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Gothic Voids: Nineteenth-Century Reader Experience and Participation

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Reader Experience and Participation

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by

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Abstract

Characterization of nineteenth-century literary Gothic is usually confined to affective response. This project argues that literary Gothic works constitute an intellectual, empirical endeavor. Because authors of literary Gothic intentionally left voids in their narratives, they invited their readers to participate in making narrative through speculation and conjecture about missing information. The practice of Gothic reading makes the reader an active partaker in filling those voids with rational conclusions. Reading is not just textual encounter. Rather, it incorporates making meaning of one's surroundings. In their experiences, literary works' characters "read" their environments: people, objects, events, etc. Chapter 1 characterizes Gothic reading as the employment of logical processes; *Northanger Abbey*'s Catherine Morland uses induction, deduction and syllogism to make sense of—read—her world. In Chapter 2, *Frankenstein* presents reading as audience engagement between characters as they tell their stories. Shelley uses sympathy as a social-bonding device in which characters read other characters through listening. Chapter 3 examines *Jane Eyre* through the motif of the legend of Bluebeard's House. The house serves as a narrative that Bluebeard's Wife must read and decode for its danger. With her keys, she can unlock the spaces of that narrative. Standing in for the reader, Jane attempts to unlock Thornfield's narrative through investigation. Both Jane and the reader use "keys" of unexplainable things to unlock the secrets within the narrative; the Gothic author endows the reader with keys of mysterious objects, people, and events. Reading continually opens up answers. In the final chapter, this project argues for Gothic as detective fiction. In their narrative structure and storylines, *Dracula* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* allow for the reader to sleuth out mysteries. Dracula's Seward and van Helsing perform detective work on Renfield and Dracula, respectively. Additionally, each man represents a different style of

reasoning, Seward algorithmic and Helsing heuristic. Meanwhile, Utterson the attorney must play detective to determine the nature of the relationship between Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde. All three characters read their environments as part of their detection.

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INTRODUCTION: GOTHIC—A CEREBRAL ADVENTURE

I. The Reader and Her Mind

The word Gothic normally conjures up images of fear, terror, horror, *frisson*, anxiety, and suspense—all strong emotional reactions. From this perspective, the reader is chiefly, if not exclusively, a creature of emotional literacy practice. She answers to visceral impulses, not to any analytical drives. According to this view, her internal life is predominantly physical, a corporeal experience. Fred Botting, who calls Gothic "negative aesthetics," views the mode as chiefly, if not exclusively, emotive:

> Knowledge and understanding do not constitute the primary aim of gothic texts: what counts is the production of affects and emotions; of the extreme and negative: fear, anxiety, terror, horror, disgust, and revulsion are staple emotional responses. … The negative aspect of intense emotions is not simply a sign of the loss or absence of rational judgment. Reason is overwhelmed by feeling and passion … . (6)

A few scholars, among them Diane Hoeveler and Anne Williams, characterize nineteenth-century Gothic as more sophisticated than just feeling. For Hoeveler, the mode served as a mechanism for women writers' clever creativity in circumventing patriarchy and rewriting masculine space into feminocentric areas. Gothic became a coded discourse, a complex gendered linguistic community for women. According to Hoeveler, female Gothic authorship assumed an ontological dimension of reshaping reality (*Gothic Feminism* 19). In *Gothic Riffs*, Hoeveler situates the mode partially in the cerebral realm of nineteenth-century life. Gothic's popularity, she argues, rested in the public mind's psychic anxieties concerning movement from the premodern world of superstition and belief to a modern naturalistic, scientific culture. Mediating this angst, Gothic literature lay in the midpoint between faith and reason; "ambivalent secularization," she asserts, was the late eighteenth-century's attempt to find epistemological

certainty between the realms of the supernatural and the emerging rationalistic, naturalistic age (5). Meanwhile, Williams argues for the era Gothic's portrayal of female "realization" and intellectual maturation as a heroine navigates the world. Like the mythical Psyche (Gk, *mind*), she actualizes through the accomplishment of complex, multidimensional tasks (153). In *Madwoman in the Attic*, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar grant that nineteenth-century Gothic woman authors such as Shelley and the Brontë sisters possessed the intellectual focus to write and create. However, "anxiety of authorship" or "influence" rendered these women painfully self-conscious, diffident toward their creative powers. Such insecurity, they maintain, limited their self-images as authors. What Gilbert and Gubar imply, though, is the presence of creative intellect in authoring in this mode. Gothic feminist scholars make some gesture toward the cerebral dimensions of the mode.

This project develops the argument that Gothic reading is more than just affective response. Rather, it is also an intellectual endeavor, inviting and requiring the reader to use her mind to speculate and conjecture. In their creativity, Gothic authors intentionally plant voids into their narratives as informational gaps so as to stimulate reader curiosity and further inquiry, even if that inquiry constitutes only desire to read on. What results is an empirical event, with reader as scientist and detective. She collects clues and gradually coheres them into rational conclusion. Whether that conclusion is correct or not is irrelevant. What matters here is that she employs reasoning and intellect as part of literacy practice. A picture of Gothic reading as merely emotional phenomenon implies an incomplete, gapped portrait of the reader. Conversely, this project treats the entire person as both emotional ***and*** intellectual, contemplating the Gothic reader as a whole person during her textual experience.

Exploring Gothic as a cerebral phenomenon determined this project's textual selections. In its argument, this dissertation focuses on canonical works by Shelley, Austen, Charlotte Brontë, Stevenson, and Stoker, all literary Gothic. All incorporate aesthetic and intellectual elements that foreground and appeal to mind as well as emotion. Here I distinguish between the literary Gothic, reflecting the values of a middle-class British readership, and the pulp fiction and chapbooks popular among lower-class consumers. My approach rests on the divide in "literary" value and class audience between the two species. Scholarship positions this difference with narrative aesthetic and conventions. Characterizing literature, or the "literary," as "mainly a middle class cultural institution," Gary Kelly describes the sophisticated, highbrow nature of literary Gothic (207). Authors such as Austen and Shelley employed extensive description; made abundant allusions to or used literature, the arts, philosophy and other learned disciplines in their narratives; and invoked discourses of taste and discrimination popular with the middle and upper classes (232). According to Kelly, "literary," middle-class texts reflected an appreciation for the intricate in narrative structure and development; such works possessed

> detailed depiction of complex subjectivity; … attention to the cause and effect relation-ship between character and incident; progressive plot leading to complex denouement and closure; and stylistic markers of the "literary" such as "poetic" language, elaborate-ness of construction, and effects that would be considered "original" rather than formulaic or merely novel. (232)

Hoeveler observes that middle-class Gothic literature "made claims for the powers of reason, rationality, and secularized education," and emphasized emotional control ("Gothic Chapbooks" 156). Meanwhile, Kelly notes literary Gothic's nature as educationally utilitarian, "urging the accumulation of moral and intellectual capital, … "solid and useful" knowledge for adult middle-class life" (226). Literary Gothic catered to refinement and epicurean tastes, privileging the cerebral over the emotive.

Conversely, lower-class pulp fiction and derivative chapbooks played to lowbrow, unsophisticated tastes. Typically, the chapbook, or cheap book, was an abridged version of a longer literary work or the product of a second-rate hack writer who wished to earn his pay quickly. Hoeveler characterizes chapbooks as intellectual vapidity: "child-like simplicity, the distillation of plot, and the flattening of character" ("Gothic Chapbooks" 157). Similarly, Kelly says they "lacked the detailed representations of subjectivity, extensive descriptive passages, lengthy social scenes, and literary allusions often found in their sources" (219). These derivatives constituted intellectual bankruptcy, being formulaic and stylized, using shallow characterization of subjectivity, and being desultory in narrative structure (214-15). In treating popular magazines of the period, Robert Mayo notes the permeation of amateurish hacks who lowered contemporary Gothic to a level of juvenility and maudlin sentiment. Such periodicals "made a regular practice of butchering the classics of Gothic romance, compressing them to a fraction of their original length, [and] intensifying the melodrama" ("Gothic Romance" 770). Mayo asserts that their "childish didacticism may be regarded as the direct expression of the prejudices of a new reading audience which was practical, naïve, and sentimental" ("Gothic Romance" 772). Chapbooks privileged emotion over rationalism. Another lower-class menu item, the Gothic fragment, lacked the aesthetics of plot framework, exposition, plot resolution, and explanation of mysterious events (Mayo "The Gothic Short Story" 451). Lower-class consumer items of literature played to corporeal rather than cerebral tastes and valued the quick pound over careful and diligent attention to aesthetic detail.

"Nonliterary" works' absence of appreciation for the intellectual drove this project's textual fare. Unlike pulp fiction and chapbooks, the works I treat herein demonstrate an appreciation for the thinking reader. All carefully and artistically establish mysteries that

encourage inquisitive investigation into cause and effect. In their narrative constructions, their authors develop plotline carefully so as cleverly to tease and invite the reader to sleuth and discover. Moreover, each casts its protagonists as curious inquirers into mysteries; in so doing, the authors demonstrate cognizance that their readers act as co-investigators, conducting inquiry in the shape of persistent reading and alongside the characters they encounter. Readers experience artistic unfolding of events and detailed explorations of subjectivity that elicit reader curiosity and encourage active exercise of mind in unearthing the truth behind puzzle.

Treating the whole reader entails accessing and understanding reading experience as a variegated paradigm. Particularly, it conceptualizes Gothic literacy practice as impacting the sensorium at manifold levels. Those who, like Botting, restrict Gothic to affective response confine the reader sensually as susceptible chiefly, if not solely, to physical drives. Where the mind participates, it is only reader response as bodily event. Addition of an intellect-response component creates a multisensual reader. Here the senses accomplish a dual function. If Gothic is merely feeling, mental processes arise only from corporeal impulses. However, the senses serve intellect too. As empirical devices, they also perceive, observe, and collect input from the external world: behaviors, texts, events, material objects, speech. As a mode, Gothic—including the literary Gothic—appeals to and uses higher-order reasoning faculties of the brain as well as primal drives of fear, anxiety, and threat perception. Essentially, the very same senses that interpret threat and danger also direct perceptions to the logical, critical-thinking centers of the brain for assessment. Thus, processing of sensual input occurs at two different levels.

Neuroscience supports this concept of multilevel, interconnected interpretive ability of the brain. Addressing its sectors and their operations, A.R. Luria observes the nature of the brain's sensual processing as interrelated between areas:

> It would be a mistake to imagine that each of these units can carry out a certain form of activity completely independently … , that the second functional unit is entirely reponsible for the function of perception and thought, while the third is responsible for the function of movement and construction of action. … Each form of conscious activity is always a *complex functional system* and takes place through the *combined working of all three brain units*, each of which makes its own contribution. The well-established facts of modern psychology provide a solid basis for this view. (99; emphasis the author's)

The concept of the "triune brain" contemplates a three-part division of processing: the reptilian brain (primal fear, threat perception), the limbic system (emotional center, emotional responses to danger), and the neocortex, or cortex (complex cognition—logic, reasoning, critical thinking).[1] The three parts are not separate, but, rather, interlocked with a complex of neurons. In the reptilian brain, the amygdala and the hypothalamus, processors of threat and fear, maintain strong, broad connectivity to the cortex; Luiz Pessova characterizes the brain's interlocking networks as bidirectional, allowing the reptilian brain influence on the cortical processes (231, 235, 241). The limbic system is densely interconnected with the cortex; the latter processes and appraises input from the former (Baars and Gage 37; Panksepp 70). Jaak Panksepp maintains that the reptilian and limbic emotional systems interact vigorously and continuously with the cortical reasoning systems. According to Panksepp, "[e]ach emotional system is hierarchically arranged throughout much of the brain, interacting with more evolved cognitive structures in the higher reaches … . [T]he emotional systems are centrally placed to coordinate many higher and lower brain activities … . Because of the ascending interactions with higher brain areas, there is no emotion without a thought" (27). Moreover, the reptilian and cortical sections have a direct link between them: "[T]he thalamic-neocortical axis … harvests information from our external

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[1] Noted neuroscientist Paul MacLean proposed his concept of the "triune brain" in the 1960s and expounded on it in *The Triune Brain in Evolution: Role in Paleocerebral Functions*. New York: Plenum, 1990. Print.

bodily senses and guides our skeletal motor systems through the cognitive influences of appraisals [and] plans" (61). In fact, the reptilian area processes stimuli before sending it to the cortex for integration and meaning making (69, 72). Panksepp argues for a brain whose parts interact and network integratively with each other. More, he sees the organ as an organic whole in its workings. Along these lines, he adopts the model of a brain whose parts are an indivisible composite, operating as a single unit internally and with respect to the world:

> By appreciating how the brain is organized, we may gradually outgrow the illusory sense that we are creatures of two distinct realms, of mind and matter, and come to monistically accept that we are simply ultracomplex creatures of the world—with complex feelings, thoughts, and motor abilities that have arisen from the dynamic interaction of our brains with environments. (302)

Because of this homogenous conception, he characterizes the entire emotional-cognitive network as "open," i.e., acting with different responses according to different stimuli; the cortex is significantly "open," collecting and cohering various external sense input (63).

Considering Gothic reading experience as combined affective and intellectual imagines one sensual channel bearing a double load; eye and ear, that is, must process external data simultaneously for both corporeal feeling and logical thinking. Two functions, one pathway. An expanded mind-body conceptual framework such as this one enlarges and reimagines Gothic sensual experience as just as much abstract as it is concrete. Moreover, recasting the role of the sensorium as dual functionality renders the Gothic an experience of mind as well as body.

In this project, the practice of reading assumes a definition and understanding of literacy beyond textual encounter. Gothic characters "read" their environments. They "read" people and situations. In so doing, they stand in for or mirror the reader herself as interpreter. For my arguments herein, "reading" connotes application of intellect and reasoning to signs in the ambient environment for the purpose of meaning making. This worldly "literacy" exerts the

mind to determine how such signs connect both with their particular signifieds and with each other. Connection is insufficient; reading environmental signs involves deciding how they relate meaningfully. Gothic reading and "reading" see connection as means to end, preliminary or second-order; its literacy practice endeavors making meaning of linkages. This dual task is vital to effective Gothic narrative; its authors deliberately detach signs both from the signifieds that cause them and from other signs. In text, readers often see effect without visible or understandable cause. This liminality positions signs as part knowledge, part concealment. Hybrid visibility/invisibility stimulates the form of reading we term decoding or deciphering. Gothic narrative is a mode of encryption. Its writers purposely disintegrate coherence of data, deconstructing truth and objective reality, and rebuild these into an intentionally confusing environment for the reader's phenomenological processes. As a mode, it also elicits the intellectual operation of closure, in which the mind works extrapolatively or interpolatively to "complete" a partially-hidden image, word, or object using incomplete knowledge. Such process requires deductive reasoning, application of a general, universal law to a specific example in order to determine significance and relevance. Overall, "reading" as competent literacy in understanding environment transforms the reader into a meaning maker, Gothic reading into an active process of determining significance of clues.

Gothic paradoxically creates by destroying or, more precisely, by deconstructing. Namely, its authors intentionally fashion voids in their narratives as invitations to reader exercise of empirical inquiry. Gothic reading experience is an oxymoronic event of empty fullness; readers achieve a gratifying opportunity from encountering and possibly closing narrative gaps. Authors plant informational lacunae and the reader fills the gaps with intellect and speculation. Ironically, reader experience encounters tangibles that represent vacuity. In *The Strange Case of*

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Stevenson affords the reader unexplained material clues such as texts and a stick, but empties the text of any clarification of their significance beyond vague intimations. In *Jane Eyre*, Brontë plants a candle in Thornfield's hall, but leaves the narrative explanation vacant. Material clues are a paradox of both matter and emptiness; they may appear on the scene with physical existence, but their inexplicability leaves them void of any justification for their being in a particular space. Although people are corporeal beings, they may present as blanks, as narrative nonentities. In its reading experience, Gothic is representationally conflicted; on the one hand, it presents fictional characters and animates them with description and personality, yet often deliberately erases characters from reader view either by nonspecific description or by hiding them outside the narrative. Hyde is a mystery. Readers encounter him personally only very briefly, and characters can offer few if any specific details about his appearance despite having had contact with him. Jekyll refuses details about him. Bertha Mason is a body, yet Thornfield's residents try to delete that body, nay, her very existence, through false narrative. As *Frankenstein* demonstrates, experiences are blanks to others until people share them. Artifacts may be physical objects, but appear without a placing agent or explicable connection to that agent. In this instance, the chain of causation, itself a "narrative" plotline of sequential causality, presents gaps.

Bodies and less concrete things can present voids too. Events without elucidating reason can be gapped. Creatures and people can be narrative voids by their presence or absence, their hidden motives, or their mysterious movements. Because of their alternate appearances in and disappearances from narrative, creatures and the supernatural serve as unexplained empty spaces for the empirical intellect to fill. *Frankenstein*'s creature is absent from the narrative for two years, roaming outside the text to watch the cottagers and self-educate. Hyde is a multi-gap. For

example, he is descriptive emptiness; no one can really describe him with any specificity, and even Utterson's report contains little of help. Hyde is linguistically gapped not only in description, but Stevenson omits details of most of his sordid deeds. Even when he does appear, ninety-nine percent of this presence occurs through the mediation of others' stories and fallible perceptions—themselves so vague and general that they cannot help us imagine him clearly. Meanwhile, Dracula roams at large outside the text through London. With Stoker's clever narrative structure, events suggest, but not conclusively establish, that Dracula is the cause of certain events. We never see him drain Lucy; in fact, we do not see him produce the bite marks. We never see him fatally injure Renfield in his cell. Yet, readers assume that Dracula is the cause. Stoker permits us this speculation. In each work, the reader has an opportunity to close gaps with intellective operation. She can conclude that the Creature killed Clerval, an event we never witness. She can imagine Hyde with a personal touch by applying what description she wishes; she can even guess where Hyde has gone to commit his atrocities. As a reader with the ability to conjecture, she can reasonably speculate that Dracula caused Lucy's bite marks and paleness. A reading of *Dracula* can reasonably conclude that the vampire caused Renfield's demise. Overall, Gothic not only uses all of these things (bodies, creatures, material objects, events with discernible cause) to create gaps, but, further, fashions them *as* gaps, incomplete pieces, for reader investigation and cerebral closure.

Because of the numerous encryptions in its narrative, Gothic constitutes diversified interpretive practices. Reading different signs—or types of signs—leads to multiple literacies; understanding human behavior might require so-called "emotional intelligence" (the ability to read others' behaviors and nonverbal cues, what some may popularly term "people skills") but comprehending a natural event might necessitate using formal logic. Essentially, the reader is not

a unitary entity; rather, environmental "reading" draws on different processes and abilities depending on the situation, evidence, or artifact. *Northanger Abbey*'s Catherine Morland reads people and social situations, marking behavior and speech and comparing these with past personal observations of same or similar circumstances. During her Abbey sojourn, she continues this activity, but uses Gothic novels as a framework. Additionally, Catherine fabricates a dark history of the space and its inhabitants. Her mind employs temporal logic; decoding present situations necessitates prior-gained knowledge. Like Catherine, Jane Eyre must decipher space. Thornfield's three floors are in reality different "stories" to navigate and interpret. Its bottom two floors present a spatial narrative of domestic familiarity and security. Conversely, the third floor's locked room emblematizes hidden story even as it remains physically locked. For Jane, the manor is a composite sign of smaller signs, whether concealed material space or obscured narrative area. During her stay, she tries to read—or read into—residents' opaque explanations of the manor's mysteries.

