dark alleyways to rain-soaked rooftops, we will unpick how London as a city, and its architecture, has been the inspiration for horrendous stories embodied in the literary and filmic figures of the monster and serial murderer unleashed upon a helpless city and its inhabitants.

- **Screening:** *Frenzy*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock (1972)
- **Readings:**
- Short essay and map assignment tutorial

Unit 4

A View To a Kill
This session continues some of the threads from the previous session but evolves the discussion by looking at the now cult classic Peeping Tom and its vitriolic reception in 1960. A filmmaker’s film, Peeping Tom is a shocking examination of the intimate relationships between violent cinema, filmmaker, and audience.

- **Screening:** *Peeping Tom*, dir. Michael Powell, 1960
- **Readings:**
  - Pirie, David *A New Heritage of Horror: The English Gothic Cinema*, pp. 113-119
  - “Michael Powell’s Peeping Tom: the film that killed a career,” David Gritten, August 27, 2010, [http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/7967407/Michael-Powellss-Peeping-Tom-the-film-that-killed-a-career.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/7967407/Michael-Powellss-Peeping-Tom-the-film-that-killed-a-career.html)

Unit 5

Death Lines
There is a city beneath the city: a subterranean London of underground rivers, cavernous tunnels, and ancient roads. This session looks at films that take the London tube as a storehouse of alien secrets, feral violence, and malevolent visitors.

• **Readings:**

**Unit 6**

**Red Scare/Mob Ties**

British cinema and television have long held a fascination with depictions of organised crime and London's criminal underbelly. From films portraying the legendary Kray twins to contemporary crime dramas like Top Boy, the bloody allure of criminal activity is a subject of endless dramatization. This session examines Cronenbourg's exploration of the Russian mob in London's East End in Eastern Promises, as well as a brief examination of the tv series McMafia.

• **Screening:** *Eastern Promises*, dir. David Cronenberg, 2007
• **Clip Reel:** *McMafia* extracts
• **Readings:**
  o Alexander Litvineko and Skripal poisonings news articles: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19647226  
  https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-48801205
  o Glenny, Misha *McMafia: A Journey Through the Global Criminal Underworld*, 2008, pp. TBD
  o Bacon, Henry *The Fascination of Film Violence*, pp. 86-121
  o Bullough, Oliver “How Britain Let Russia Hide Its Dirty Money,” The Guardian, May 25, 2018  

• First two map pins **due**

**Unit 7**

**Future Shocks**

Technological advance or societal collapse? Two views of future London: Quiribet's optimistic early sci-fi *The Fugitive Futurist* and Cuarón's classic dystopia *Children of Men*.

• **Screening:** *The Fugitive Futurist* (Gaston Quiribet, 1924) / *Children of Men* (Alfonso Cuaron, 2006)
• **Clip Reel:** *Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick, 1971), *The Possibility of Hope* (Alfonso Cuaron, 2009), *V for Vendetta* (James McTeigue, 2006)
• **Readings:**
  o Zizek, Slavoj “The clash of civilisations at the end of history”  

Unit 8

Long Essay & Map Tutorials

Unit 9

Stop...Hammer Time!
Schlocky but iconic, no production company is more closely associated with the history of horror in Britain than Hammer. This session looks at the legacy of Hammer films on contemporary British and international cinema.

- **Clip Reel**: Selection from various Hammer horror titles
- **Readings**:
  - Pirie, David A New Heritage of Horror: The English Gothic Cinema, selection TBD
  - Canterio, Martyn “Where to Begin with Blumhouse Productions,” March 18, 2019
- Two additional map pins **due**

Unit 10

Things That Go Bump in the Night
Ghosts, poltergeists, spirits, messages from beyond the grave: the idea of the ghost is a human universal, and the ghost story is a staple of supernatural horror in both literature and cinema. This session looks at one of the most celebrated and well documented cases of all, the Enfield Haunting, and also examines one of the most celebrated media hoaxes, the 1992 BBC broadcast “Ghostwatch.”

- **Readings**:
  - Josiffe, Chris Gefi, Strange Attractor, pp. TBD
  - Short Ghost Stories, TBD
Unit 11

Guest Lecture

Unit 12

Apocalyptic Visions
The iconic monuments of London are often subjected to destruction in apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic films. Filmmakers have relished imagining London abandoned in ruin, with busy streets and attractions abandoned, and distinctive features rendered unrecognisable. The class will examine films that imagine London as the scene of apocalyptic disasters wrought through fire, water, and disease.

