



## WSPS: Sub-Topic Bibliography

### Liminal Spaces, Non-Places, and The Backrooms

#### I. Theoretical Frameworks (The "Why")

*Essential reading for understanding the psychological mechanisms behind the survey data.*

- **Augé, Marc.** *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity.*
  - **Relevance:** This is the origin of the term "non-place" (airports, waiting rooms, supermarkets) cited in the ArchDaily article. It explains the sociological emptiness that makes the Backrooms feel "familiar but wrong."
- **Freud, Sigmund.** "The Uncanny" (*Das Unheimliche*).
  - **Relevance:** The foundational text for horror studies. It defines the uncanny not as something new, but as something "familiar yet repressed." This perfectly explains the nostalgic dread of Liminal Spaces.
- **Turner, Victor.** "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage."
  - **Relevance:** The anthropological origin of "liminality." Turner describes it as a state of disorientation and possibility, which modern internet folklore has darkened into a state of permanent entrapment.

#### II. Academic Analysis of the Phenomenon

*Scholarly work analyzing the specific trend.*

- **Cho, Day & Underberg-Goode, Natalie.** "Lost in Liminal Space: The Internet Legend of the Backrooms." *Contemporary Legend*, Vol. 3.

- **Relevance:** The definitive academic text on the subject. It analyzes the phenomenon through the lens of "virtual legend-tripping" and collective grief during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Tietjen, Jill.** "Lost in The Backrooms [or How I Learned to Love the Liminal]." *Electronic Book Review*.
  - **Relevance:** Provides a socio-economic critique, arguing that the Backrooms represent the "consumerist wasteland" of late-stage capitalism —endless office corridors with no work to be done.
- **Wiggins, Bradley Earl.** "The Backrooms and Liminal Spaces: Explorations of a Digital Urban Legend." *New Media & Society* (2024). The Backrooms and the aesthetic of the empty." *Journal of Digital Culture*.
  - **Relevance:** This is currently the most robust peer-reviewed study on the phenomenon. It analyzes the Backrooms as a form of digital folklore and explores how "low-fidelity" (lo-fi) aesthetics contribute to its believability and viral spread.
- **Tanner, Grafton.** *The Circle of the Snake: Nostalgia and Utopia in the Age of Big Tech*. Winchester: Zero Books, 2020.
  - **Relevance:** While pre-dating the peak of Backrooms mania, Tanner is the leading theorist on "**vaporwave**" and "**lo-fi**" aesthetics. He argues that low-definition media (VHS grain, glitch) creates a "cursed" realism that disrupts the high-definition perfection of modern Silicon Valley tech.

### III. Primary Digital Artifacts (The "Lore")

*These are the raw materials of the folklore. In this study, these serve as the "canonical texts" against which respondent narratives are measured.*

- **Anonymous.** "The Original Backrooms Thread." *4chan /x/ (Paranormal)*, May 12, 2019.
  - **Relevance:** The "ur-text." The specific phrasing ("600 million square miles," "mono-yellow") provides the linguistic markers you will look for in your survey responses to check for **Cultural Priming**.
- **The Backrooms Wiki (Wikidot).**
  - **Relevance:** Represents **Collaborative Ostension**. It documents the community's shift from a singular "eerie feeling" to a "gamified" universe with levels, entities, and survival guides.

- **Pixles, Kane.** "The Backrooms (Found Footage)." *YouTube*.
  - **Relevance:** The primary driver of the "Found Footage" revival. This video single-handedly shifted the folklore from static images to video narrative, influencing how younger respondents visualize the space.

#### IV. Vernacular Theory & Commentary

*Journalism and essays that articulate the community's own understanding of the fear.*

- **Yalcinkaya, Günseli.** "Why Are Liminal Spaces Eerie? The Case of The Backrooms." *ArchDaily*.
  - **Relevance:** A critical bridge between architectural theory and internet aesthetics. It legitimizes the feeling of "wrongness" in built environments.
- **Stanton, Rich.** "Nocliping is no joke: the strange world of The Backrooms explained." *PC Gamer*.
  - **Relevance:** Documents the "Gamification" of the lore. Useful for differentiating between respondents who fear the *space* vs. respondents who fear the *monsters* (a key distinction in your Coding Schema).
- **Koebler, Jason.** "Backrooms Horror Works Best When You're Alone With Your Thoughts." *VICE*.
  - **Relevance:** Represents the "Purist" faction of the folk group. This article argues against the "monster-ification" of the lore, favoring the psychological dread of isolation.
- **Nail Bite.** "What Is Liminal Space? Weirdcore, The Backrooms, and Nostalgia."
  - **Relevance:** Links the phenomenon to **Hauntology** and "Anemoia" (nostalgia for a time you never known). This is a crucial psychological marker for your "Interpretation" section.