  Jane Eyre shares with *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* the cathectic interests of their authors. The unaccompanied candle and torn veil of the former share with Stevenson's broken stick and cryptic texts the trait of unexplained material object clues. In each case, presentation of the object to the reader either omits the causative agent or, where such agent is identifiable, explanations of the connections between agent and object. These two works foreground the positivist nature of Gothic. Not confining themselves to the convention of the hidden motive, Brontë and Stevenson provide the reader with "hard" evidence through materiality. A candle, a broken stick, a veil, inexplicable texts—all are tangible proofs of both an agent and a concealed rationale both for their existence and for their position in space. In both

works, people become liminal presences, revealers and concealers; Rochester and his servants purportedly reveal the agent of Thornfield's mysterious events, while Dr. Jekyll acknowledges Hyde's connection with him without divulging the nature of that relationship.

Frankenstein and *Dracula* afford unusual understandings or definitions of Gothic "reading." For Shelley, sympathy and the social virtue of compassion transform into sentimental and intellectual mechanisms for auditory engagement with others. Listening is not just social bonding; it becomes a way of "reading" another's life and experience. *Frankenstein* is really both meta- and multi-experiential. The further and deeper we read into others' lives, the more we undergo others' experiences. Moreover, Shelley constructs a literacy nexus for her reader. Reading Walton's life requires consuming the letters along with Margaret Saville. Interpreting and understanding Victor necessitates doing the same for Walton, while decoding the Creature and the cottagers mandates that we first read Victor and the explorer. In *Frankenstein*, lives and experiences are signs to decrypt. *Dracula*, meanwhile, employs science as a literacy for decoding the vampire's nature, history, and location. However, this science—or "science"—is more complex than first appears. Van Helsing's application of the term for tracking Dracula blends understanding and use of tradition and superstition into his definition of "science." "Reading" Dracula requires dual, intertwined literacies: on one side, premodern faith and folklore, on the other, hard-fact modern positivism.

Signs require certain relevant and appropriate devices for decoding. The Bluebeardian motif of *Jane Eyre* underscores the authorial provision and reader use of "keys" that invite participation and unlock narrative and space. Catherine Morland employs various logical processes such as induction, deduction, and syllogism to her circumstances. Temporality serves as the medium for her conjectures, that is, the past unlocks the present. That past certainly

includes Gothic novels, but also incorporates empirical observations of family and friends. In her representations, Austen takes pains to map out Catherine's considerations of prior observed behavior and speech. Her heroine employs doubly-mediated reading of people, interpretively decoding the General through the previous reading of Gothic narrative. Self-reflexively, Gothic in the form of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* serves as a key to access the Abbey's equally "Gothic" history. Jane Eyre and Gabriel Utterson use objects to attempt unlocking secrets and other people. Meanwhile, Utterson shares with Helsing resort to the use of detective-fiction style investigation for solving mysteries. With its professional use of empirical method, Utterson's lawyerly position focuses its attention on artifacts and a witness statement. Enfield is just as much a "key" as the work's texts are. Meanwhile, Helsing's "keys" are heuristic thinking, with its emphasis on adaptable problem solving, and a radically altered conception of "science," so called. In *Dracula*, this "science" is not unitary, being a composite of multiple deciphering "keys." Inside this conceptual entity are four accessing devices: modern positivism, tradition and folklore, history that entails Helsing's chronicling Dracula's past life, and rural peasant superstition. All four components act as requisite media of access to Dracula's movements and nature.

Decoding occurs not just with pure logic; reason may work synergistically with feeling. Shelley's key is sympathy and social sentiment. Where the other works privilege the eye (with perhaps the exception of *Jane Eyre*, in which sounds too become signs), *Frankenstein* favors the ear as the "key" to unlocking, accessing, and comprehending experience. Listening and sympathy serve as deciphering of others; additionally, both act as keys to open doors to core psyches. All of these keys are available to the Gothic reading experience as much as to its fictional characters. Readers, too, can use logic, investigation, material signs, and prior

knowledge to decode and close narrative gaps. *Frankenstein* foregrounds the opportunity of exploratory metalistening; Shelley's reader learns her characters' experiences by vicariously listening in with Walton, Victor, and the Creature. Characters too become "keys." Walton is the access device to Victor, Victor to the monster, and the monster to the cottagers.

Decoding and unlocking imply an energetic, dynamic literacy process. Because of its narrative voids and the intellectual inquiry they invite, Gothic reading offers active reader participation. This involvement is dual. Certainly, there is affective interface with the text. However, scholarship has neglected both the potential of cerebral engagement and an extensive study of this phenomenon. Gothic reading is performative, permitting the reader to act a role in the narrative creation process. While all narrative and genres invite this activity to various degrees, Gothic and detective fiction are different in presenting liminality and intimations. Detective writing, as we shall see in chapter 4, was a child of nineteenth-century Gothic. Each positions material clues, behavior, and speech mediately between the known and the unknown; effect may appear without explicable cause or agent. Gothic serves as multi-participative because of numerous elements that the author presents for reader delectation. With creativity, writers incorporate various conventional ingredients that stimulate curiosity. For example, the reader partakes of semantic inquiry, weighing speech and language. Shelley, Brontë, and Stevenson rely, respectively, on character narration and strange texts for understanding opaque figures. Reading probes actions and things for hidden motive. Through Brontë and Stevenson, the Gothic reader partakes of material artifacts detached from explainable provenance. When Jane and Utterson encounter and examine the objects they encounter, the reader participates in the examination vicariously. When Jane inquires into strange sounds and a veil, the reader is beside her as fellow seeker. When Utterson examines the stick and the texts, the reader participates in

his investigation, just as puzzled as he is. Between these different conventions, the reader enjoys participation not only in specific events and dialogues, the specific synchronic moment, but diachronically through process and unfolding of knowledge.

In each novel discussed in this project, the author permits the reader to share in detective work with the characters. The Gothic reading experience becomes a narrative all its own because of authorial investment in reader intellectual activity. Planting voids into the storyline constitutes the additional act of scripting the reader into the story. Essentially, the reader becomes a character; like the other figures, the reader too will create text through gap closure. Gothic reading's nature as partly speculative moves the story along just as much as the characters' actions and words. Ironically, by virtue of their vacuity, gaps act as material characters with a role. Although an "absence" in the text, they are a presence that impacts narrative through the allurement of a solution. In fact, this very impact represents an "action" that the author imposes on her text. Furthermore, gaps constitute textual lacunic "events" whose active influence on reader interpretive faculties stir and activate the plotline of reader thought processes. However, the reader herself is not a monolithic entity. She is a composite of multiple characters, each of whom acts a performative role in narrative participation and creation. Diverse emotions play separate parts in the drama, but the rational mind is an actor in its own right. The intellect brings curiosity and wonder. These in turn activate reason, which calls on the process that is logic. In its workings, the last introduces induction, deduction, and syllogism. These materialize interpolation and extrapolation. All act at various times as circumstances necessitate. Each process carries with it its singular character profile.

These "characters" are processes that the Gothic reader brings with her as part of reading experience and its participatory nature. As narratives all their own, reasoning methods proceed

by a "plot" of beginning, development, and conclusion. The first chapter explores the formal

logical processes that Catherine Morland uses to comprehend her world. Sometimes she employs

induction.[2] In this method, the mind first observes specific examples of behavior or natural

event, then forms an inference that formulates a general "law" or principle pursuant to that

observation.

SPECIFIC OBSERVATION:	I hold my pen over the floor and drop it. It falls.
SPECIFIC OBSERVATION:	I hold my pen over the floor and drop it. It falls.
SPECIFIC OBSERVATION:	I hold my pen over the floor and drop it. It falls.
INFERENCE/CONCLUSION:	Things fall if I drop them. A force at work does this.

In this example, I have noted a consistent pattern in nature through multiple discrete incidents.

Its opposite, deductive logic, applies a known general law or principle to a specific observed

example.[3] Conclusions in deduction must be true if the premises are true; the same does not

always hold for inductive logic. The following example applies deductive logic from a general

"law" of human behavior:

GENERAL LAW:	Those who feel guilty and know that they are guilty of wrongdoing tend toward concealing behavior
GENERAL LAW:	Furthermore, those who conceal truth tend not to avoid eye contact with those who confront them and/or give evasive answers
SPECIFIC:	My favorite (and expensive) lamp lies broken on the floor
SPECIFIC:	My child will not look at me or give me a straight answer when I ask him how the lamp fell and broke
CONCLUSION:	My child is at least hiding something and is possibly the culprit.

Both processes collaboratively act as foundation for the syllogism; here the mind uses a major

premise and a minor premise to generate a conclusion.4 A famous example of the syllogism in

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[2] Described by Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I.1, I.17, and Sir Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Aphorisms, Book I, no. 19, "On the Interpretation of Nature and the Empire of Man"

[3] Defined by Aristotle in *Prior Analytics* I.1 as "discourse in which certain things being stated, something other than what is stated follows of necessity from their being so."

[4] Described by Aristotle in *Prior Analytics* I.1 and II.23

action is as follows:

MAJOR PREMISE:	All men are mortal.
MINOR PREMISE:	Socrates is a man.
CONCLUSION:	Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

A fourth method, abduction, resembles inductive method in its observational character. However, they differ in that abduction is inference from the ***best explanation***. Catherine Morland employs abduction in an encounter with the Tilney siblings:

SPECIFIC OBSERVATION:	Henry had not talked like a married man.
SPECIFIC OBSERVATION:	Henry had not acted like a married man.
SPECIFIC OBSERVATION:	Henry did mention a sister.
CONCLUSION:	The woman with him is his sister Eleanor.

Inductive reasoning does not necessarily lead to the soundest inference; its operations lead to a likely—or most likely—surmise that could still err. Similarly, abduction's conclusion may be the best explanation, but not necessarily the most or absolutely correct; it merely operates on probabilities.

Lest we think Austen represents logical processes in a rigid or oversimplistic way, we should note that *Northanger Abbey* rather portrays logic in action as multilayered. Catherine uses all these processes at different times and sometimes with synergistic mixture. On seeing Henry with Eleanor, she actually employs both inductive and deductive logic simultaneously in order to infer his bachelor status. In this instance, she uses abductive logic to arrive at the best—here the correct—conclusion. At the Abbey, Catherine exercises induction and deduction fluidly in extended syllogism to calm her fears respecting a flapping curtain during a storm. Her thinking occasionally uses the form of deduction called extrapolation or generalization. In her excitable exchange with Isabella regarding their Gothic reading list, Catherine draws upon known information to infer about the unknown. Specifically, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* serves as starting point for determining whether and what novels on the reading list are just as "horrid" as

Udolpho. This extrapolative activity manifests itself during her conjectures about the Abbey's diabolical past. Using Gothic novels such as *Udolpho* as "laws" of behavior and motive, Catherine generalizes from the confined world of text to the larger world of real life. Whether she arrives at erroneous and ridiculous conclusions is irrelevant. What matters for this project is that she has exercised not only formal, but also legitimate and valid, logical processes to create those conclusions.

Catherine is not the only fictional character in this project's texts to use reasoning; the other works present us with characters that employ logic too. Walton observes specific verbal and nonverbal conduct and speech in Victor Frankenstein to infer the latter's wretched state. At Thornfield, Jane Eyre inductively observes specifics (candle, laughs, animal growls, a fire) that lead her to surmise a threat to the residents. Arguably, Jane pursues two investigations, not one, that require greater exercise of her intellect. First, what or who is causing these mysterious things? Furthermore, what is the motive behind the lies or evasions of multiple residents? During her stay, she must establish and pursue two opposite lines of logical process. The multiple material and auditory clues are particulars that point Jane's attention, although unbeknownst to her, toward Bertha Mason as the general causative "law" of the manor's mysteries. Conversely, mindful of the general "law" that humans provide cryptic or dismissive answers as evasion and concealment, Jane applies these universal principles to an understanding of and resultant skepticism toward residents' verbal subterfuge during questioning. Even this particular line is logically complicated in operation. Series of evasions and spurious explanations themselves become specific, collective examples of suspicious behavior from which Jane infers a conspiratorial silence in the house. The torn wedding veil is part of a deductive reasoning that material evidence, here objects, do not appear without agency or natural cause; starting from the

general law that there must be a cause for every effect, she applies it to the particular nocturnal visitation in order to conjecture that someone tore it.

In *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Utterson, too, variously uses both induction and deduction. Cryptic texts, Jekyll's oblique answers to his inquiries, a broken stick, and Enfield's "witness statement" become specifics for a general inference of Hyde's diabolical intentions. Deductive logic occurs during a visit to Jekyll; Utterson begins with the general premise that blackmail occurs in dimly-understood relations and concludes, wrongly, that Hyde holds Jekyll captive. In his legal capacity, Utterson bases part of his surmise on the existence of a will, a document with financial benefits to certain persons, that may be complicit in Jekyll's failure to explain Hyde's presence. Van Helsing too applies the general "laws" of tradition and superstition—the supernatural—to the specific instance of understanding a single vampire. Ironically, one would not consider "illogical" mentalities as these "laws" to be part of a rational process. Yet, Helsing regards even purportedly irrational superstition and folklore as reasonable enough to participate in ratiocinative thinking if these will capture the supernatural. In each work of this project, the logical processes of induction, deduction, syllogism, and abduction play a participatory role, as "characters," both in Gothic reading experience as well as narrative fictional figures.

Understanding Gothic reading as logical processes as well as affective experience infuses a scientific complexity into this literacy event. This project argues for Gothic reading performance as scientific, as science itself, with the reader's role as inquirer, perhaps even researcher. While all narrative invites participative probing to some extent, Gothic and detective fiction—and Gothic *as* detective writing—evoke "scientific" investigation because of the mysteries and enigmas within. Gothic narrative shares common traits with science. In its

character, the latter itself acts as a narrative model by nature. The empirical researcher observes and documents causation (the why), process and development (the "how"), change and transformation, and conclusion. Along the way, inquiry uses sense observation of various signs and signfieds. These signs can be material (objects), oral (e.g., eyewitness reports), behavioral (psychology, sociology). An inquirer must adopt a positivist stance, crediting "hard" evidence of materiality and firsthand witness report as the most—or only—valid, credible index of truth. The so-called Baconian "scientific method" requires sequential, linear logic, whether inductive or deductive, for creating epistemic certitude.[5] The scientific report that originates from such thinking proceeds in a highly structured narrative: speculation, theory, hypothesis, materials and equipment used, procedure, observation and documentation of signs, method (the "logic") used, observed changes, and conclusions. In its structure, the report incorporates "plot" in the way of events (procedure and process), "characters" (objects, equipment, methods, etc.), and internal movements of the observer (intent or motive, thoughts, concluding comments).

Gothic narrative resembles this scientific model in multiple ways. Characters in this project's novels inquire into causation, outward behavioral signs, criminality in act and motive, psychology, inexplicable events and physical artifacts, and locations of mysterious characters. Essentially, they too are internally recording their own science reports. Occasionally, as with Catherine Morland, Van Helsing, and John Seward, characters seek to understand operative principles behind strange human and supernatural behavior. Overall, the Gothic reader transforms into a scientist. Literacy practice transforms the reader into psychologist,

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[5] Bacon's method breaks down into the following sequence: 1) observations; 2) hypothesis (more popularly called theory); 3) testing, experimentation, and gathering of data; and 4) results and conclusion. Bacon lays out what we now consider to be the "scientific method" in *Novum Organum* (New Method), Book I, Aphorisms 18-22, 24.

criminologist, or any other type inquirer that the narrator representation asks of him.

At its heart, Gothic relies for its intellectual component on implicitly epistemological and metaphysical dimensions. Beyond its affective components, Gothic possesses a philosophical temper that challenges reader perceptions of and confidence in reality and epistemic certainty. On the dichotomic revelation/concealment continuum rest two paradigms of objective truth. "Reality" constitutes that which appears to be true—untruth. Its diametric opposite, reality, represents the true and factual. The author acts the dual role of deconstructing reality and refashioning it as the illusion of truth. However, even within this space, the writer's creativity articulates itself into a paradoxical existence. At one moment, the author presents to the reader facts and data that must be reliable in order for the reader to form some authentic picture of the world in the text. In this role, the author has a duty to work as friendly to the reader's understanding. A Gothic author cannot completely be false or cunning lest she risks completely confusing a reader who must have some solid data on which to proceed for comprehension. On the reverse side, the author works at other times to undermine reliability. A countervailing force, the reader reconstructs "reality" into reality, or at least attempts such a task. Arriving at a correct reconstruction is irrelevant; what matters is that as a reader she assumes the task of restoring, even "healing," broken text. Authorial narrative disintegration initiates loss of reality; as truth seeker, the reader recaptures it. What renders the reader's task more difficult is the author's deliberate intermingling of fact and artifice for reader confusion. Ultimately, the telos of Gothic reading experience is not just meaning making. Narrative involvement represents production of knowledge. In fact, its reading model is a framework of mathematics. Authors may add knowledge, but through intentional withholding and gaps subtracts it too; the reader and her literacy practice adds—or adds back—what the writer took away.

This concept relies for its vitality on constructing an independent reader whose creative faculties produce knowledge. Conversely, the reader must construct knowledge, or "knowledge," through cerebral processes as closure of gaps and cohering of data. This model understands epistemology in two ways. In her withholding, the author invests the reader with agency to mesh truth with "knowledge," that is, what the reader thinks, hopes, or expects (whether right or wrong) to be the truth. Arriving at the right answer or not has no bearing here. What matters is that reading practice actively creates new knowledge, or at least what passes as knowledge until narrative's end. Arguably, in the power politics of Gothic reading, the reader triumphs in epistemic rebellion, expropriating the author's knowledge for herself not only through continuing to read, but also completing the reading. Accomplished reading emblematizes the fully empowered Gothic reader. In fact, more, securing full possession of the knowledge that the author encloses in the text represents full realization or maturation of the Gothic reader. In the process, she has actualized a developed mind and logical processes through exertion of them during textual encounter.

III. Chapter breakdown

Overall, this project argues that Gothic or, more precisely, the Gothic reading event, is an intellectual endeavor through reader experience that assumes a scientific character or dimension in its actualization. This argument posits two actors who labor in a fluidly conflicted collaboration/rivalry relationship that stimulates empiricism and positivism in the reader's mind. Literacy practice incorporates speculative curiosity and logic that metamorphose Gothic from just emotive into full-mind adventure. As a creator, the Gothic author deliberately fractures the narrative informationally. Gapped text teasingly invites reader participation in "creating" text

even as it jealously withholds knowledge vital to reader illumination. In my argument, I omit discussion of Gothic as affective response, preferring to address Gothic as a cerebral model of literary aesthetic. Its empirical nature overlays a scientific complexion onto the narrative, transforming the reader into a hybrid reader-scientist. In so doing, the experience synthesizes aesthetics with investigative logic. Blending aesthetics with scientific cast of mind expands our definition of reading beyond mere textual enterprise and decoding. Each relevant work in this project offers a portrayal of "reading" as interpretive decipherment of unexplained material objects, speech, events, people, and space in order to cohere superficially random, scattered bits of information and answer mystery. For each, proactive cerebral engagement with narrative is a necessary instrument for correct and effective interpretive "reading." Each chapter also works from an expanded definition of "narrative" and "authorship." In these works, I consider the printed word as only one type of narrative. Social situations; physical space, including domestic area; a material artifact—all can constitute narratives in the same way that text, modernly understood, can be more than print. This project contemplates that the novelists are not the only authors or scripters of story. Catherine, *Frankenstein*'s characters, Jane Eyre and Thornfield's residents, and *Dracula*'s two investigative doctors "author" events in their respective works by deed and active reasoning.

