

[Call for Papers - There Can Be Only One: Critical Essays on the Highlander Franchise](#)

Announcement published by Michele Brittany on Tuesday, January 4, 2022

Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

May 31, 2022

Subject Fields:

Popular Culture Studies

There Can Be Only One. This phrase was made popular 35 years ago with the release of *Highlander*, a fantasy action-adventure film directed by Russell Mulcahy and starring Christophe Lambert, Sean Connery, and Clancy Brown. While it did not turn a profit during its theatrical release, it did become a cult film inspiring several sequels, three television series, original novels, comic books, audio books, video games, a web series, collectibles, musical scores, and a loyal fandom who have successfully organized a number of *Highlander* fan conventions.

Over the years, aspects of this franchise has become part of popular culture's lexicon, such as the enduring Queen album, *A Kind of Magic* with iconic phrases ("Princes of the Universe"/"There Can Be Only One"), and dramatic imagery (electrifying beheadings and portrayals of historic events/places). Since 2008, there have been discussions of remakes and reboots and most recently in May 2021 with Henry Cavill proposed to have a lead role.

Interestingly, other than franchise retrospectives, soundtrack analysis, and film reviews, there are no singular books of scholarly focus. This proposed transmedia book will seek to address this gap by collecting a series of essays that provide a focused exploration of the *Highlander* franchise.

The editor seeks essays exploring any aspect of the *Highlander* franchise in films/television, literature, comics, video games, and any other popular culture medium such as:

- **Films:** *Highlander* (1986, Russell Mulcahy); *Highlander II: The Quickening* (1991, Russell Mulcahy); *Highlander III: The Sorcerer* (1995, Andy Morahan); *Highlander: Endgame* (2000, Doug Aarniokoski); *Highlander: The Source* (2007, Brett Leonard); *Highlander: The Search for Vengeance* (2007, Yoshiaki Kawajiri)
- **Television series:** *Highlander: The Series* (1992-1998); *Highlander: The Animated Series* (1994-1996); *Highlander: The Raven* (1998-1999)
- **Books:** *Highlander: Die Ruckkehr des Unsterblichen (Highlander: The Return of the Immortal*, 1994, Martin Eisele and Hans Sommer); *Highlander: The Element of Fire* (1995, Jason Henderson); *Highlander: Scimitar* (1996, Ashley McConnell); *Highlander: Scotland the Brave* (1996, Jennifer Roberson); *Highlander: Measure of a Man* (1997, Nancy Holder); *Highlander: The Path* (1997, Rebecca Neason); *Highlander: Zealot* (1997, Donna Lettow); *Highlander: Shadow of Obsession* (1998, Rebecca Neason); *Highlander: The Captive Soul* (1998, Josepha Sherman); *Highlander: White Silence* (1999, Ginjer Buchanan); *Highlander: An Evening at Joe's* (2002, written by cast/crew of *Highlander: The Series*)

Citation: Michele Brittany. *Call for Papers - There Can Be Only One: Critical Essays on the Highlander Franchise*. H-Announce. 05-27-2022.

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/9472692/call-papers-there-can-be-only-one-critical-essays-highlander>

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- **Comics:** *Highlander* comic book series (Dynamite Entertainment); *Highlander 3030* (Emerald Star Comics)
- **Video games:** *Highlander* (1986, PC); *Highlander: The Last of the MacLeods* (1995, Atari Jaguar CD)
- **Audio:** *Highlander: The Original Scores* (1995); Queen's *A Kind of Magic* (1986); Big Finish Productions' *Highlander* audio stories; *Highlander: A Celtic Opera*
- **Web series:** *The Methos Chronicles* (2001)
- **Collectibles:** *Highlander: The Card Game* (La Montagnard Inc.)
- **Fan derivative works:** film, fiction, etc.

Essays that take an interdisciplinary approach to the subject matter and/or can apply a variety of lenses and frameworks, such as, but not limited to, are encouraged:

- Close textual analysis
- Comparative analysis
- Cult/secret societies
- Cultural and ethnic
- Fandom and fan studies
- Film studies
- Folklore
- Gender/LGBTQIA+ studies
- Historic analysis
- Literature studies
- Media and communications
- Media Sociology
- Mythological
- Psychological
- Racial studies
- Semiotics
- Theoretical

The editor will review multiple abstract submissions to assemble the most cohesive arrangement of entertaining/insightful essays that will provide a well-rounded exploration and representation of this popular franchise. Additionally, the editor is seeking essays that balance an academic and armchair enthusiast tone to ensure the widest audience appeal. The deadlines are:

- 05/31/2022: Abstract of 300 - 500 words, brief CV, and preliminary draft bibliography emailed to the editor.
- 06/10/2022: Notification of acceptance/rejection. Successful essayists will be sent a comprehensive style sheet.
- 12/10/2022: Essays of 4,000 - 6,000 words in length are due to the editor. Earlier submissions are welcomed and encouraged.
- 12/10/2022 - 05/10/2023: Essays will be edited and returned to each author for review and revision.
- 05/11/2023 - 11/11/2023: Manuscript will be peer reviewed. The editor will work with essayists to address all peer review notes and finalize each essay.

- 11/30/2023: Final manuscript sent to the publisher.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The editor will be utilizing Microsoft Word's Track Changes function to record all edits. It will be the writer's responsibility to resolve each edit and submit a final clean essay by the deadline noted above.
- Contributors will receive a complimentary book copy when published. Postage will be paid by the editor.
- For team written essays, keep to a maximum of two co-authors.
- The editor encourages the widest possible diverse representation to submit to this call for papers.

Please direct all correspondence to:

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Michele Brittany is an independent popular culture scholar and editor of the Bram Stoker nominated *Horror in Space: Critical Essays on a Film Subgenre* (2017, McFarland), *James Bond and Popular Culture: Essays on the Influence of the Fictional Superspy* (2014, McFarland), and co-editor of *Horror Literature from Gothic to Post-Modern: Critical Essays* (2020, McFarland). She is co-chair of the Ann Radcliffe Academic Conference and an academic member of the Horror Writers Association. She is a podcaster who co-hosts/produces the H.P. Lovecast Podcast and co-hosts the monthly Scholars from the Edge of Time. She has served as moderator and panelist at such popular culture events as Stokercon, San Diego Comic-Con International, and Wondercon, and she has presented her academic work at the Ann Radcliffe Academic Conference, Comic Arts Conference series, and Southwest Popular/American Culture Association.