- **Readings:**
- Suggested readings: Wheatley, Dennis. Black August, Chapter 9, “Burn Them! Burn Them!,” pp. 105-117

Unit 13

Final Session
- Map project presentations
- Final two map pins and map writeup **due**
- Long essay **due**
POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Student attendance at all classes is required and expected. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. The first time a student has an unexcused absence for a class, their grade will not be impacted. The second time a student has an unexcused absence in that class, it will result in a 3 percent reduction of the final grade (for example: an A- [92] will become a B+ [89]). The student will be placed on academic probation at this time. Three unexcused absences per class will result in failure of the course.

Excused Absences

Absences are only excused for medical reasons, for a family emergency or for a religious holiday. To request an excused absence, you must contact excused.absence@capa.org ahead of time with the reason for their absence, otherwise the absence will not be excused. Even if the student knows the absence will not be excused, they should still contact CAPA to inform CAPA they will not be in class. In addition to contacting excused.absence@capa.org, it is the responsibility of the student to contact their instructor and make up any missed assignments.

Class Participation

You need to be committed to full participation in a live community of learners, albeit online in the case of any Globally-Networked Learning components, and ensure you attend class and participate fully.

You are expected to participate in all sessions and to participate actively and critically in class discussions: the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. You must read assigned reading BEFORE the class and arrive at the session on time.

Participation is a vital part of your grade: you are expected to participate orally in class sessions and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others will not be tolerated.

Statement of Technology

- What technology is required in the course (computer, operating system, software, webcams, internet connectivity, etc.)?
The use of the following applications or platforms may be required for this course: Canvas, Google Maps, Google Hangouts, Google Slides, Screencast-O-Matic, and Zoom is required in this course.

It is recommended for students to use a desktop or laptop computer less than six years old with at least 1GB of RAM, and to use the most recent version of Chrome or Firefox with JavaScript enabled. Internet connections should be at least 512kbps.

Email AcademicAffairs@capa.org regarding any concerns you have about your ability to secure reliable internet access or about any other academic technology needs.

- Whenever virtual class sessions occur, all participants are expected to activate their webcam and be sure that their face is fully visible in order to facilitate effective communication and encourage community. Any exemptions from this policy will be considered on a case by case basis. Students who wish to be considered for exemption from this policy must request this to their instructor in advance, stating their reason. Alternatively, if you prefer not to be viewable on video, you may contact AcademicAffairs@capa.org to express your needs and CAPA Academic Affairs will discuss them with the CAPA Center where you are studying.

- Any use of technology must be compliant with FERPA.

**Academic Accommodations**

Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability should contact Academic Affairs at their earliest convenience at academicaffairs@capa.org. Students requesting Accommodations must have their home institution's Disabilities Services or an appropriate licensed professional or healthcare provider submit official documentation directly to CAPA in a timely manner outlining their specific needs. If the documentation is submitted by a provider other than the home institution's Disabilities Services, it must be someone familiar with the history and functional limitations of the student's disability (not a relative or family member of the student). Any required accommodations will be approved by CAPA's Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with relevant Academic Directors, before being relayed to faculty. Any student who requires an accommodation based on official documentation should also discuss their needs directly with their instructor.

**Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting, and Title IX**

CAPA: The Global Education Network is committed to encouraging a safe and healthy environment at our seven CAPA centers. This commitment includes the understanding of, and applicable adherence to, the guidelines outlined in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX necessitates that US universities provide equity in all educational programs and activities without sex discrimination. CAPA understands the implications of Title IX compliance for our institutional partners and thus endeavors to support this compliance as a vital aspect of partnership. The safety and security of all students during a program is a matter of crucial importance to CAPA. To facilitate this, CAPA encourages you to openly disclose any and all information that is Title IX relevant so that CAPA staff can provide support and connect you with appropriate resources. Because you may not understand the implications of Title IX abroad, CAPA will work to advise you about the resources available through Title IX and explain the importance of compliance in Title IX reporting. CAPA will work to build student confidence in CAPA’s status as a mandated reporter by outlining the advantage of disclosure for the student, reassuring them that any information disclosed will not be used in an inappropriate manner, and stressing that individuals will only be informed on a need-to-know basis.
Late Submission

Late submission of papers, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request for an extension must be made to the relevant faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a 3 percent per day deduction of the final grade. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of “0” will be given for the assessment.

Behavior During Examinations

During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, accessing online resources of any kind is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.

Examinations

These may take place in timed format, with all students required to undertake the exam together in a limited time, or in an open “take home” format, where a prompt will be provided in advance by faculty and you will be given a certain number of hours to complete their work. Exam questions will be made available in CANVAS at a certain time and will be removed at the end of the scheduled time. You will write your answers directly in CANVAS or as an MS Word.doc, as required by the instructor. Where an MS Word document is required, these must be uploaded by the student via Turnitin in CANVAS by the end of the scheduled time.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.
Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

**Student Conduct**

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.