Chapter 1 examines two conceptualizations of Gothic literacy and lays out a dual understanding of interpretive reading. *Northanger Abbey*'s Catherine Morland practices multiple such "literacies." Gothic novels comprise only part of her readings of people and events. During the novel's first half, Catherine reads social behavior and people with native common sense that uses practical observation and everyday experience. Only in the second half and in her conversation with Isabella regarding novels does she read the world through a Gothic

framework. Even then, this decoding is not monolithic. Rather, Catherine synthesizes such novels as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* with formal processes of induction, deduction, and syllogism. Essentially, Catherine's interpretation of the Abbey and its occupants is not purely novelistic, but a hybridity of literary and logical drives. For Catherine, reading—and "reading"—actualize at two levels: textual and environmental. Each level constitutes an energetic act of participation in her world. Catherine's reading of behavior makes her a psychologist or social scientist. Additionally, her persistent skepticism toward John Thorpe's outlandish statements, as well as her encounter with mysteries in her room at the Abbey, mark her as a logician. During her enthusiastic exchange with Isabella, Catherine's use of logic in understanding Gothic arises independently of any novelistic interests. The dark narrative that she weaves at the Abbey transforms her into a historian who reconstructs the Tilney family's past. Arguably, our amusement at her conspiracy theorizing at the Abbey originates not in considering her stupid, but, rather, in exercising her mind too much.

In Chapter 2, the project addresses reading in *Frankenstein* as both intellectual and auditory participation in others' experiences. Each embedded tale serves as narrative that invites full listening. Such activity plays two roles. As attentive act, it represents involvement of one mind and experience in another's existential world. The storytelling process entails collection of experiential data for the purposes of understanding and knowledge of another. In its progression, listening is participation in narrative that a teller authors. An additional role of listening is "reading." The ear, not the eye, encounters spoken text and interprets it. Walton listens to and "reads" Victor and his history in order to comprehend his friend's wretchedness. Further in, Victor hears out his Creature in order to "read" interpretively the rationale for the latter's special request. Shelley positions this series of exchanges through the devices of sympathy and male

homosociality. The first, sympathy, I argue, is not just sentiment. Rather, by the standards of David Hume and Adam Smith, it also possesses an intellectual dimension. Through characters' serial metalistening into linked narratives, Shelley foregrounds the character of Gothic reading as social-relational through narrative community. Each auditor interacts with oral text in order to gain new knowledge about and grasp of the world and human experience. Listening is not just social, though. Auditory participation constitutes quasi-scientific "research" into psychology. All of *Frankenstein*'s characters practice this branch of knowledge in that they diligently probe others' psyches. We and Margaret read the letters to grasp why Walton rides the heights of emotional excess. Walton seeks comprehension of his friend's misery. In deciding to override his disgust for the Creature, Victor desires to know the rationale for his creation's pleas for a fair hearing. From the monster, we hear his attentive role in discovering the history behind Felix and Safie's relationship. Shelley's investigative tales enclose diverse psychological examinations, with no two exactly alike: overwrought romantic emotion, wretched depression, rage and vindictiveness, and formation of an unlikely romance. In its actualization as narrative, *Frankenstein* is multiple "readings" not only of experiences, but markedly different motives. Each listener investigates cause of behavior, whether excessive despondency or murderous impulses. In the work, engagement with narrative is not merely casual social exchange; for Shelley's characters, this activity becomes empirical research into experience.

Engagement with narrative takes a fairy-tale turn in chapter 3 with *Jane Eyre*. Here the project critiques Jane's reading of Thornfield's space and evasive residents' explanations through the lens of the tale of Bluebeard's House. In its argument, the chapter asserts that Jane is a Bluebeard's Wife who proxies for the reader in approaching and unlocking narrative space with the "keys" of inquiry, intellect, and conjectural logic. I argue here that the author becomes a

Bluebeard figure who endows the reader with the "keys" of data to the door of text and invites her to keep reading with the bait of insufficient information. Jane and the Wife become inquisitive investigators into their respective domestic environments, participating in the narrative of space both known and unknown. During her time at Thornfield, Jane is a sometime scientist probing causation, agency, and material evidence (candle, veil). At one point, she even acts the attorney, carefully interrogating Grace Poole about the fire. Where Bluebeard hides female corpses, Rochester conceals a wife socially nonexistent and "dead" to him relationally. Though dead or of negligible of value in others' eyes, these concealed women constitute threatening hidden narrative space within otherwise tranquil domestic space. Using feminist and postcolonial scholarship, notably Spivak, my analysis also argues that Jane's realization as participatory reader involves erasure or at least diminution of the colonial Other. Furthermore, the argument addresses a topic less often considered in feminist theory, namely, inter-female rivalry in a patriarchal structure. Bertha Mason is not the only threat to Jane; Fairfax and Poole collaborate with Rochester to suppress the true narrative of the third floor.

The final chapter picks up and foregrounds what the previous three chapters imply: Gothic is a form of detective fiction. Its chosen works, *Dracula* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, are detective stories. Each also encloses multiple investigative narratives that also interconnect. Utterson, Van Helsing, and Seward participate actively in empirical explorations of both human beings and creatures who constitute narrative alterity. In this chapter, I argue that Victorian interest in science and positivism endowed Gothic with an investigative flavor. Here the argument begins with characterizing both writing forms as an outside/inside dialectic. Because each uses retrogressive plotline and detaches effect from cause, both Gothic and detective writing emblematize movement from outside (nescience) to inside (knowledge). I

then move to treating the attorney Utterson as he navigates empirically what Stevenson constructs as the phases of a criminal investigation. Additionally, he is an outsider to information and knowledge that others withhold from him. Stoker's Van Helsing and Seward, men of science, both act the role of detective-doctor in locating a vampire and a lunatic's psychic core, respectively. In his representation, Stoker depicts Seward and Helsing as emblems of two different reading "logics." Where Seward incarnates the algorithmic inflexibility of modern science, his aged counterpart embodies premodern heurism. Seward's logic participates in and reads Renfield's tortured psychic narrative. In so doing, he partakes of one half of the supernatural bond—itself a narrative—between vampire and madman. The other half rests in the older doctor's investigative engagement with Dracula through narratives of criminal typology, the vampire's history, and tradition and superstition. There is a way to "read" Dracula: through modern science (criminological markers), erudition (Dracula's history), and Old-Country folklore.

CHAPTER I

MIND GAMES: CATHERINE MORLAND AND

THE OVERSTIMULATED INTELLECT

Some scholars on *Northanger Abbey* cast Catherine Morland as an immature, witless dupe who blindly and uncritically adopts Gothic novelistic tropes and conventions. What their approach really critiques is an apparently undeveloped and undiscerning reader experience. As a reader, particularly a consumer of Gothic novels, she seems unable to read life and people correctly, rather performing that reading through the lenses of literature; she seems incapable of understanding that life is not always or necessarily mimetic of novelistic portrayals. Catherine, they argue, cannot tell reality from fantasy and that the novel is about her growing up and learning what is real, what not. Routledge and Chapman point to Catherine's "inappropriately non-literary" reading, in which "the novels she reads become a blueprint for "real-world" experiences" (2). Catherine, they say, is a poor reader who must progress to learning how to read accurately, discriminatingly, and realistically. Jung Hwa Oh calls her "one of those misguided readers whose thoughtless response to novels confuses fiction and living instead of bringing them to "the most thorough knowledge of human nature""(658). At times, she comes across to us as a shallow, frivolous teenager who falls unwittingly for everything people and books tell her is true. Scholarship is divided, though, as to when Catherine matures. Most place this juncture at the Abbey visit in the second half of the novel following Henry's reprimand for her entertaining suspicious thoughts. A minority are willing to position the display of some intellectual abilities earlier in the work, at the Bath visit.

This direction of thought that paints Catherine as a dupe treats her one-dimensionally. Closer examination yields a different picture: a young lady who at times actually exercises her

intellect to the point of demonstrating some powers of discrimination. Contrary to what these scholars tell us, Catherine does not buy or adopt uncritically all that she sees and hears. Rather, she demonstrates the ability to inquire and to reason. In fact, throughout Austen's work, we receive a portrait of a young lady who possesses some native intelligence, an intuitive instinct that tells her when things are not as they should be. David Bell admits to having "underestimated" Catherine, "too quickly dismissing her as a lightweight" (Bell). Our laughter keeps us from giving her a second look: "The Gothic parody also gets in the way of appreciating Catherine" (Bell). There are even times that Catherine exhibits the powers of inductive and deductive reasoning, cause-effect logic, and the "chronicling" trait of a historical mind. Sarah Tindal Kareem, whose work identifies curiosity as part of wonder, argues that "one might consume marvels while maintaining one's critical faculties" (9). Her research foregrounds intellect and the use of it through the linguistic context of Austen's time, namely, that the contemporary definition of *wonder* incorporated the ideas of curiosity and the desire to learn and know, a wonder *about*, not just at, objects (8). Catherine is able to exercise powers of cogitation vis-à-vis what she experiences. Duquette notes that Austen works from "an astute awareness of an expanded definition of sublimity operating within the works of her female contemporaries," namely, the "contemplative sublime" (Duquette).

While the reader may find Catherine humorous in her adoption of Gothic tropes and conventions as real, Catherine does in fact show some powers of intellect, starting with her time in Bath. Certainly, the teenager's overuse of imagination and even conspiracy theorizing is humorous. To be sure, we find laughable the misguided and unmentored use of her reason to create an elaborately ludicrous picture of the Abbey's inhabitants. However ridiculously *Northanger Abbey* may characterize Catherine as a reader, Austen implicitly foregrounds the use

of intellect in Gothic reading. In her introduction to the novel, Marilyn Butler observes of the Gothic novel that it possessed "a sophisticated format, based on conversation, or the Socratic philosophical dialogue," and "enjoyed intellectual prestige" (xvii). Butler goes further, investing Austen's novel with highbrow appeal: "It is, in fact, time to acknowledge *Northanger Abbey* for what it is: … quizzically intellectual about fiction itself" (xvi). As a reader, Catherine uses her mind, albeit a hyperaroused intellect, to employ Gothic conventions as a way to understand her world.

Some scholars invest Catherine with an empirical spirit, a young lady of some mental ability to question and to test: "I don't think we have to worry about Catherine. Throughout the Bath chapters, she proves an excellent empiricist who never interprets reality through the paradigm of fiction, and who learns pretty quickly to read that unstable text, John Thorpe" (Bander 51). Mooneyham argues that Catherine "learns to be a good eighteenth-century empiricist, judging actions instead of words" (1). To Zlotnick, Catherine is a logician with an inquisitive character. She "searches, surmises, hypothesizes" (289). Catherine has the intellectual curiosity to seek and discover. Bankes implies that Catherine reflects the mind and character of her creator. Austen, she notes, places value on "an open, questioning mind," and invests her characters with the spirit of inquiry: "Austen gives her heroines the task of forming the correct opinions, judgments, and theories on the world and the people around them. Catherine's empirical approach emphasizes the need to look at particular details, to question the "universal truths," and to be always ready to revise opinions in the light of new evidence" (Bankes). As such, Austen's reader encounters a heroine who employs both novelistic and extranovelistic data for her surmisive activities. Furthermore, Catherine exercises that mind in the areas of aesthetics, history, and human and social behavior. Cerebration involves inductive and deductive reasonings.

Catherine applies this empirical spirit during her visit to Northanger Abbey. Until Henry reproves her, she continually employs inductive and deductive reasoning to understand its life. The Abbey and its history are a series of Chinese boxes for that inquisitive character.**1** During her narrative progression, Austen charts a certain linearity of positivist fixation in her heroine. Catherine's inquisitive drives focus first on objects and the material (chest, cabinet, scroll). She moves later to events and finally to core concealed intent, the interiority of mind, particularly General Tilney's. Each serves as an enclosed puzzle piece that she must unlock to determine hidden motives or diabolical truth within. Intellectual investigation occurs in two phases. Early in her visit, she directs her empiricism toward the external only. Chest, cabinet, and scroll exist as mysteries. Catherine does not connect these objects with any evil motives; rather, they serve only to affirm the existence of Gothicity in the extraliterary realm—nothing more. All these things ostensibly have are a strange cypher, an inexplicably broken handle, and cryptic text. In the second stage, Catherine progresses from exteriority to analyzing for Gothicity in motive and mind. The Tilney family, especially the General, becomes a Chinese box whose layers she must pierce to determine concealed insidiousness. Catherine engages in what Lisa Zunshine terms "mind-reading" or Theory of Mind. That is, she forms conclusions about motives and thoughts through outward behavior and words. Zunshine notes of readers such as Catherine that "we engage in our own constant construction of possible states of mind of the people we encounter—negotiating among their own reports of how they feel, others' guesses of what they might feel, and our own intuitions of what a smile, a turn, a pause, a rise may mean in a given context" (24).

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1 Chinese box: a puzzle box that encloses a number of smaller boxes, each of which one must open to access the next piece inside.

Analysis is insufficient. After Catherine has examined the pieces, her mind must labor further with connection of those data through attributive activity. Uncovering evil is not adequate. She must then link that evil with the General. Her empirical impulses ultimately penetrate the multi-layered murkiness of history. To Catherine, the Abbey is a conflicted narrative space. Superficially, all is innocent and upright. Underneath lays barbarity, cruelty, and evil. Austen's narrative maps out a full range of Catherine's intellectual experience and activity as a progress from engagement with the physical world to reading of mind.

This cerebral manner fashions Catherine Morland into an emblem for the Gothic reader and reading experience. And this is not just for the female reader. She uses her mind and reasoning to create narrative and fill in gaps by helping to compose storyline where there is missing or deficient information. Catherine participates in creating missing narrative or even bringing submerged or unwritten narrative to the surface and applying it to the immediate story. Occasionally, the closure of a gap arises from her subjectivity and the active use of it in producing "text" during reading or a "reading" of a situation, that is, insertion of her subjective nature into either narrative that others have created or even story that she creates herself visually from imagination and prospective mental record.

As part of her readings of text and people, Catherine employs methods of sequential logic. Austen's word choices throughout *Northanger Abbey* underscore her heroine's predisposition to act the logician. While Catherine does occasionally form unrealistic, foolish conjectures, Austen takes care to chart the teenager's thought processes and leaps in reasoning. At times, she uses inductive logic, observing and gathering discrete pieces of data and weaving them into general conclusions. Henry's reprimand accurately characterizes how Catherine's mind operates, how she "infer[s]" and "surmise[s]" diabolical intentions behind his mother's

death (185-86). At other times, she deduces from universals in order to understand specific situations and behaviors. In each case, Catherine uses logic to complete gaps in comprehension. Sometimes she provides information of her own fantastical fabrication to close what observation and input cannot. Nelson asserts that "[o]n an epistemic reading, *Northanger Abbey* is about the maturation of Catherine's strategies for assessing evidence and advancing truth claims" (194-95).

FOREGROUNDING THE CEREBRAL: CATHERINE AND THE NOVEL

The narrator describes Catherine as 'ignorant," "uninformed," and sometimes "stupid" (16, 19). Some scholars who write on *Northanger Abbey* characterize *The Mysteries of Udolpho* as a silly, unrealistic work on which Catherine comes to rely for her understanding of the world, of people, of places. According to this research, the teenager's reliance on the novel for reading the world around her represents poor intellectual abilities in two areas: reading fiction *as* fiction (not reality) as well as interpreting the actions and motivations of others. Yet, even Austen's own words and characterizations suggest a girl of some mental capabilities. Moreover, Austen's defense of novels implies that Radcliffe's work is not as unsound an epistemic foundation as it first appears.

From its beginning, the work foregrounds the significance of intellect and its active employment. Whether she discusses novels as art form or portraitizes Catherine, the author emphasizes the role of viable interpretive faculties in experience and aesthetics. Austen's depiction of her heroine's latent aptitudes commences early in the work. Catherine's upbringing suggests something of intellectual abilities, although not necessarily or completely of the "book smarts" that characterize the more educated. Barron characterizes the heroine as having "native common sense" (62). Knights notes her "intuitive" understanding of the novel's "silent dramas"

(24-25). From early childhood, Catherine does not fit social norms in such areas as socialization, female education, and play. She is one of the elder Morland daughters "left to shift for themselves" (17), suggesting that her mother allows Catherine to learn without a great amount of mentorship or parental guidance. Foregoing domestic pursuits, she plays a number of outside sports usually reserved for boys. Her education about the world occurs in peer play. As Sara Whitecotton notes, "Austen rejects female conformity. … By portraying Catherine as a non-conventional female character, Austen rejects the normal social customs for women and attempts to change them with her writing" (Whitecotton). Giffin observes that "tomboy" Catherine "resisted … attempts at gender conformity or female stereotyping" (49). It is reasonable to assume that her time in independent play and extradomestic socialization gives Catherine some social intelligence.

The mentoring that she does receive affords her some culture. What some would deride as a superficial education contains authors of weight and sophistication, even elegance, providing Catherine with some learning of substance: Shakespeare, Pope, Gray. She must have an adequate mind to commit these pieces to memory. In fact, her improvement was "sufficient—and in many other points she came off exceedingly well" (18). James Nelson has noted that while her education and learning are not stellar, "nevertheless [she] has memorized a respectable amount of poetry, become tolerably competent in writing, accounts, and French" (188). She can read sonnets even if she cannot write them. Catherine can even appreciate music.

The purported "lowbrow" character of the Gothic novel as Catherine's source for understanding her world suggests that Catherine is a poor reader. Oh and Routledge and Chapman argue that her reading, abundant as it is, prepares her inadequately to face a world that does not mimetically reproduce what novels contain as far as narrative, motivations, and tropes.

Catherine's dependence on *The Mysteries of Udolpho* becomes a dismissive argument for the

novel's exaggerated and overblown characterization of people and places and her immature

reliance on books to "read" the world accurately. What this argument overlooks is that Austen

actually defends the novel in general as intellectual toil and cerebral substance. In her famous

defense of novels, Austen foregrounds and recognizes the presence of the mind, not just the

affect, in novels.

