

Title	The Addiction
Director	Abel Ferrara
Date	1995
Area	Moral Philosophy
Theme	Existentialism and Freedom
Plot Summary	Kathleen (Lili Taylor), an idealistic philosophy student appalled by a world that could allow evils like the Holocaust, is turned into a vampire and becomes everything she hates. There are copious references to Sartre and other existentialists (her thesis is on Sartre and existentialist philosophy), but the film puts forward the entirely un-existentialist view that in the end Kathleen has no choice but to accept her fate, and indeed that all human beings have an innate predisposition towards evil (i.e. an addiction to evil and violence). Their only hope is God's assistance.
Key Scenes	
Relevant Text	Clare O'Farrell suggests that 'The Addiction is very reminiscent of a certain style of Catholic existentialism and jansenism which one can find in pre and immediately post war writers such as Francois Mauriac, Graham Greene, George Bernanos and the Japanese novelist Shusako Endo. All very gloomy, guilt ridden and concentrating on the evil and weakness at the core of human nature, an evil which can only be rejected with enormous effort by belief in God and Catholicism. It brings to mind Robert Bresson's films in its preoccupation with extreme evil and redemption. Key scene: The professor (the first one who got bitten by Kathleen) pretty much sums up Ferrara's and the writer Nicholas St. John's approach when he is giving a tutorial early on. He quotes Calvin saying something like you have to sink to the depths of evil to know what it is and then repent so that one can be forgiven by God. The female vampire who originally bit Kathleen is quoting toward the end in the hospital, theologian and writer R.C. Sproul, a Calvinist / Presbyterian - "We are not sinners because we *do* sin, but we *sin* because we *are* sinners." Ferrara and St. John seem to be saying almost that one has to be incredibly evil - not just be aware of it - before one can reject it (eg Frank White in King of New York and Kathleen) - and the only way one can reject it is with God's, specifically Christ's help. The only people who are able to resist the vampires are the priest (I believe the priest who appears in the hospital is an actual priest - Father Robert Castle who also makes an appearance in Ferrara's film The Funeral as well) and the man handing out religious pamphlets in front of the building where the end of thesis gore fest happens. I noticed that when Kathleen gets inside the building she goes berserk and keeps on shouting 'I will not submit' which I assume is a reference to Lucifer's 'non serviam'. I was actually very interested by the whole premise of the film that if one does not recognise and face the evil within oneself and in the rest of mankind then one is controlled by it, one becomes addicted to it and spreads it to other people.'