　　In that defense, Austen contrasts herself and her kindred authors with authors outside the

novel-writing field. Her circle are intellectuals too. The novelist produces a "work in which the

greatest powers of the mind are displayed" (36-37), but there is "a general wish of decrying the

capacity and undervaluing the labour of the novelist" (36). Novels reflect cerebral values, having

"genius, wit, and taste to recommend them" (36).　The definitions of *wit* and *taste* for Austen's

time were "mental faculties, intellectual powers" and "discernment," respectively (OED). In fact,

writers such as Austen spend their talents and abilities in producing the mind's finest use of its

gifts, "the liveliest effusions of wit and humor conveyed to the world in the best chosen

language" (37). Novelists exercise more of their brains and talents, and use them more

productively and creatively in comparison with unoriginal compilers and hacks, with "the

abilities of the nine-hundredth abridger of the History of England, or of the man who collects and

publishes in a volume some dozens of lines Milton, Pope, and Prior" (36). Where compilers

waste their intellectual abilities in uncreative, hackneyed labor, the novelist employs her mind

productively. Even more, mere compilation and republication of previous work, Austen implies,

downplays the intellectual achievement that novel writing can be for women. Multiple editings

of Milton, Pope, "a chapter from Sterne," or other male authors demand little of the mental

capacities compared with what women novelists must exercise in creative and original work (36).

While *Northanger Abbey* appears to ridicule *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and its kindred Gothic works as unrealistic and ludicrous, Austen's defense does not bear out this reading. Works in her trade bear more intellectual value than just in language. Novels, she says, demonstrate "the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineations of its varieties" (37). Here Austen lauds the literary form for its cerebral insight; the novel reflects the product of observation and thoughtful experience. It is inconsistent for Austen to indict and degrade Radcliffe's work after she has previously to this assertion chosen not to engage in the "ungenerous and impolitic" self-condemnation of novel writing of which others of her profession have partaken (36). One might wonder why Austen would ridicule *The Mysteries of Udolpho* after so vehemently endorsing novel writing as an admirable and respectable pursuit. Bander argues that Austen does not parody, but, rather, defends Radcliffe's work, allowing Henry Tilney to defend the work, and suggests that, after all, the novel is a "reliable guide to human nature" (49, 57). Linda Hutcheon argues that parody acts to re-engineer discussion of the meaning and impact of a parodied work. Referring to parody as "trans-contextualization," a removal of a parodied form to a new setting, or "refunctioning," Hutcheon sees this form as introducing "another form of coded discourse" that transforms the "target" text with new dialogue (16). Parody, she asserts, preserves continuity between original artwork and its parody, but also maintains critical distance and "is also capable of transformative power in creating new syntheses" (20). Hutcheon's argument has significance for Austen's treatment of Catherine's reading experience; Radcliffe's work, far from being an unrealistic read on the world, is part of a new dialogue that characterizes the novel as accurately reflective of human behavior. Moreover,

why would Austen then ridicule a character of her own creation who reads what Austen has most vigorously defended? If novels are intellectually superior, as she asserts, or at least solid, reading works such as Radcliffe's would do her heroine good.

Catherine employs Radcliffe's work and its ilk to read others' behavior and motivations; would this work not limn out motivations and character at least somewhat accurately? Catherine's time at the Abbey bears this defense out to some degree, as we discover the General's ability to commit unkindness. Wyett, who asserts that female quixotic reading granted women "intellectual authority," argues that Catherine's quixotism serves her well in her judgements: "her initial perceptions are often not far from the "truth" of her social reality" (262, 268). Cordón observes that *The Mysteries of Udolpho* helps Catherine decode the General's hidden ability to act unkindly: "After reading the novel, Catherine has a way to understand her own feelings of discomfort around General Tilney … . [S]he is right to be suspicious about his charming and approving social façade" (51). Against the charges of lack of realism, Austen goes on to attack the *Spectator* for the very same things of which critics have found novels guilty: "the substance of its papers so often consisting in the statement of improbable circumstances, unnatural characters, and topics of conversation, which no longer concern any one living" (37). As a periodical, *The Spectator* fails as a highbrow work for its inability to separate fantasy from fact about events, people, speech, and modernity. Novels, she implies, are no more unrealistic than other popular nonfiction texts of her time. It also disappoints in her estimation to elevate its language to sophistication, and has become intellectually untenable as a work. The vocabulary is "coarse" and reflects poorly on the times (37). That Austen calls novels a "thorough" knowledge of human nature contradicts an accepted picture of Catherine as a dunce; rather, Austen's writing portrays her heroine not as flat, one-dimensional pasteboard, but complex.

CATHERINE: EMPIRICIST AND THINKER

One image of the Gothic reader portrays a textual consumer who has divorced herself from her environment and buried herself inside the experience of the novel. Austen's characterization of Catherine does not support this picture—at least not completely. If a hallmark of intelligence is the ability to observe the world and evaluate its elements, her heroine has that faculty. By their very nature, inductive and deductive reasoning as well as conjecture assume a mind's intellectual interactivity with its environment. Catherine must use external data in order to process and draw conclusions. Examination of *Northanger Abbey* indicates that Gothic novels provide some, but definitely not all, of those data respecting aesthetics and human behavior. Some of Catherine's conclusions are extranovelistic. For example, many of her inferences during her Bath sojourn arise independently of any Gothic novels; *Udolpho* does not even figure once into these events. Conclusions about social behavior are purely her own.

Scholars seem to miss the opportunity to see Catherine as an aesthete, that the appreciation of and desires to see the lovely and eye-catching things of the world around her value landscapes, structures, and beauty. Some of that value arises from her reading of Gothic novels. Other aspects of appreciation lead to an empirical spirit of inquiry that yearns to discover what wonders and marvels architecture holds for the observer. More than just affective, Catherine is the intellectual that gestures toward taste and values beauty in her environment. Recalling *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, she remarks to the Tilneys: "I never look at [Beechen Cliff] … without thinking of the south of France" (102). Though she has never been out of England, Catherine is able to generalize from Radcliffe's work and a place she has never seen, except in text, to a place she has seen, the reverse of generalization's normal sequence. Moreover, she uses that extrapolative activity to bridge her understanding from the smaller space and environment of text

to the larger world of natural setting and British landscape: "I only mean what I have read about" (102). Catherine is able to think transgeographically, appreciating landscape aesthetics wherever they may occur, whether in text or in real life. Austen even grants to her heroine a measure of respect, commendation, and forbearance from parody sufficient to make Catherine that aesthete. In fact, usually criticized for being indiscriminate in thinking and taste, she comes to exercise discriminating abilities in her (e)valuation of beauty. The Beechen Cliff conversation turns to drawing:

> [A] lecture on the picturesque immediately followed, in which [Henry's] instructions were so clear that she soon began to see beauty in every thing admired by him, and her attention was so earnest, that he became perfectly satisfied of her having a great deal of taste. … Catherine was so hopeful a scholar, that when they gained the top of Beechen Cliff, she voluntarily rejected the whole city of Bath as unworthy to make part of a landscape. (107)

Catherine uses *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, particularly its eminent descriptions and narrative about landscape, as an epistemological foundation and smaller text space from which to extrapolate to the larger world and on which to base her valuation of landscape and pulchritude in both realms.

When she learns of Blaize Castle, her curiosity awakes. Austen's language choice heavily underscores the spirit of inquiry that drives Catherine. Interestingly, in her learning about Blaize, she at first seems expresses the empiricist's bit of skepticism as to whether it might conform to the descriptions of castles that she has learned to appreciate in Radcliffe's work:

> "Blaize Castle? … "[W]hat is that?"
> "The finest place in England …"
> "What, is it really a castle, an old castle?"
> "But is it like what one reads of?"
> "Exactly—the very same."
> "But now really—are there towers and long galleries?"
> "By dozens."
> "Then I should like to see it."
> …

> "I should like to see the castle, but may we go all over it? may we go up every staircase,
> And into every suite of rooms?
> "Yes, yes, every hole and corner."
> …
> On the other hand, the delight of exploring an edifice like Udolpho, as her fancy repre-
> sented Blaize Castle to be, was such a counterpoise of good [to being with the Tilneys],
> as might console her for almost any thing. (81-83)

The castle becomes a narrative and text which she desires to explore carefully and exhaustively, participating in that narrative with a thorough quest by "reading" Blaize for herself just as she has "read" the castle of Udolpho. As the quester, she gauges her happiness and its extent on the opportunity to explore Blaize. Catherine holds to the associative logic that if a = c and b = c, then a must equal c. If Udolpho is a castle and Blaize is a castle, Blaize must be like Udolpho, or even Udolpho itself comes alive. Hermansson notes that Catherine, in her own way a logician, repeatedly uses analogy, "whereby she draws on "like" situations … [that] supplement her reading of the world in which remains inexperienced" (344). "Catherine is keen to see Blaize Castle once its character is promised to be just as its name connotes. … Catherine makes Blaize Castle, unseen, to approximate Udolpho, which has at least been read" (344). According to Hermansson, Catherine reasons by analogy, the "rhetoric of likeness" (344). The same empirical spirit applies to the desire to explore anything that even hints of Udolphoesque character. This spirit is so strong that Catherine even is not sure which structure she wants to investigate, castles or abbies: "To see and explore either the ramparts and keep of one, or the cloisters of the other, had been for many weeks a darling wish, though to be more than the visitor of an hour, had seemed too nearly impossible for desire" (134). This attitude carries over to her quest to experience the Abbey and its layout. On the carriage ride, "every bend in the road was expected with solemn awe to afford a glimpse of its massy walls of grey stone, rising amidst a grove of ancient oaks, with the last beams of the sun playing in beautiful splendor on its high Gothic

windows" (152). Exploring the Abbey was "what she much wished for" (171). Catherine has an appreciation for aesthetics, not just affect, but intellectual valuation of beauty, even if they are the exaggerated fancies of Gothic reading experience. Duquette argues that although Austen parodies the Gothic, she "grants Catherine a degree of correct judgment regarding the aesthetics of Gothic architecture" (Duquette).

Although Catherine is not by any stretch of the imagination the most intelligent of thinkers and observers, she does exhibit certain powers of native intelligence and reasoning. These abilities demonstrate her capability either of concluding certain things correctly or at least of questioning what appears at face value to be true. While it is true that at times she falls prey to the deceptions of Isabella and John, at other times Catherine is able to reason certain things through logic. While she may not be a genius by any stretch of the imagination, Catherine is an intellectual in her own way and right.

This reasoning ability extends into her various relationships and into certain incidents at Bath. At the Pump-Room, after having met Henry, she sees him coming toward her with an unknown lady, and Austen charts a thought process that threads together various sense data and input as well as previous observation:

> He was talking with interest to a fashionable and pleasing-looking young woman, … whom Catherine immediately guessed to be his sister; thus unthinkingly throwing away a fair opportunity of considering him lost to her forever. But guided only by what was simple and probable, it had never entered her head that Mr. Tilney could be married; he had not behaved, he had not talked, like the married men to whom she had been used; he had never mentioned a wife, and he had acknowledged a sister. From these circumstances sprang the instant conclusion of his sister's now being by his side. (52)

Austen has written this sequence of events as a chain of logic, with language reflecting that sequential thinking. We find Catherine piecing together facts and observations from past encounters, and through different inputs. In fact, they "guide" her thoughts. Notably, Catherine is

able to perform these ratiocinations despite having known Henry only a short time and ignorant

of much of his life. Catherine makes her "conclusion" from two things. First, she follows the

"simple" as Occam's Razor would dictate.[1] Additionally, there is the law of averages, the

"probable." This event demonstrates Catherine's ability to reason out according to both the said

and the unspoken. She had listened to Henry's speech and found certain information missing,

namely, the absence of a wife. That speech, however, did include the mention of a sister. Verbal

cues are not the only thing she has observed; Henry has displayed nonverbal, or behavior,

language. He "had not behaved" like a married man.

Catherine has also displayed several other ratiocinative powers. As an empiricist and sense

observer, she has collected information from the past, and not just from Henry's previous speech.

As with her conclusions about the safety of her carriage ride, she is able to draw upon facts in her

background. Catherine reasons very much from the experiential, noting sensual data from

previous personal encounters. He does not conduct himself in the same way as "married men to

whom she had been used." Here Catherine exercises the power to generalize or extrapolate,

reasoning from part to whole, or whole from part. That is, she has been accustomed to watch and

listen to married men, found certain patterns of speech and behavior, and generalized these to her

conclusions about Henry. Some of this reasoning activity has occurred by negatives, or reverse

logic.[2] That is, she logics out certain positives either by silence or by things that have not existed.

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[1] Occam's Razor: developed by 14th-century logician William of Ockham, the Razor boils down to an easy principle: keep it simple. The Razor dictates that Catherine has removed (or dismissed) all but the easiest conclusions to make. In solving a problem or understanding or explaining something, one should avoid multiplicity. Rather, one should remove the unnecessary from consideration; the simplest answer is best.   [2] By *reverse logic*, I mean proving that

Henry had "not" talked and had "not" behaved like a married man. He "never' mentioned a wife. Catherine reasons that failure to speak of something or to behave in a certain manner could mean its opposite or that something does not exist, else the reasonable person would have mentioned or acted in such a way.

Catherine is able to draw upon her background inferentially using those whom she knows well and observing their conduct. Kareem, who characterizes her as a "rational thinker," notes *Northanger Abbey*'s emphasis on a reader's "enacting the empiricist assumption that first-hand experience is the basis of knowledge" (197, 204) Using powers of generalization and extrapolation through knowledge of a few, a small part of humanity, she is able to form conclusions about the whole of humankind. Her life experiences, as short as her life has been, arises as the touchstone against which to measure truth-value. Her family—as well as any childhood friends she has made--becomes the foundation on which she fashions conclusions, using them as standards of behavior. Her innocence of Thorpe's ability to lie, while some scholars consider it to be naiveté that makes her a dupe, also serves as a purity that allows her freely and without impediment to ferret out logical contradictions and deceptions:

> [S]he knew not how to reconcile two such very different accounts of the same thing; for she had not been brought up to understand the propensities of a rattle … . Her own family were plain matter-of-fact people, who seldom aimed at wit of any kind; her father, at the utmost, being contented with a pun, and her mother with a proverb; they were not in the habit therefore of telling lies to increase their importance, or asserting at one moment what they would contradict the next." (64)

Catherine's upbringing allows her to play the empiricist, with her family, friends, and home as the laboratory in which to form certain inferences and conclusions about life, humankind,

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(continued from the previous page) something exists when nothing contradicts that existence. Essentially, we find that something exists because nothing says that it does not exist.

behavior, and truth and reality.

Austen's occasional usage of the language of logic during the first half of *Northanger Abbey* belies the usual assumption by scholars that Austen lampoons Catherine's thought processes. Early on, her heroine already is exercising both inductive and deductive abilities through and about social situations and truisms. Separated from her party and acquaintances at the Pump Room, "from the whole she deduced this useful lesson, that to go previously engaged to a ball, does not necessarily increase either the dignity or enjoyment of a young lady" (55). Catherine exercises cause-and-effect logic, or the opposite, namely, that a certain cause does not absolutely and deterministically lead to a certain consequence. In fact, Austen's choice of "necessarily" recalls the philosophical term *necessity*. Employment of the word "deduce" underscores Catherine's drawing down from the general given that accompaniment to a social event does not guarantee pleasure. This general or universal she then applies to the more specific event to which she has been subject, namely, this particular social event. Engagement to someone for a social event does not guarantee pleasure or dignity; this specific event has not brought pleasure, and therefore she has not received honor or felt pleased.

Before she even has met General Tilney, Catherine already has learned to entertain doubts when circumstances and behaviors are dubious and ambiguous, when actions and words do not harmonize. Far from being a mindless young lady, Catherine logically and correctly determines experientially that the boorish, boastful John Thorpe cannot be trusted in his speech. Thorpe boasts about his expertise with horses that show wild spirit but conveniently are docile in his able hands; he mentions that James's carriage is unstable and unsafe. Catherine exercises common sense through experience and past observation about human relationships:

> Catherine, though she could not help wondering that with such perfect command of his horse, he should think it necessary to alarm her with a relation of its tricks, congratulated

> herself sincerely on being under the care of so excellent a horseman … .
>
> …
>
> [J]oining to this, the consideration, that he would not really suffer his sister and his friend to be exposed to a danger from which he might easily preserve them, she concluded at last, that he must know the carriage to be in fact perfectly safe, and therefore would alarm herself no longer. (61, 64)

Catherine plays the pragmatist, "joining" one link to the next in a chain of reasoning. She "concludes at last," indicating an inference arrived at after stages of data and determined facts. Far from being naïve, she exercises practical logic in seeing that words do not match up with visual evidence. Gallop notes in his work on Aristotelianism and Austen, including her "common-sense intuitions," that "Aristotle's recommendation of the *practical* intellect is central to all her novels … [and] it is exercised by her women at least as capably as her men" (Gallop). In fact, she learns to value her senses, and learns to credit conduct, over words.

Furthermore, Catherine reasons from patterns that have established themselves. For example, from past observation, she has correctly reasoned that family and loved ones do not expose each other to danger without good reason. Catherine also reasons a whole from a part, that is, using her family—and observations about family—as a basis or foundation from which to judge the truth and fashion inferences about behavior. Inductive and deductive reasoning have now applied themselves to another relationship beyond that with Henry:

1. John Thorpe has lied or contradicted himself in the past about the drinking at Oxford

2. His statements about Oxford are questionable at best (64); he does not make clear what he wants others to understand

3. John Thorpe's words about the horse and the carriage do not harmonize with reality

4. John Thorpe cannot be trusted with his assertions and claims

Catherine is able to exercise common sense as to what is plausible, what veracious. She asks for evidence, not mere assertions; reality and experience are more creditable. More importantly,

because he "did not excel in giving those clearer insights" and does not excel in "making those things plain which he had before made ambiguous," Catherine learns to trust her own judgment over those of others (64). Because others can be confusing in speech and action, or between their own words and behavior, which created epistemological incertitude, she learns more to listen to the inner voice: "Little as Catherine was in the habit of judging for herself, and unfixed as were her general notions of what men ought to be, she could not entirely repress a doubt, … of his being altogether completely agreeable. It was a bold surmise" (65). Catherine is able to make her conclusions, reason out for herself with native intuition, when things do not accord with what she understands to be reality. And, in the first of several instances, the inference is "bold," a stretch of her mind. Austen continually casts Catherine as a thinker who can draw inferences, and draw them reasonably.

From her encounters with John Thorpe, we find Catherine capable of contesting authority or, more particularly, of resisting authoritative assertions merely because they seem authoritative or because they are asserted as so. We find her resistant to adopting some assertions and claims wholeheartedly or just because someone states such to be a reality. After he insists that he has checked with the Tilneys for permission to forego her engagement to walk, Catherine takes it on herself to confirm the truth of his statement, especially after he has lied about this fact previously. The discussion about the amount of drinking at Oxford is a telling scene. After John claims that an increase in alcohol consumption would make England healthier, she rejoins, "I cannot believe it" (62). Catherine is unwilling to accept John's implicit definition of consumption at his and James's rooms. While he might operate from the meaning of drinking as not much, she works from the definition that any drinking is drinking. Even more, she operates on a different understanding involving degree and extent. John believes that there is little or no

drinking in "the general rate" (63). "It does give a general notion," she retorts, "and that is, that you all drink a great deal more wine than I thought you did" (63). That Catherine challenges—or can challenge—assertions and falsely authoritative claims Austen makes sure to impress upon us at the conclusion of this exchange. That she fails to accept completely statements just because they exist Austen shows us as Catherine's mind fights to maintain its autonomous beliefs. We are told that "Catherine was left, when [their exchange] ended, with rather a strengthened belief of there being a great deal of wine drank (sic) in Oxford" (63); all of this time with him "induced her, in some small degree, to resist such high authority, and to distrust his powers of giving universal pleasure" (65). In Aristotelian language, Austen tells us that her heroine has inductively come to the conclusion about a "universal": John has not given her enjoyment in several different specifics, situations or encounters, so will not provide her with overall gratification.[3] Catherine's encounters with John Thorpe afford us a picture of a young girl who is quite capable of thinking for herself.

Catherine Morland usually projects the image of uncritically and mindlessly adopting the fabrications of Gothic conventions and applying them unthinkingly to the world around her. The fictive creations of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, according to these arguments, so overbear Catherine's imagination that she cannot separate fact from fantasy. The text of *Northanger Abbey* argues otherwise, for in different sections of the work she actually hesitates or outright refuses to accept certain fictive tropes, knowing them to be unrealistic. Her attitude toward the histories that she reads yields a contradictory, almost doublethink, perspective regarding them.

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[3] Aristotle's philosophy treats classifiable things and ideas in the light of *genus* (general or universal) and *species* (specific example of a genus). Plato's *Dialogues* did the same thing.

During her walk with the Tilneys, Catherine explains what she likes and dislikes about the histories that she has to read:

> I read it a little as a duty, but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars or pestilences, in every page, the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all—it is very tiresome; and yet I often think it odd that it should be so dull, for a great deal of it must be invention. The speeches that are put into the heroes' mouths, their thoughts and designs—the chief of all this must be invention, and invention is what delights me in other books. (104)

While she does delight in fiction, and with it the fantastical and romantic nature that it can bring, Catherine knows that history can be fabrication. She is aware that history can be linguistic and textual manipulation. That authors can place certain words and ideas in certain mouths that may not have said or represented them Catherine understands to be history's potential toward misattribution. In fact, she demonstrates a comprehension that this misapplication extends to both words and motivations; authors may in fact conflate truth with falsehood. History may be wrong, she grasps, as to whether a certain person spoke a certain way or that a certain speech. Her use of the word *must*, recalling the philosophical term *of necessity*, indicates her full awareness, a full cognizance, of the reality and nature of invention. Her mere use of the word *invention* indicates that cognizance that books contain and even perpetuate unreality, an awareness that distinguishes truth from falsity. Even as Catherine declares her willingness to accept invention as something that will delight her affectively, she also acknowledges that such fabrication exists and can make things seem true that are not. Even things that we know to be true as occurring in history do not compose the whole of recorded and extant events as authors represent them. Ages past do not just have quarrels, war, or disease. History is more than just men; rather, there is an imbalance in the study of history that omits the fact of women's contributions to humankind's progress.

Catherine's real problem with history lies in her understanding and definition of *invention*, with how writers employ it and with the aesthetics of reading experience. In fact, the actual basis of her critique of invention is aesthetic. Additionally, that objection concerns how intellect and aesthetic synergize. Her complaint respecting this word is contradictory. Imaginative fabrication of historical speeches does not excite her, she says, but "invention is what delights me in other books" (104). Catherine holds a conflicted perspective of invention, particularly invention in narrative. If historians conceptualize and construct oratory in actual historical events, this rhetoric is "dull," "tiresome" (104). Attribution of thoughts and motives here is prosaic, mundane. Conversely, when Gothic narrative exercises imaginative creativity regarding speech, act, and motive, such work arouses her and births unforgettable reader involvement. Eleanor points out the inherent conflict in Catherine's perspective: "Historians, you think, … are not happy in their flights of fancy. They display imagination without raising interest" (104). What Catherine disdains reflects the change in historiography during her time. Hay notes "the steady penetration of erudition" into late eighteenth-century histories (174). Meanwhile, Breisach marks the transformation of historical narrative into a science with methodological leanings (101). Rhetorical invention is not what really bothers Catherine. Rather, it is the *type*. Moreover, her approval rests on the context in which the invention occurs. The "thoughts and designs" that she dislikes in scholarly history excite her in a Gothic Montoni or other villain (104). Here we encounter an additional incongruity in her thinking. She finds erudite history, she says, vexatious and tormenting. Yet, the Gothic novel itself forms and presents a chroniclar history of speech, act, and event. It too charts out "thoughts and designs." *The Mysteries of Udolpho* depicts the history and adventures of Emily St. Aubert's life after her parents' decease. Catherine does not

dislike history itself; rather, it is the *kind* of history she reads and how a writer contextualizes speech and act.

Ultimately, the Beechen Cliff conversation foregrounds Catherine's appreciation of the synergism of intellect and aesthetics for Gothic reading experience. Scholarly history chronicles the mundane actual and real, leaving nothing to the reader's ability to speculate and surmise respecting motive, particularly diabolical intent. Moreover, writers present such history in a straightforward manner. There is no hidden evil for a reader to seek out. Erudition arouses no curiosity because it maps out commonplace experience. Conversely, the mystery inherent in Gothic historical narrative stimulates reader participation because this mode's history conceals enigmas for the hungry reader. For Catherine, exciting historical narrative must be fantasy, not actuality. Furthermore, historical tale that arouses reader intellectual engagement requires aesthetic—not just erudite—appreciation of invention.

Invention also concerns the degree of fabrication. Austen implies that Catherine's desire for reader involvement relies on the quantity—or perceived quantity—of constructedness in text. Facts of history—diseases, wars, pope, kings—do not allure; imagined evil does. Again, Miss Tilney suggests that narrative history is less enticing to Catherine than novels because of a blend between fact and fantasy: "I am … very well contented to take the false with the true. … [A]nd as for the little embellishments you speak of, they are embellishments, and I like them as such" (104-5). It is not enough that invention fabricate. Blending true, factual "heroes" and speeches into a historical narrative pales in comparison with the completely fantastical construction of an *Udolpho*.

Scholars of *Northanger Abbey* argue for and adopt the conclusion that Catherine Morland, in the all too foolish and unthinking avidity of novel reading, blindly accepts Gothic conventions

and tropes. She is too uncritical a reader, the argument goes, to realize that what she reads is not mimetic of real life. Austen's characterization is different from what these scholars say about Catherine. In fact, her heroine does not buy wholeheartedly all conventions just because they are presented to her either by others or by provocative events.

During their carriage ride to the Abbey, Henry teasingly and facetiously spins the yarn of likely events and objects that Catherine is likely to encounter at the Abbey. Henry engages in producing a complete history and chronicle of occurrences that will in all probability transpire to frighten his guest. What both Catherine and the reader experience is something akin to the "invention" of which Catherine spoke during their walk along Beechen Cliff. Catherine had earlier expressed a conflicted attitude toward invention in her history books. Their conversation on the ride also is conflicted. On the one hand, she is indeed caught up in the exciting visuality of affectively stimulating happenings, and forgets momentarily that they are fantasy. On the other, though, we find Catherine realizing that Henry is just as much putting ideas and events into places and people as the historians do into their heroes. Catherine in fact demonstrates periodic resistance to complete acceptance of and belief in Gothic conventions. Henry teases Catherine with an exaggeratedly Gothic picture of the Abbey's interior:

> And are you prepared to encounter all the horrors that a building such as 'what one reads about' may produce?—Have you a stout heart?—Nerves fit for sliding pannels (sic) and tapestry?
> Oh! yes—I do not think I should be easily frightened, because there would be so many people in the house—and besides, it has never been uninhabited and left deserted for years, and then the family come back to it unawares, without giving any notice, as generally happens." (149)

While scholars fault Catherine for immaturely fabricating her life from Gothic usages, Henry is the one "inventing" and Catherine the one resisting the invention. If anything, of the two Henry is the one taking his cues from Gothic texts and practicing manufacture of unrealistic usages. Not

only does he fashion a "text" of artificial novelistic figures, but in truth becomes that text, and she contests the realism that he presents. Notably, Catherine has never been to the Abbey, yet knows and understands that it is not deserted or abandoned. She takes as her guidance for the basis of truth the Tilney family itself as well as their discussions as faithfully diligent in tending to the Abbey's grounds and interior. Through the ride, Catherine continues challenging Henry's text and historical invention, protesting her inability to give into the affective response that he insists she will experience and to which she will succumb: "[B]ut this will not happen to me, I am sure"; "But it cannot really happen to me"; "I should be too much frightened to do any such thing" (149-51). Henry invents the "text" and conventions and Catherine challenges his version of them.

Catherine resists accepting typologies and tropes. In fact, she contests both the text of the Gothic novels she reads as well as the text that Henry "writes" for her. In his fanciful narrative, Henry fabricates what will happen as Catherine settles in as a guest:

> [A young lady that visits and] is formally conducted by Dorothy the ancient housekeeper up a different staircase.
> …
> I am sure your housekeeper is not really Dorothy.
> …
> [Henry] was obliged to entreat her to use her own fancy in the perusal of Matilda's woes. Catherine, recollecting herself, grew ashamed of her eagerness, and began earnestly to assure him that her attention had been fixed without the smallest apprehension of really meeting with what he related. (150, 152)

Catherine's resistance to text extends to linguistic challenge to Gothic typological names. He writes the names, and she contests them. Catherine is able to look beyond abstracts and fantastical generalities and think concretely and in realistic specifics.

Though at times Catherine is absorbed in what appears to be a novel brought to life, she does not always believe that she lives—or lives in—a Gothic typology. During the stormy night

that Austen parodically creates for the reader as well as Catherine, the latter employs the more

rational part of her being to determine the nature of events and remain calm, foregoing a

tendency to yield to impressionable fear and anxiety:

> *She* had nothing to dread from midnight assassins or drunken gallants. Henry had
> certainly been in jest in what he had told her that morning.
> …
> She looked around the room. The window curtains seemed in motion. It could be nothing
> but the violence of the wind penetrating through the divisions of the shutters. … [She]
> saw nothing on either low window seat to scare her, and on placing a hand against the
> shutter, felt the strongest conviction of the wind's force. … [S]he scorned the causeless
> fears of an idle fancy. (158-59)

Several logical processes of thought have passed through her mind. Earlier Catherine has

demonstrated the ability to reject false generalities and abstracts when they do not conform to

what she has seen and heard in the world. Moreover, there is a strong cause-and-effect reasoning

that operates to dispel the fear and myth that Gothic novels have produced as to flapping

curtains. Taking circumstances collectively, she inductively logics that there is nothing to fear:

1. The wind moves things.

2. Wind has force, even violence, in its motions.

3. There is a wind tonight.

4. The curtain is moving.

5. It is near a window.

6. The wind is the causation of the movement.

Catherine's checking behind the curtain, an intense empirical spirit of inquiry, occurs as a

metaphor just as much to discover what is behind the veil as what she experienced in her reading

of Radcliffe's work. The curtain serves as a veil that invites further interpretive reading

experience of her environment. Interestingly, in what is to become an emblem of her sojourn at

Northanger Abbey, Catherine seeks to understand violence and its cause, whether it be wind's

vigorous blowing of a curtain or the brutality of a husband's actions toward a helpless and virtuous wife. That she does not completely believe that she lives a Gothic typology we see as she looks around the room and at a fire which Radcliffe would omit from Emily's hearth, but which a servant has prepared as a welcoming warmth to the room: "How glad I am that Northanger is what it is! If it had been like some other places, I do not know that, in such a night as this, I could have answered for my courage: --but now, to be sure, there is nothing to alarm me" (159). Instead of removing herself to a safe distance as a reader and mere observer, Catherine has self-consciously injected her I into the narrative "text" that is Northanger, her room, and her situation. Subjectively, Catherine has singled out the Abbey correctly and accurately not only as not novelistic, but as an ordinary, non-Gothic structure and happening.

BOOKS, FRIENDS, AND ABBEYS:

SPECIAL INVITATIONS TO READ AND "READ" (INTERPRET)

Scholarship about *Northanger Abbey* usually casts Catherine Morland into the role of uncritical thinker and reader who accepts and adopts unthinkingly Gothic conventions and tropes. She does not just interact and participate with her reading; she interacts too much, to the point that she reverses life and novels, each replacing the other inasmuch as she determines reality more from the latter than the former. Yet, throughout *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine is capable of exercising certain independent intellectual abilities that invest Gothic with its cerebral dimension, namely, her desire and ability to insert logic and reason into the making of narrative where gaps in storytelling or the narrative of the world and life occur. She reasons concerning objects, places and spaces, and motivations or thoughts of others. According to Karin Kukkonen, female

quixotic reading such as Catherine's actually contributes to cause-effect logic and causal reasoning. She suggests that

> reading fiction, which serves as an exploration of environments other than the real world, further extends our process of constructing possible causal models, as we configure and reconfigure our probabilities … while exploring storyworlds. Quixotic narratives then address the question of how to integrate the causal models we configure through fiction into a fully causal viewpoint on the world. (56)

Through *Northanger Abbey*, Catherine demonstrates either that she is an intellectual or at least is capable of exercising intellectual abilities in her reading of both books and people. Moreover, we see flashes of the empirical spirit of inquiry in that she asks so many questions and carries on a great amount of introspection throughout the novel.

Gothic writers deliberately insert gaps in narrative as invitations to readers to speculate, to fashion certain conclusions on their own about missing information, and appeal to the intellectual curiosity of their readers. Isabella is an incarnation of Catherine's invitation not just to read, but to speculate. She teases and stirs Catherine's mind, referring to the pleasure and enjoyment of the narrative void that Radcliffe has created in her work: "How delightful! Oh! I would not tell you for the world what is behind the black veil for the world! Are you not wild to know?" (38-39). The veil that Emily St. Aubert must encounter becomes a metaphor for Catherine's reading. The narrative gap itself is a veil that hides certain information that excites and incites her curiosity. Radcliffe has revealed certain things, but has drawn a curtain across the story that her young reader must penetrate. Furthermore, Isabella herself becomes a veil not only in drawing attention to something that she will not divulge, but in deliberately hiding the truth. Isabella serves as a projection of several aspects of the Gothic reading experience. For one thing, she is the narrative gap and storytelling voice—or lack thereof—that "would not tell." Therein lies the paradox of the unvoiced voice that the narrative void represents. Then Isabella also

emblematizes that part of the Gothic reading experience that is the tantalizing of curiosity to know and to speculate. In a sense, she is a projection of Catherine's mind, the latter's private experience with Radcliffe's text. Isabella's promise that "we will read *The Italian* together" becomes an incarnative event in which the excitement of reading with a curious mind accompanies the Gothic reading experience (39). Ultimately, Isabella serves as a Chinese box, at least momentarily, in that her possession of the secret behind Udolpho's veil acts as a second curtain which Catherine could penetrate, but chooses not to.

Catherine herself serves as a veil or, more particularly, her own veil. Her conversational exchange with Isabella reveals the desire to reveal, but yet to draw closed, the curtain at Udolpho. This self-veiling represents that part of Gothic reading that wants the curtain to stay closed so as to afford the mind the opportunity to speculate. Catherine is torn epistemologically with cognitive dissonance, with an intellectually curious desire to know but not to know. Asked if she eagerly wants to know the secret, she responds with a contradictory "Oh! yes, quite; what can it be –But do not tell me—I would not be told upon any account" (39). Furthermore, her desire not to find out yet represents her constructing her own veil. Catherine herself becomes as much her own Chinese box as Isabella or *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, desiring the gap that the veil is and purposely erecting that veil to stimulate excitement. Ultimately, the veil becomes an emblem of agency for Catherine the reader. As a narrative device, it purposely hides the truth in order to encourage and provoke participation in the narrative through speculation as to what is on the other side, the hidden truth. While a reader may want eventually to pull away the curtain, the veil becomes the reader's proactivity and self-empowerment in evoking, in fact, prolonging, curiosity and excitement that leads reading to the ultimate discovery that Gothic texts offer.

Catherine participates in making narrative with the injection of her own subjectivity. Resuming her commentary, she continues to insert herself into the experience of creating part of Radcliffe's story: "I know it must be a skeleton, I am sure it is Laurentina's skeleton. Oh! I am delighted with the book! I should like to spend my whole life on reading it. I assure you, if it had not been to meet you, I would have not come away from it for all the world" (39). Her excited statement about the skeleton, as well as the continual first-person usage, constitutes Catherine's situating of the I into the narrative as part of her reading experience. This injection of self into story also reflects the nature of Catherine as an empiricist, a curious inquirer who wants to test out hypotheses, the kind of perspective found in someone who wants to inquire for "my whole life" and not leave off seeking "for the whole world." Catherine's Gothic reading experience has become a subjective encounter. It is not enough just to read and enjoy text. Even interaction is insufficient; the reader has the opportunity, the invitation, to exert control with insertion of self. As a reader, she has placed herself squarely into the middle of the text. Gothic reading experience is not just about self-empowerment. Agency entails the reader's ability to involve herself intimately in the narrative as part of the storytelling.

Her comments demonstrate more chains of logic whose rationality and probability fall not far from the truth since Udolpho's veil hides a waxen *memento mori*. In almost philosophical and Aristotelian fashion, she employs the strong word *must*, almost as a philosopher deterministically uses the word *necessity*. Part of Gothic reading experience is the interior/exterior, or what is concealed inside and opposed to what is apparent outside, the hidden inside acting as a stimulant to inquiry and speculation. Gothic reader inquisitive spirit must cope with empiricism about spaces. Catherine's curiosity must encounter hidden spaces not just in narrative, but a mediated layer of story void that draws a veil in front of a forbidden space.

Starting from the premise that veils must hide and be intended to hide, otherwise they would not

exist, Catherine tries to unravel the mystery through syllogism, through inductive and deductive

reasoning that is part of Gothic reading. Part of her reasoning, albeit rather specious and almost

sophistic, runs thus: veils hide skeletons, and because this object is a veil, it must hide a skeleton.

Add to this chain of logic that Laurentina is missing, her absence unexplained. Meanwhile, the

veil separates one space from another and must contain something unspeakable; otherwise,

Radcliffe would divulge what is inside. Catherine employs a criss-cross intersection of two

parallel reasoning systems, one inductive, one deductive, to determine what the veil conceals:

INDUCTIVE	DEDUCTIVE
1. Laurentina is missing	1. All veils hide secrets
2. Her absence is unexplained	2. All veils hide terrible things
3. It's her skeleton behind the veil	3. It hides a skeleton

Catherine will employ this reasoning about objects and space again. Here the two come together:

the forbidden space must contain an object of some terrible aspect of magnitude worthy of

concealment.

Extrapolation of a whole from a part continues during this scene as Isabella offers a list of

"horrid" novels that the latter characterizes as must-reads. Catherine asks confirmation of

something of which she is almost certain: "[B]ut are they all horrid, are you sure they are all

horrid?" (39). This generalization occurs at different levels and through several different

mechanisms. There is linguistic extrapolation, and from a smaller space of one work to a larger,

unknown space of seven works. Catherine reasons, and sensibly so, that books with titles and

language of similar complexion to *The Mysteries of Udolpho* must exhibit similar or exact same

character traits as Radcliffe's work: *Castle, Mysterious, Necromancer, Black Forest, Midnight,*

Orphan, Horrid Mysteries. Catherine's reaction to this list demonstrates the logical process of generalization from seen to unseen. Her current reading is that known and seen space of Udolpho, Montoni, and Emily St. Aubert. The list, however, is that veil which she must draw back and whose texts behind that veil she has yet to experience. Isabella is the outside of the Chinese box within which the listed books lay. Then there is the friendship with Isabella which overlays the logical process; add to this aspect the element of contemporaneity. Catherine reasons out through several channels that the list of others is as "horrid" as the one she is reading currently, the list sharing the trait of likeness because of the simultaneity of mention. Isabella and Radcliffe's work both become parts from which she generalizes to larger wholes. First, any general list of things listed close in time to something that is "horrid" must also be "horrid." However, the impact of this reasoning would be incomplete without the superimposition of Catherine's trust and confidence in Isabella and her judgment. The former reasons that a friend is one in whose judgement one should vest confidence. Isabella has been correct about Radcliffe's novel and recommends other novels alongside it. Finally, Catherine reasons that the novels must be "horrid" because Isabella has termed them so. Catherine depends on an intersection of three different realities and relationships to form her conclusions regarding the listed novels. Her friendship with Isabella and confidence in her knowledge overlays her reactions to and ratiocination about titles and language as well as generalization from the work she currently reads. Isabella is the Chinese box that erects the veil of a list and of concealing yet affectively evocative titles that promise their own skeletons for empirically Gothic reading discovery.

Henry's parodic treatment of Gothic novelistic tropes includes objects and spaces, and thus takes on a materialistic stance. In several cases, as with things, his descriptions are not just fanciful, but actually conform to what Austen's heroine encounters (the chest, the japanned

cabinet). Catherine's logic assumes a materialistic dimension. Even more, the furniture in her

room offers the mysteries that emblematize the interior/exterior dialectic so common in Gothic [3],

but which also stimulate inductive and deductive reasoning. Madoff observes of the Gothic that

it is detective fiction that focuses on the interior because it incorporates unseen space that must

be explored since it stands as a conflict with exteriority and since it stimulates cerebral activity:

> In the detective's realm, "outside" is a place of banal order and reason, or hopeful safety
> from the rage whose results stay locked up inside a room. It is a place of solved cases.
> somehow outside must contain inside while remaining different from outside. Yet,
> paradoxically, for the detective, while this encapsulation is real, outside is changed into
> ignorance; inside, into knowledge. (50)

For Catherine, what is outside is mundane and ordinary; the interior, on the other hand, is

allurement and invitation. Belton asserts that Catherine is an "active investigator"; Austen's

heroines "do in a very real sense write as well as solve their own mysteries" (44, 45). Barron,

who says that Austen "anticipated the modern detective novel," calls Catherine "principal

detective and principal victim" (61, 62). The chest and the cabinet become narrative gaps or

voids because of the enigmas that they present, and they afford Catherine the opportunity to fill

those gaps with speculation and exploration.

Northanger Abbey becomes a Chinese box for her. She is first enraptured with an

intriguing vision of its outside (152). Once she is inside—has "opened it up" for further

exploration and experience—she discovers smaller mysteries inside the Abbey. Several of these

"boxes" are the chest and the cabinet, each of which is an exterior that hides an intriguing and

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[3] One of the tropes typical to the Gothic novel is exteriority/interiority. An example of this trope
would be the veil, the Gothic device which separates two spaces, one visible and apparent, the
other invisible, hidden from sight. The Chinese box is another example; this multi-layered series
of puzzles, one inside of another, represents multiple outsides and insides. Gothic also concerns
itself with the exploration of thoughts and motivations, the mind's internal dialogue.
Appearance, the outside, can deceive, can hide a malevolent interior.

alluring interior. The chest yields a number of empirical and philosophical questions for Catherine as she stands before it in the "motionless wonder" of curiosity:

> An immense heavy chest! –What can it hold? –Why should it be placed here? Pushed back too, as if meant to be out of sight! I will look into it—cost me what it may, I will look into it—and directly too—by daylight. —If I stay till evening my candle may go out. … [The handles were] broken perhaps prematurely by some strange violence; and, on the lid, was a mysterious cypher … . She could not, in whatever direction she took it, believe the last letter to be a *T*; and yet that it should be anything else in that house was a circumstance to raise no common degree of astonishment. If not originally their's (sic), by what strange events could it have fallen into the Tilney family? (155)

Subjectively, Catherine inserts herself into the narrative of the room and the chest with a desire to engage in and be part of the story of both. The empirical spirit yearns to know what is inside, that is, what the outside holds. Her desire to search it in daylight metaphorizes the explorative spirit's yearning to shed light on a mystery. Furthermore, she exercises cause-effect logic in inquiry into motivation and rationale. And this regarding space, namely, why the motivation for the space it occupies and its peculiar position within the room. There is the question as to its origin and to events, or a sequence of events, that might have transpired to bring the chest there. "Mysterious" language leads to her attempts at textual testing of a hypothesis as to whether the first letter is that of the host family. And, as with the wind in her room, there is the mystery of violence to the chest's handles that prefigures the more serious quandaries of the General's purported brutality toward his wife.

The japanned cabinet is a Chinese box in that it contains a number of smaller drawers inside and past the larger outside ones; in addition, one drawer adds itself as box since it contains the unknown text on the sheets of parchment that Catherine discovers. Henry's earlier "text" of narrative had "invented" certain furniture for Catherine to find, and the cabinet now fills a storytelling gap even as it opens more voids as mysteries for her to solve. In a sense, the cabinet is emblematic of the Abbey itself as another such puzzle since both possess intriguing smaller

compartments or rooms within the larger structure that present and solve alluring mysteries. Just as Gothic has its enticements for readers to proceed through the invitations of text to find out narrative secrets, the chest invites Catherine's curiosity in ascertaining its unknown contents. Austen tells us of the chest's allurement and a mechanism-object that invites her to "read," or interpret further the story that is inside: "The key was in the door, and she had a strange fancy to look into it; not however with the smallest expectation of finding anything, but it was so very odd, after what Henry had said. In short, she could not sleep till she had examined it" (160). The key and its lock are not the only "encouragements" to proceed. The cabinet repeatedly resists any opening as though frustrating her attempt to plumb its narrative. Feverishly, she "seized the key … and tried to turn it; but it resisted her utmost strength. … [S]he tried it a new way; a bolt flew, … but … the door was still unmoveable. … Again therefore she applied herself to the key, and after moving it in every possible way, … the door suddenly yielded to her hand" (160).

Catherine's empirical spirit of inquiry leads her to exhaustive exploration as she seeks to understand the nature of the cabinet's interior. This exploration and empirical quest actually assumes the four stages of development of questing as Catherine learns the nature of overwrought search and curiosity. In its first phase, Austen's language characterizes this spirit as fervid, feverish, a curiosity that does not cease, but which must "read" every drawer and "read" the cabinet and its narrative "text" to the very end:

> [H]er fingers grasped the handle of a drawer and drew it forth. It was entirely empty. With less alarm and greater eagerness she seized a second, a third, a fourth; each was equally empty. Not one was left unsearched, and in not one was any thing found. Well read in the art of concealing a treasure, the possibility of false linings to the drawers did not escape her, and she felt round each with anxious acuteness in vain. The place in the middle alone remained now unexplored; … it would be foolish not to examine it. (160-61)

Each unopened drawer is not only a narrative gap, but an invitation to open other so-called "gaps." In the next stage of inquiry, Catherine opens another small such void in the chest's narrative and discovers a parchment. The language of the parchment is of unknown signification, but she decides to "test" the parchment through translation to determine its correct meaning: "She seized … the precious manuscript, for half a glance sufficed to ascertain written characters [and] … resolved instantly to peruse every line before she attempted to rest" (161). Catherine exercises theory and hypothesis as to the paper's nature and textual "interior," generating questions that she must test out by sense observation and research: "[She had] a curiosity so justly awakened … . [H]ow was [the parchment] to be accounted for? –What could it contain?— to whom could it relate?—by what means could it have been so long concealed?" (161-62). Empirical spirit raises questions as to nature and "whatness," provenance, contents, even relationship to other human beings. In the morning, Catherine again determines to ascertain the roll's language, and, as with the chest, uses daylight as a metaphor for illuminating a mystery. There is a second testing of her hypotheses and attempt at "translation" as she peruses by the morning sun. In the final phase, Catherine experiences intellectual growth of a kind as a result of exploration and inquiry, albeit bittersweet as she discovers financial information and a laundry list: "Could not the adventure of the chest have taught her wisdom? A corner of it catching her eye as it lay, seemed to rise up in judgment against her. Nothing could now be clearer than the absurdity of her recent fancies" (164). Catherine's experience with the chest comprises the different stages of empirical spirit of inquiry even if the incident is, understandably so, laughable and overblown.

Austen's depiction of Catherine's process of search and discovery in the cabinet operates at several different reading experience levels, one for the heroine and one for us. The cabinet

both contains and is its own narrative; Catherine sees this object as having a singular story and history to penetrate and ascertain. Her exploration of its contents is a reading in that she attempts to discern the hidden tales inside. Search of each drawer is an interpretive activity since each compartment represents for her something dark and enticing. Catherine practices a metareading of the cabinet, approaching the piece through the mediative experiential lens of her reading of Gothic novels. Austen tells us of Catherine: "Well read in the art of concealing a treasure, the possibility of false linings to the drawers did not escape her" (160). In fact, each exploration is only one reading among many, as each drawer is another level of encounter with the cabinet. At a higher level, Austen plays with her reader in the same way. We explore the cabinet empirically along with Catherine, advancing to each drawer in time as she does. Her experience with the cabinet for us constitutes a metareading; we the readers participate in Catherine's inquiry as she herself practices a reading experience with the piece. Catherine is not the only Gothic reading experience of *Northanger Abbey*. We too explore the cabinet and discover the tale that it becomes.

Some of Catherine's spirit of inquiry arises out of a sense that things are not what or where they should be in position or rationale. When she enters her room, she encounters something that seems out of place: "[H]er eye suddenly fell upon a large high chest, standing back in a deep recess on one side of the fireplace. The sight of it made her start; and, forgetting every thing else, she stood gazing on it in motionless wonder … . "This is strange indeed! I did not expect such a sight as this! … Why should it be placed here? –Pushed back too, as if meant to be out of sight" (155). Catherine has an "eye" for things that are out of place. Her intuition tells her when things are out of order or are in a different space from which she has been accustomed. Such is her experience with the Abbey and her host family and its riddles.

Defending Catherine, Bander notes that the mysteries of the Abbey "are the common mysteries of human behavior," that it contains people who serve as "vexed texts for Catherine to read" because words and meanings do not accord; Henry has not helped, but has "in effect spread a black silk veil over" the place (56). Her encounter with this veil activates a spirit of inquiry that increases over Catherine's stay at the Abbey. Mooneyham notes that at the Abbey, she "begins to look at the General more empirically [and] … to investigate [him] more analytically," evaluating words and actions "more empirically" (14). Catherine is also a historian, piecing together bits of data about the family and the Abbey to create a "chronicle" of the Tilney past; Zlotnick notes that "reading Gothic novels is what inspires Catherine to try to uncover the buried history" of the family (286). In fact, *Northanger Abbey* at one point becomes a metanovel. In drawing her own inferences and forming her conclusions about the Tilneys, Catherine goes beyond just reading novels; indeed, she writes her own story of the Tilneys, generating her own complete and rather lengthy narrative of the General, his children, and the late Mrs. Tilney as well as of the events that occurred inside the Abbey.

Part of accessing the General's thoughts arrives through the Chinese box of the family itself. That is, she must understand—unlock—the minds and histories of Eleanor, Henry, and even the deceased mother before she can grasp the depth of the General's cruelty. In attempting to understand the Tilney group dynamics, Catherine acts the part of behavioral psychologist, forming conclusions about motives from actions. In her encounters with John Thorpe, she draws on her experience with her family and her upbringing as epistemological foundations for evaluating the truthfulness of his statements. Similarly, her sense experience with her host family allows for empiricism that relies on observation of relationships between the Tilneys; Catherine employs emotional (nonverbal) intelligence to read emotions (especially Eleanor's) and

demeanor. Psychological empiricism seeks out rationale behind emotions. This observation extends not just to the General's behavior, but to his children, through whom Catherine intuits some of the rationale behind his strange ways. Eleanor Tilney is one layer she must explore to get to the General's "crimes." In fact, Eleanor is part of Catherine's metareading since the latter forms conclusions about the General from observing his daughter. When the General wants to wait to show Catherine around the Abbey, the latter asks, "Why was Miss Tilney embarrassed? Could there be any unwillingness on the General's side to shew her over the Abbey?" (167).

Eleanor in particular excites and provokes questions from Catherine through silence and morose facial nonverbal cues. When Catherine wonders aloud why the General should avoid his deceased wife's favorite walk and that it should instead provide a fond remembrance of her, Eleanor is silent. Shortly thereafter, when Catherine wonders whether that walk endeared itself to Mrs. Tilney from dejection of spirits, Eleanor answers three of her questions; however, "the two others were passed by; and Catherine's interest in the deceased Mrs. Tilney augmented with every question, whether answered or not" (170). Shortly after the two view the deceased woman's portrait, they enter the corridor where her sick room had been. Catherine's "agitation as they entered the great gallery was too much for any endeavour at discourse; she could only look at her companion. Eleanor's countenance was dejected, yet sedate; and its composure spoke her enured to all the gloomy objects to which they were advancing" (180). Eleanor forms for Austen's heroine part of a chain of cause-effect reasoning, provoking in Catherine a desire to know the causation of Eleanor's taciturnity and sadness and theorizing and hypothesizing as to their origin. The young lady's reading of the Tilneys, Eleanor in particular, foregrounds the speculative nature of Gothic reading. That this speculation leads to embarrassing results for Catherine, that she acts insensitively in her suspicions, thus making her speculations wrong, does

not remove the significance that Austen places on conjecture in the reading experience. The Tilneys present an apparently dark, secret, sinister past. As such, for Catherine they become a text to read—a Gothic narrative. As a reader of her hosts, she draws inferences from and closes the informational gaps that Eleanor leaves in her silences and nonverbal behavior.

That Austen casts Catherine as an empiricist reflects itself in the language of logic, observation, and intellection throughout *Northanger Abbey*. Her heroine becomes a reader not only of people, but of situations, and sometimes must read the latter in order to form conclusions about the former; the Abbey and its family become one more Gothic narrative to encounter as a reading experience. Catherine uses this logic to explore and explain the General. Catherine "searches for those proofs" of his cruelty (181). In her continual inquiries, for Catherine "[t]here must be some deeper cause"; as a detective, she demonstrates "boldness of her own surmises" (178). Even Henry tells her in reprimand following her conspiracy theorizing, "Consult your own understanding, your own sense of the probable, your own observation of what is passing around you" (186). The General and the Abbey both become narratives, "texts" to "read. They present themselves as "pages of intelligence for Catherine" (175-76). These pages permit Catherine to participate in making narrative and create the history that she desires to fashion. They serve as mysterious "text" for her translation empirically into reality. The empirical inductive and deductive reasoner is in full force at the Abbey because of the mysteries that General Tilney and his dead wife present and are.

To penetrate to the General's interior, Catherine also generates a long chain or series of deductive and inductive ratiocinations. Many scholars find her use of reason to ascertain the nature of this inside parodic. However, through native common sense she does intuit that the General is not the urbane and completely kind man that he appears to be. Catherine "is nothing

like a quixotic, deluded, isolated reader," asserts Brownstein; for the girl, "it is quite logical to imagine that he must have murdered his wife in the Abbey" (39). Where gaps of information and knowledge occur, she is able to "read" the General and create narrative text through logic that fills voids in her understanding. When the General delays the guided tour through the Abbey, Catherine questions the rationale behind the procrastination. That the General himself proposed the tour bewilders Catherine that much more. Deductively, she concludes that he must have a forbidden secret, else the tour would proceed immediately:

1. People who propose things on their own and in and regarding their houses have nothing to hide.

2. General Tilney should have nothing to hide

3. He is unwilling to show Catherine around

4. Therefore, he must be hiding something; there is something he does not want her to know.

As to the walk in the Abbey garden, Catherine forms several different conclusions concerning the General's attitude. These deductive inferences, as earlier at the Bath Pump Room, arrive partly from empirical and experiential observation of her family and friends, so are not completely irrational. Observing people such as her father and Mr. Allen, Catherine notes their preference in taking walks later in the day, not early morning. An early walk, she conjectures, bespeaks secrets of some sort; the General must have something to hide because he walks early in the day. This chain of logic interfaces with another deduction, namely, with memories attached to spaces. Starting with the premise that people walk where a beloved walks (or walked) because such activity arouses fond memories, Catherine observes that the General will not walk

in a certain area of the garden. From there, she leaps to the conclusion that Mrs. Tilney was not beloved. Else he would have walked in that space.

The deceased woman's portrait, and the General's unwillingness to display it openly, also raises doubts and suspicions. That he is "dissatisfied" with it deepens that suspicion. Catherine reasons, and sensibly so given real-life situations, that a person would want to display, and maintain in display, images of loved ones. Furthermore, for Austen's heroine, having the portrait around is tantamount to fondness of remembrance and kindness. To Catherine, failure to display the image and dissatisfaction with that likeness is equivalent to unkindness and to past displeasure with the deceased. Catherine is unsure though, and may not fall prey easily to her first inclinations. She entertains a contradictory, conflicted perspective in questioning whether that love may have existed after all: "The General certainly had been an unkind husband. He did not love her walk:--could he therefore have loved her?" (170). Ultimately all of these deductive operations lead in and out an inductive chain into which she has drawn a number of disparate and discrete bits of information and observations to create an entire history and narrative text of a mind, exteriors leading to an understanding of an interiority. A protracted absence; a solitary, early walk; a morose and silent walk around a room; dissatisfaction with a portrait; a delay in showing the Abbey's room; staying up late—she weaves all of these into a history or chronicle whose annals are a stricken conscience. Catherine is able to interface behaviors with objects and "forbidden," "unhappy," and unseen spaces in order to piece together the history and chronicle of not just a place, but a conscience. Interestingly, these behaviors and their derivative inferences center partly on walks and walking.

Perhaps the greatest and most complicated, even inscrutable, multi-enigma is the deceased mother. Catherine must penetrate layers of data and sense observation to ascertain the

circumstances of her death and her experience at the General's hands. Her absence is also a

method by which Catherine comes to "know" more about her husband. She is more of an enigma

than the Abbey's other residents since her demise has placed her beyond the reach of any final

resolution of mystery. Catherine must fashion determinations all from secondhand information: a

portrait with a static image and almost unexpressive face, what Eleanor says of her mother, the

General's demeanor, a series of unrelated events, and Eleanor's nonverbal cues. Catherine

projects, and must project for any resolution to occur, virtue and emotions onto Mrs. Tilney as an

empirical activity of guessing what she can never really know for certain firsthand.

The layers of the puzzle begin with Eleanor and the General in considering why the

former is embarrassed and why he postpones the tour. Catherine begins understanding the dead

woman through others as surface boxes. Unanswered questions and tacit assertions by conduct

are layers to the box: "Could there be any unwillingness on the General's side to shew her over

the Abbey? The proposal was his own. And was it not odd that he should *always* take his walk so

early?" (167). Catherine's empirical spirit works at various levels. Actions are not considered

alone; Catherine pairs them logically with spaces. General Tilney will not show the deceased's

room; he refuses to walk where his wife had walked. Catherine couples acts inductively with

objects, such as the portrait: "Here was another proof. A portrait—very like—of a departed wife,

not valued by her husband! —He must have been dreadfully cruel to her! (171). In the church

service, Catherine notices and reads an epitaph, an object that is also a space where virtue is

honored, a text and narrative that help her fill in some voids of the dead woman's life story.

Austen's description of Catherine's thoughts very much resembles the inquiring mind's desire to

place pieces together and to explore, in fact, to play detective, maybe unearth crime, even to the

metaphorical and literal plumbing of the dark depths into the figurative sealed and submerged

knowledge that awaits in deep recesses. The General appears calm and collected, but Catherine,

a lá Montoni, believes that he hides a secret under his equipoise:

> Not however that many instances of beings equally hardened in guilt might not be
> produced. She could remember dozens who persevered in every possible vice, going on
> from crime to crime, murdering whomsoever they chose, without any feeling of humanity
> or remorse, till a violent death or a religious retirement closed their black career. The
> erection of the monument itself could not in the smallest degree affect her doubts of Mrs.
> Tilney's actual decease. Were she even to descend into the family vault where her ashes
> were supposed to slumber, were she to behold the coffin in which they were said to be
> enclosed—what could it avail in such a case? (179-80)

The pristine virtue of Mrs. Tilney, coupled by stark contrast with the conclusions that the

General was unkind and unloving, leads to suspicions that she was a helpless, victimized saint.

A doubled Chinese box wraps around the deceased in that, to Catherine's conflicted intellect,

Mrs. Tilney is both dead and living, and possibly imprisoned secretly in a room with only bread

and water for sustenance. In entertaining the possibility that the mother is living, Catherine

divides her empirical spirit between determining why she died and why she might still be living.

Again, Austen characterizes Catherine as the empiricist, even the philosopher, the statistician and

knowledge-seeking intellectual with language that suggests a Baconian "scientific method" for

determining both the General's guilt with certainty and the ultimate truth:

> To be kept up for hours, after the family were in bed, by stupid pamphlets, was not very
> likely. There must be some deeper cause: something was to be done which could be
> done only while the household slept; and the probability that Mrs. Tilney yet lived, shut
> up for causes unknown, and receiving from the pitiless hands of her husband a nightly
> supply of coarse food, was the conclusion which necessarily followed. Shocking as was
> the idea, it was at least better than a death unfairly hastened, as, in the natural course of
> things, she must ere long be released. The suddenness of her reputed illness, the absence
> of her daughter, and probably of her other children, at the time—all favoured the
> supposition of her imprisonment. –Its origin—jealousy perhaps, or wanton cruelty—was
> yet to be unravelled. (177)

To reach the mystery that is Mrs. Tilney, Catherine has to resort to reasoning, however fanciful,

and empirical behavior. She must penetrate multiple layers, yet still not reach the core. Whether

it is seemingly odd family behaviors, a portrait, an epitaph, or a room (seen or unseen), Catherine exercises a continual spirit of intellectual inquiry and reasoning in an attempt to understand her world.

PUTTING HERSELF INTO THE STORY

Catherine is not content just to read Gothic narrative passively. She must place her very Self proactively into the middle of it. Not just a textual consumer, Austen's heroine transforms herself into author too, birthing narrative and story on her own. Linda Gill notes of *Northanger Abbey* that it is fiction with characters who "write their own strategic fictions for self-empowering reasons" (Gill); Catherine uses reading/"reading" and "writing" as a way to empower her abilities at reasoning and discerning the world around her. Nelson points out that Catherine's "epistemic" reading "installs a cluster of sensibilities that shape how gothic heroines understand their world" (195, 193); this reading "does not result solely in degraded abilities to see and to reason" (195). Sometimes this insertion is visual, so that she actually sees herself as part of the narrative and "reads" her imagined reactions as well as reads herself ***into*** a storyline of her making. In this way, she participates in narrative creation and with herself as least partly a storyteller. Sato, calling Catherine a "reader, knower, and creator," asserts that "she attempts a practical reading of the world as a text—with her own detective research"; Catherine may actually be Austen's doppelganger: "The heroine's state may be regarded as a doubling of the author herself" (62). Correa observes that reading is not just of books, but people, behaviors, and words (41).

Catherine's subjective nature is not satisfied with enjoying text. She must change the world around her phenomenologically. Austen expends a significant amount of narrative space

mapping Catherine's internal processing of her environments. From Gothic novels she first generalizes to larger-world experience, then situates herself visually in that larger world. As such, Catherine reads twice, once for the novel and a second time for real life itself. Through generalization, she is able to perform this second reading in and into areas both unseen and unknown. Conflicted between wanting to walk with the Tilneys and visiting Blaize Castle, Catherine divides her visuality between the siblings and the spectacle of another ancient Udolpho. Two narratives exist, with Catherine injecting herself alternately and uncertainly into both and creating the text for each:

> [S]he meditated by turns, on broken promises and broken arches, phaetons and false hangings, Tilneys and trap-doors … .
> …
> [She meditated on] a progress through a long suite of lofty rooms, exhibiting the remains of magnificent furniture, … [on] being stopped in their way along narrow, winding vaults, by a low, grated door, or even of having their lamp … extinguished by a sudden gust of wind, and of being left in total darkness. (83-84)

Catherine is able in her mind's eye to visualize herself as part of Gothic narrative, whether that narrative exists in print or in the material world. Furthermore, she reads herself as part of the narrative she creates. Indeed, since story is a sequence, Catherine imagines the progress of images as she projects a visual "record" of her mental tour through Blaize. Her desire for participation in the "readings" that she creates extends to the visuality of visiting the Abbey. Udolpho becomes the narrative text and reading that Catherine superimposes prospectively on everything she hopes to meet: "Its long, damp passages, its narrow cells and ruined chapel, were to be within her daily reach, and she could not entirely subdue the hope of some traditional legends, some awful memorials of an injured and ill-fated nun" (134). For a moment, she doubles, even triples, her narrative fabrication and reading, reading not just Radcliffe's work and herself into the scene, but also Gothic works in general.

During the carriage ride to the Abbey, Catherine engages in narrative creation and participation, but in a manner different from what scholars characterize the scene to be. In fact, she performs somewhat as much as does Henry. This participation is active, not just the passive receptive witness to Henry's bemused extended scenario of what she is likely to encounter on the first night. Scholars usually fault Catherine for uncritically accepting and entertaining foolishly as a dupe each and all of Henry's teasingly and parodically invented Gothic conventions and devices. Austen's description of the exchange demonstrates that Catherine actually subjectively partakes of and helps create his narrative, even usurping it from him, not by adopting unthinkingly his version of things and of herself in the picture. Rather, she inserts herself self-consciously and to the negative: "I do not think I should be easily frightened"; "Oh, but this will not happen to me, I'm sure"; "But it really cannot happen to me"; "I should be frightened to do any such thing" (149-51). Catherine persistently and consistently injects her subjectivity into his story as anti-narrative, namely, contradicting and challenging his text and reading of both things and her. In fact, she challenges both as to her own feelings as well as events, creating what results as an internally conflicted storyline. Far from being dimwitted, Catherine also demonstrates future-projective thinking; particularly, her mind maps out prospectively an alternate outcome of events and behavior that differs from Henry's scenario. An uncritical reading of Austen's narrative would have us believe that Catherine's mind projects only Gothic scenarios and results. In fact, what she demonstrates is the faculty not only of imagining multiple possible outcomes, but outcomes independent of what novelists such as Radcliffe might project. What results in the carriage-ride episode is two narratives in one, his rendition of the first night and her opposing, second, different version because she has placed her Self into the middle of his

narrative as the anti-Catherine, namely, the subjective Catherine as a counter to the girl he has invented for his story.

CONCLUSION: AUSTEN'S WORK COMMENTS ON LITERARY GOTHIC

Scholarship on *Northanger Abbey* tends toward two conclusions about Catherine Morland. Some paint her as a mindless dupe who is unable to read correctly or with any depth the world around her, people and situations that present themselves to her. Lacking critical thinking, Catherine accepts representations of life as true without examining carefully whether they are in fact true. According to this line of argument, she falls unwittingly for Isabella's selfishness and superficiality. Furthermore, Austen's heroine accepts unthinkingly the conventions of Gothic literature and projects these novelistic tropes onto her reading of life itself. She reads people and literature poorly. Secondly, these scholars characterize Catherine as an immature intellect. Both portrayals deserve re-evaluation in the area of Catherine's reading experience and her role as a Gothic reader as well as *Northanger Abbey*'s depiction of the Gothic reading process.

Austen's work is not just a parody of Catherine's Gothic reading. Rather, it is also a commentary on the intellectual functions inherent in that reading. Catherine is the emblem of the Gothic reader. Scholarship on the Gothic more often than not characterizes or focuses on—even tends to restrict—Gothic as a mode only of affective response. As a mode, it raises fear, horror, and an emotional encounter with sublimity. *Northanger Abbey* and Austen foreground the presence of intellect as well as affect in the Gothic reading experience. Although Austen may parody the literary Gothic and its conventions, she highlights through language, description, and Catherine's interior dialogue the cerebral side of the mode, its ability to appeal to the mind, not

just feeling. Literary Gothic is an intellectual adventure and happening that parallels affective occurrence.

Catherine models that intellect. Her reading experience both of life and Gothic novels demonstrates abilities in logic. Occasionally, in reading people and events, this logic forms correct or at least reasonable surmisals. Regardless of their accuracy, she still employs and applies her mind in exercise of thought. We laugh at her theories, suppositions, and inferences not because she displays mindlessness, but because she uses that mind too much; Catherine's reading experience contains excessive use of mental faculties in birthing and developing ludicrously fantastical scenarios. The reader too becomes a fellow intellect. Austen's parody in the Abbey visit reaches several levels of playfulness in the cerebral nature of Gothic reading. She plays with and lampoons her heroine in the latter's ludicrous conspiracy theorizing. For us the readers, though, Austen asks why the General acts the way he does, invites us along with Catherine to question why Eleanor Tilney is morose, and casts doubt on the nature of Mrs. Tilney's death. *Northanger Abbey* is a Gothic reading experience for the reader outside as well a the heroine reader inside the story.

Logic alone does not make for a pleasurable read. As a reader, Catherine exhibits an empirical spirit, inquiring into the text that she encounters. Gothic novels present both veils and Chinese boxes for the curiosity. As a veil, Gothic text such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* separates narrative into two distinct spaces. The reader is outside, in the known space of visible text that the author has provided, questing for knowledge and answers to the informational gaps of the narrative. With storyline vacancies, Gothic authors curtain off an inner space of information from the reader. Radcliffe's veil at Udolpho becomes an emblem for that which stimulates and provokes the emotion of desire for (further) reading experience. Furthermore, the

curtain elicits an empirical spirit, the quest to read on and uncover what is inner. Gothic reading is in fact the reader's movement, indeed, a constant progression, from outside to inside. Meanwhile, the Chinese box serves as more than a veil; in fact, it is the veil multiplied. A multi-layered puzzle presents to the reader numerous curtains. Where the veil invites a single reader participatory event, the Chinese box is a package of multiple such happenings. Each level is a new participation in empiricism and inference. Participation, though, is not just a happening, but more. Active reader empiricism brings discovery, with the reader as explorer of text for clues and information. Literary Gothic reading, far from being passive, constitutes the reader's active discovery of knowledge and understanding. Veils offer single prospective unearthings and invite reader participation toward locating single pieces of information. The Chinese box, conversely, affords multiple involvements in numerous, ongoing discoveries. Austen plants these veils and boxes into her narrative for readers as well as for Catherine; *Northanger Abbey* is not just a send-up of literary Gothic, but faithful itself to that mode in creating narrative gaps for us her readers, since we encounter them along with Catherine.

Both narrative devices invite and encourage speculation. Although Catherine guesses wrongly, to an extreme degree regarding her hosts, even insensitively, her reading experience of people and novels involves conjecture and surmisals as to what and whom she reads. Catherine is not just an intellectual in her own way (although not the epitome of stellar IQ by any stretch of imagination), but emblematizes the cerebral experience that Gothic reading becomes. Radcliffe and her kindred authors leave narrative voids—veils—in their texts that invite reader speculation as part of their textual experience. As a reader, Catherine uses her mind to fill in those gaps with guesswork. Along the way, she employs inferences, generalizations, past experience, and inductive and deductive reasoning to arrive at conclusions.

However, Catherine's reading is not content just to enjoy the narratives of novels, people, places, and events. She must become an intimate part of these things. She transforms reading into a subjective experience wherein she embeds herself into different texts. Voluntary insertion of self adds proactivity to the already active nature of reader speculation. For Catherine, even speculation about Laurentina's skeleton does not fulfill or provide a pleasurable reading event; she employs first-person language to inject herself into the story as a fellow author with Radcliffe in the process of that speculation.

CHAPTER II

ENGAGING READING: *FRANKENSTEIN*'S COMMUNITY OF READERS

As Mary Shelley's Creature considers his first interaction with the DeLaceys, he emphasizes that they "loved and sympathized with one another" and that "their joys depend[ed] on each other" (100). Observing the cottagers' togetherness inspires him to reach out to them: "The more I saw of them, the greater became my desire to claim their protection and kindness; my heart yearned to be known and loved by these amiable creatures" (100). He "reads" the DeLaceys as beings of compassion, as social creatures. This interpretive activity impels him toward community with them; through them, the monster hopes to bond with humankind generally. Richard Dunn observes that *Frankenstein* "portrays the yearning for deep communication that the romantic imagination held necessarily antecedent to any meaningful human community" (409). The Creature's reading of their behavior constitutes an aspect of socialization, albeit vicarious. Through this connection with the cottagers, the monster also discovers and reads his own subjectivity. His observations become inquiries into human nature that help him understand his personal consciousness and identity. However, that self-image originates ultimately from his mind's vicarious engagement with the outside world. The cottagers are "friends" and "protectors." He weeps for Werther and identifies closely with Milton's Satan. The Creature's social interpretive decoding processes foreground Gothic reading's relational-communal dimensions. Because he eavesdrops on the cottagers and studies their nonverbal behaviors, he must engage with them, even if from afar. The monster becomes part of a narrative community each member of which "reads" another's life experience through listening. Frankenstein's male narrators become "text"; of the reading process, Bernard Duyfhuizen says, "Readers and narrators are encoded entities—even if only linguistic signs—within the textual system (28).

More, this community is exclusively male. *Frankenstein*'s men blend homosociality and reading. Through male bonding and interaction, Shelley's characters interpret and decode each other.

Sympathy provides the bridge for social decipherment in shared tale. Shelley's storytellers fuse experience, sympathy, and inter-male "reading" as part of narrative experience. Eric Daffron terms Shelley's structure "sympathetic narrativity" (426, 419). The work's use of sympathy is "allowing the matching of perspectives" (Britton 9). In his letters, Walton articulates the homosocial desire for a man with "reply[ing]" eyes as well as feeling conversation (8). This perspective of communication encloses dual spaces: oral and nonverbal. For Walton, reading body language is just as vital as speech. Terming sympathy a "social passion," Adam Smith continually foregrounds the interexperiential, intersubjective nature of this trait (48). Implicit in his observations is the nature of sympathy as "reading." Although a vicarious experience, his famous "brother on the rack" image nevertheless constitutes another's internal processing of the spectacle, with subsequent formation of ideas and impressions. (13-14). Smith and David Hume both intimate the character of sympathy as phenomenological process that points to the trait's decoding nature. Sympathy sequentially converts ideas into impressions (Hume 317; Smith 13-14). In their writings, both philosophers conceptualize this phenomenon as two stages. A spectator or auditor must first encounter an event, then process and decipher its import. More than affect, sympathy is its own interpretive literacy, a process of social "reading" of others' experience and affect.

Connection and interaction constitute "reading." The Creature's behavior underscores the different natures and representations of reading in the novel. Shelley's work is replete with consumers of text. Victor reads alchemical texts. Walton consumes sea tales and poetry. The Creature studies three discovered works and Victor's scientific journal. Felix reads history to

Safie. Yet, *Frankenstein* moves beyond visual literacy to depict other types of reading. The Creature "reads" the cottagers through observation and study of their nonverbal behaviors and interactions. The DeLaceys become a narrative and text to interpret; the monster watches their story unfold through their relationships and body language. From these observations, he draws conjectures and conclusions about them based on his visual experience from afar. Anthony Backes notes the Creature's "observational skills" from which he "quickly learns to draw conclusions" (35). Such interpretation is just as much a "reading" practice as textual consumption. When Victor arrives on board Walton's ship, the explorer immediately commences watching Victor, noting his behaviors and mien. Walton reads his guest closely, noting expressivity of eyes, facial features, and speech patterns. His interpretation of all these traits casts Victor as an ethereal soul. Before Victor unfolds his story, Walton has already authored a narrative—indeed, a back-story—for Victor of the explorer's invention. Victor creates his own narrative for the monster that casts the latter as evil. In each instance, reading has transpired beyond the common experience of encountering print. Rather, each character in *Frankenstein* becomes a text and narrative for another to read through interpretation. *As such*, the work is meta-internal or embedded interiorities; the work emphasizes characters' "respective abilities to recognize and narrate the interiorities of other characters in their narrative frames" (Clark 246). In Walton's case, this phenomenon occurs in two stages; he observes Victor's external condition as a pre-reading before employing a listening literacy with his friend's account. Only through storytelling, though, are characters truly able better to read others' subjectivities and experience meaningfully. *As such*, recounted framed narrative is not only an oral event, but also a phenomenon of personality reading between Shelley's figures.

As reading act, sympathy is cerebral as well as emotional. Exercise of this trait constitutes use of the intellect. Walton links the two as part of social "reading." In his letters, he desires a comrade with a "cultivated, … capacious mind" (8). The explorer's desire unites homosocial interaction and mutual reading partly through intellect. Hume and Smith recognize the presence of mind in the feeling and act of sympathy. For both, ideas accompany feeling. Hume situates the mind as the initial creator of the affect: "When any affection is infus'd by sympathy, it is at first known only by its effects, and by those external signs … which convey an idea of it" (317). In his cognitive model, the intellect actively converts concept into affect; the imagination is the initial step in birthing emotion (317, 322, 389, 427). Smith, too, underscores the role of cerebrality. Respecting the brother on the rack, he asserts that conceptualizing intellect acts the predominant role in causing sympathy: "[I]t is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. … By the imagination, we place ourselves in his situation (2-3; see also 86). Smith's active verb choices emphasize the spectator-"reader"'s proactivity in exercising mental faculties before sympathy materializes. Furthermore, his observations implicitly double the socialization event inherent in the trait. Certainly, sympathy manifests itself outwardly between humans. Prior to this occurrence, the spectator-"reader" must engage internally with concepts and images of others and their experiences. Essentially, sympathy is dually interactive and social-relational: external and intellectual/interior.

Shelley fuses sympathy, interpretive social "reading," and male homosociality to create her narrative community. *Frankenstein* implies that exclusive male engagement with language and its interpretive processes transpires through the construct of community. Nineteenth-century men moved fluidly between private and public spheres, and peer approval and "support networks" played a part in defining masculinity (Tosh 39, 61, 71). In her work, Shelley positions

men center-stage; women she marginalizes. *Frankenstein* separates females from shared tales. In

so doing, Shelley divorces women from narrative participation in a communal context. In

Between Men, Eve Sedgwick intimates the presence of social "reading" in nineteenth-century

male homosocial situations. Although Sedgwick focuses much of her writing on homosexuality,

her research also explores nonsexual currents in male bonding (2, 22, 26). Part of the patriarchy's

domination depended on inter-male consensus respecting signs and signifiers; apportioned forms

of power "included[ed] control over … meanings" (22). Partly public, this power entailed

language (24). Homosociality served as a mechanism for intersubjective social decoding. For

Sedgwick, "desire," so called, is "not for a particular affective state or emotion, but for the

affective or social force, the glue, even when its manifestation is … something less emotively

charged, that shapes an important relationship" (2). More, her understanding of desire

foregrounds some presence of mind as guiding force in male bonding, not privileging emotion.

Homosociality entails multiple "readings" beyond sex in social situations; women engage in

nonsexual activities with and for each other (2-3).

Male homosociality excludes females from not only social interaction, but also from

language itself. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar emphasize nineteenth-century women's

considerable dissociation from linguistic community. Female authors' "anxiety of authorship" or

"influence" created "a radical fear that she cannot create, that because she can never become a

"precursor" [part of a literary heritage] the act of writing will isolate or destroy her" (49). Gilbert

and Gubar imply several separative realities for this woman. Contemporary patriarchal power's

discouragement of female creativity segregated her from the wider community of authors

generally (48-49). Moreover, this authorial angst emblematized split subjectivity. Anxiety over

creativity divided her from herself. She created a fragmented self-image that spilled into

solicitous cares about language and interpretation (44). The nineteenth-century female author's narrative became a locus of struggle for self-assertion (Tsomondo 11). Alison Case notes that the era associated femininity with "lack of discursive authority"; she was a "witness" submitting her testimony to others (5, 16). The author's identification with a male authorial heritage, e.g., Milton, did not necessarily constitute meaningful, genuine community. Women authors looked to previous male authors to determine criteria for language and narrative (Gilbert and Gubar 13). *As such*, they lacked their own homosocial creative community. Consequently, they had to fashion one from an already-extant male authorial society.

Male homosociality focalizes *Frankenstein*'s implicit commentary on different understandings of gendered Gothic reading experience. Contemporary characterizations and critique of Gothic stressed the isolative nature of female reading in the mode. Carla Peterson notes the era's anxiety concerning female readers' separation from social venues—even domestic community—for "secretive" reading (5,34). Critics worried that its novels might raise gratuitous affect among this segment of the readership public. Conversely, Shelley's male community represents different approaches to narrative. Namely, males tend either to read with pure cerebral purposes or to temper affect with intellect. Of nineteenth-century manliness, John Tosh observes an "intensified emphasis on rationality as against emotionality"; literature contemporaneous with Shelley's conveyed an "overwhelming impression that masculine identification resided in the life of the mind" (69, 32). This cerebral activity includes certain spaces of the intellect; *Frankenstein*'s voices "explore those aspects of the male psyche that have been loosely termed the 'Promethean spark'" (Asquith). Walton's "intellectual eye" and "soul" balance his avowedly passionate reading (6). Victor's textual consumption blends zealous warmth with thirst for knowledge. Meanwhile, the Creature offsets his reading of the emotional

Werther with close study of the other works he finds. To be sure, Shelley's male characters display marked emotionalism. However, both tellers and listeners articulate rational motives for their roles. Walton desires an external, objective standard for the viability of his ambitions, to check his emotional excess (9). Meanwhile, Victor's motivation for narration is expanding Walton's understanding (16) Using courtroom logic, the Creature appeals for a fair hearing of his tale, while the latter states that he weighed the monster's "arguments" (74). Through intellect, *Frankenstein*'s men connect and socialize via narrative. Walton and Victor vicariously connect with seafarers and mystical empiricists. The monster's connections are multiple: emotionally with Werther, with humanity through *Lives*, with himself through Milton, and with Victor through the journal. According to Kelly Mays, men's narrative of the era gravitated toward the communal. Much male authorial work of the period fixed its energy on collective, public efforts, particularly in the areas of respectability and humanity (344, 347, 349, 351).

This argument does not assert that feminine readers do not or cannot exercise mind in their Gothic reading. Women readers use intellect too. Catherine Moreland employs hers actively with logic and surmise. Jane Eyre actively attempts to decode Thornfield's mysterious events and residents' suspicious explanations. In her 1831 introduction, Shelley characterizes her authorship as a blend of reason and emotion. During her prewriting phase, fear and terror gripped her. Yet, with a thoughtful approach, she endowed her work with form (189). Shelley, Eyre, and Moreland, though, experience detachment and isolation. Catherine's cogitations remain internal; she does not immediately communicate them. Further, her suspicions drive a temporary wedge between her and the other characters. No one at the manor will assist Jane in her inquiries. Meanwhile, Shelley's introduction underscores the isolating experience that formulating *Frankenstein* was for her. Her male readers tend to read intellectually for connection and

vicarious interaction, a different image from the insular experience for the female reader. Arguably, Shelley's foregrounding male connectivity through narrative arises from self-effacing authoriality. In her 1831 introduction, she distances herself self-consciously from her raconteur persona. Shelly is "averse" to publicizing herself (186). She was content with close imitation rather than originality and removed herself from any dominant role in her own youthful narratives (187). Self-deprecation extends to crediting Shelley for pushing her to expand *Frankenstein* and even to pursuing a literary reputation that she did not really desire (191, 187). While Shelley articulates anxiety of authorship, her male characters read and narrate confidently, comfortably, without self-conscious qualms. Tosh argues that nineteenth-century women perpetuated a powerful myth equating male homosociality with masculinity (38). Shelley critiques male shared "reading" as less self-conscious than female segregative engagement.

The previous chapter examined how *Northanger Abbey*'s Catherine Moreland approaches both narrative consumption and interpretive conclusions about her world. Moreland's reading practices extend beyond entertainment. From use of visual literacy, Catherine moves to interpretive "reading" of the world, conjecturing about inanimate objects, people, and events. She interacts with narrative and creates personal community with it. Catherine invests sufficient affect and intellect into Gothic storytelling tantamount to socializing with the text; when she superimposes the Gothic novelistic paradigm onto the world around her, Moreland engages deeply with furniture, structures, and family history as though they are personal actors in her private world. Catherine interprets the world as she would a Radcliffean work—an explorable mystery. Reading and creating narrative become her way to express herself; she is able to project her personal desires and perspectives onto the world with invention of back-stories for people and things. *Frankenstein*'s framed narrative represents a nexus of interpretive readings that help

link self with community. One character's listening to another, which constitutes a reading experience in its own right, allows the latter sufficient self-expression to connect socially with the human race. Catherine inquires into surroundings, an activity that constitutes engagement with and participation in the text of the world. In so doing, she incorporates that world into her personal life-narrative. Objects and histories becomes her subjective awareness. Similarly, Shelley's characters singly and communally discover identity through narrative investigation and interparticipative communication.

In *Frankenstein*, Shelley posits a dual phenomenon of engagement in both reading and narrative. Her era's critics dismissively conceptualized Gothic reading experience as purely isolative privacy. In a Gothic context, Shelley expands social literacy processes and narrative participation to the public sphere. That literacy practice is more than just interaction with print. Rather, "reading" assumes the social character of decoding private subjectivity and experience. Gothic literature of the time followed current standards in shifting away from collective standards of taste to studying individual psychic life (Tompkins 215). More, interpretive "social intelligence" permits characters to decipher each other through story. In its public persona, *Frankenste*in's narrative transforms to multiple shared tales and experiences that bind teller and auditor into single community. Storytelling becomes social compact. Through this consensual activity, Shelley's community metamorphoses mystery into collective knowledge and understanding. For Wolfgang Iser, text and reading close epistemic gaps—or "blanks"—because of interaction between them. Beyond socializing isolated psyches, narrative becomes a juncture and harmonizer of disparate voices into one overarching dialogue:

> Contact … depends upon our continually filling in a central gap in our experience. Thus, dyadic and dynamic interaction comes about only because we are unable to experience how we experience one another, which in turn proves to be a propellant to interaction. Out of this fact arises the basic need for interpretation, which regulates the whole process

> of interaction. … Dyadic interaction is not given by nature but arises out of an interpreta-
> tive activity … . The partners in dyadic interaction can ask each other questions in order
> to ascertain how far their images have bridged the gap of the inexperienceability of one
> another's experiences. (*Prospecting* 32)

Story serves as organizer of knowledge and experience, as transformative mechanism of private

mind-life into public understanding.

GOTHIC FRAME NARRATIVE AS COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL CONTRACT

In *Northanger Abbey*, empirical inquiry and intellectual inquiry become the mechanisms by

which Catherine Moreland interacts and connects with her world. Interpretation is not just

"reading." It becomes Catherine's peculiar form of internalized socialization with people,

objects, and histories. Gothic's focus on internal thought processes underscores the self's ability

to create and populate a private community of ideas and conclusions within the psyche. Because

of her overwrought imagination, Catherine forms relations with those ideas and conjectures in

the interiority of a mind that perceives its world through the lenses of a detective's skepticism

and investigative inclinations. Austen's heroine relates to these things as would a novel reader.

Her suspicious mind further shapes those relationships along dark lines. Similarly, Shelley

connects her characters via narrative's ability to set up and answer mysteries through inquiry.

Frankenstein's frame narrative foregrounds Gothic's penchant for connecting the individual

mind with the outer world through creation and presence of narrative as the resolution of

mystery, the unanswered question. Indeed, Walton and Victor listen to their fellows' tales

because of "curiosity" (17, 74). Austen and Shelley depict characters who connect self with outer

world through inquisitive drives. More than entertainment, narrative serves to link individual and

community with satisfaction of self's desires to answer and know.

In *Frankenstein*, narrative occupies a liminal space between self and community. *As such*, it serves as a hybrid juncture between individual subject and social collective. In fact, each tale acts as the fusion-point between the private and public spheres. At this junction, storytelling becomes a mechanism for transfer of individual experience and consciousness to the communal realm. Each domain claims narrative for its own purpose; the subject relates story for self-expression and the community employs it for group understanding. To accomplish its ends, narrative becomes a medium for seeking truth. Walton and Victor listen, they state, out of curiosity, Victor also partly out of duty. Both men position auditory involvement as a blend of private desire and social obligation. To this end, inquisitiveness and fulfillment of duty serve a creative purpose in *Frankenstein*, namely, investing and energizing narrative with a life of its own. Interrelationally, storytelling operates in several planes. Narrative assumes a personal role of creating listener-teller interaction; at macro-level, it plays the part of community's social organizer. During the act of audience, both men play the hybrid role of individual being and social creature. As single subjects, they exercise self-expression of individuated experience, practicing private life with internal thought; as community members, they share their lives, an event that permits participation in the collective experience. Shelley constructs two tiers of mental existence. Liminally, each narrative straddles private and public realms. Walton, Victor, the Creature—each begins as individual teller and concludes with identity of societal participant. Narration transforms subjectivity. Daffron observes Walton's blending of his self with Victor's (429-30). Zoe Beenstock remarks on the work's "challenge of negotiating between individual and social needs" and the self "internally divided between the contrary pulls of self-interest and social commitment" (407). In *Gothic Reflections*, Peter Garrett observes of Gothic that it invests tale with life because of its liminal existence, that it "enables self-conscious reflections on the

form and function of narrative itself, the individual acts and social transactions through which fiction exerts its force" (3-4).

Listeners also become a bridge between individual and society. The two men's avowed curiosity represents an active spirit of inquiry, an empirical impulse, whose motivations are desires to close informational voids and create knowledge. Inquiry then invites and requires proactive application of intellect to cohere that information. Ultimately, inquisitive drives also originate from one's desire to bond socially with others through understanding of others' experiences, impelling the learner to move beyond the boundaries of his personal life to sharing in his fellows' existences. Marie-Laure Ryan asserts that frames are ontological in nature and possess their singular events and characters (879-81; see also Young 79). Furthermore, narrative binds characters together with mutual understanding through that sharing. For Garrett, Gothic offers "a more open sense of narrative as a social process" (22). *Frankenstein* foregrounds Gothic narrative as a tool of multiple socializations. Within the novel, listener-teller dyads connect through linguistic transactional exchanges. Overarchingly, both listeners avowedly hope to connect the tellers with the larger community through humane sympathy or satisfaction of societally-oriented moral duty. Shelley's reader too is a listener or, more precisely, a metalistener who sits in with Walton and Victor. The reader also simultaneously plays the part of individual subject, a self, and member of *Frankenstein*'s community as she or he actively engages in inquisitive reading. Werner Wolf notes that for the reader framing serves as a bridge between everyday experience and the fantastical stories within embedded narrative (192). Reading, according to Wayne Chandler, foregrounds a Mystery/Discovery motif that infuses reading of and in the novel (42).

Novels such as *Frankenstein*, Garrett suggests, attempt to reconcile the apparent surface

tension between self and community. Where individual subjectivity and society might appear at

odds, Gothic quests to find a point of agreement, a communal harmony between the two poles:

> Gothic reflects the central nineteenth-century preoccupation with the relation of self and
> society … .
> …
> As a post-Enlightenment genre, Gothic deploys mysteries and their possible explanations
> as plotting devices that allow it to explore relations between … "privately bred" isolated
> subjectivities and public norms, engaging readers as well as characters in a drama of
> knowledge whose resolution is seldom complete.
> …
> [Gothic reflections'] reflexivity is always linked with the problematic relations of
> subjectivity and the social … . (3, 6-7, 9)

Garrett's comments underscore the multiple social-relational dimensions of Gothic narrative. At

the reader's level, story is "engaging," demanding participation and involvement from the reader.

His observations foreground the presence of the reader as a viable force in narrative dynamics.

Narrative serves as an energizing connection between individual and larger world. The same

applies in characters' worlds. Both levels converge to produce a communal "drama" that creates

social knowledge from individual experience. Because frames have "dramatic impact," William

Nelles asserts, they have "sources of meaning" ("Stories within Stories" 89, 90; see also

Frameworks 138). Individual storytelling transforms private knowledge to joint knowledge,

shifting it from private arena to public. With its unfolding of shared understanding and disclosure

of information between characters as well as characters and readers, narrative acts as an agent of

interaction horizontally and vertically. In fact, it becomes more: a pivot-point at which reader,

author, and characters unite and on which reader-experience community turns.

Commonality challenges and weakens the image of diametric polarization between self

and society. *Frankenstein*'s framed narratives do not pit individual desires against collective

ideals and principles. Rather, they accord. Shelley's nested tales emblematize a felicitous

marriage between two subjectivities, those of the discrete I and the community. Particularly, both *Frankenstein*'s separate narratives (the private sphere) and its overall Chinese-box structure (the public arena) foreground significant human needs: sympathy, understanding and mutual understanding, and knowledge-creation as the common teleologies between individual and collective. Each character separately desires these elements. Relation of account and listening translate private desire into social reality and activity that mirror that desire; story transcends the single self to the realm of group objective. Peter Brooks speaks of culture's need "to seek the expression of central individual and collective meanings through narrative design" (5). Once he has openly given his narrative, each character arguably does not own his history anymore. It has transformed its identity to public knowledge that all share and may narrate at his pleasure, with the result that no one person can lay claim to it. Because of its public nature, storytelling and oral culture are social in nature, and the spoken narrative becomes a communal possession (Jackson 27). Private tale becomes public property. Shelley's narrative and individual tales thus act the role of bridge between the two complementary consciousnesses of self and community. Frames are simultaneously part of the internal world they delimit and external realm they exclude (MacLachlan and Reid 54). Victor tells his tale to combat another's ignorance of the natural world. Later, he listens to the Creature's tale in order to bring his creation happiness. In each instance, Victor satisfies an individual desire and, in doing so, promotes a social principle or ideal. Tale unites the two poles, making them concordant in goals. *Frankenstein*'s narrative fulfills a joint *telos* for two self-aware actors: the individual character's desire for sympathy and knowledge and Shelley's linked, multi-story community that makes such things possible separately and collectively through the act of auditory engagement.

Garrett positions nineteenth-century Gothic's narrative force and social-relational personality inside the parameters of discourse and quasi-contractual exchanges. According to him, Gothic's social character reflected the novel's role as public actor: "Nineteenth-century fiction … stag[ed] narrative as a s social transaction in an age when the novel had become a central cultural institution" (25). In fact, the mode's reflexivity almost always originates "indirectly from figures engaged in narrative transactions" (25). Rather than present solipsistic or detached characters, works such as *Frankenstein* reflect community dynamic because they privilege and require storytelling conversation and interpersonal narrative engagement: "Here we begin to move … to the dialogical: a narrative can exert force only in the medium of an answering interest or desire; [we must consider] … a transactional account" (21). Garrett's work posits a literary economics. Gothic narrative becomes a marketplace space in which readers, listeners, and tellers vend their services at print and auditory levels: "As nineteenth-century Gothic fiction repeatedly finds ways to remind us, … competing versions [of such issues as incorporation and exclusion] are themselves effects of narrative, the psychosocial transaction of telling and receiving stories" (8-9). Ross Chambers, too, argues for narrative as exchange and transaction that births social relationships (4-6, 10, 12).

*Frankenstein*ian storytelling and narrative structure represent mutual exchanges. Shelley constructs the tale as one overarching Lockean Social Contract.[1] Duyfhuizen recognizes the contractual nature of the work's accounts (208). Colene Bentley asserts that these contracts help

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[1] John Locke (1632-1704), political philosopher who authored *The Two Treatises of Government*, argued that human beings form societies by voluntary agreement, essentially, a contract to surrender rights that they would have had living alone in a state of nature in return for the benefits and safety that companionship and government offer, respectively.

them reimagine their relationships and even recreate their worlds (125). Superficially, these

trades appear as one-to-one. Walton offers his ear for Victor's account. Meanwhile, Victor

fulfills a Lockean obligation respecting the Creature: "For the first time, I felt what the duties of

a creator towards his creature were" (74). Shelley's word choices in *Frankenstein* here imply the

contractual nature of narrative between Victor and Walton on the one hand and Victor and the

Creature on the other. Bentley notes the "compact" of the latter pair (325), and Beenstock

observes that "social contract theory helps account for some of *Frankenstein*'s iconic cultural

status" (407). *As such*, her frame narrative construction rests partly on the socially binding nature

of verbal or tacit pact between two parties Newman argues that the monster's purpose of

narration is to bind Victor to a promise (153). In each encounter, characters create and fulfill

mutual agreements. Narrative is the focal point of contractual relationships that bind her

individuals into a collective. Reader-response scholar David Bleich characterizes reading and

narrative as compromising movement of multivocality and univocality: "The assumption of the

subjective paradigm is that collective similarity of response can be determined only by each

individual's announcement of the response and subsequent communally motivated negotiative

comparison" (135). As Garrett notes, "[W]hether solitary or social, the life represented in a

narrative is already linked with others through the transaction of telling it" (102). Narrative

transactions are the social ligaments of experiences and subjectivities that find expression

through character interactions. Experiences are the commoditied goods of narrative exchanges,

the terms of the storytelling contract.

　　　　In *Frankenstein*, linkage of lives occurs both immediately and mediately. Superficially,

narrative exchange occurs between only two parties, one teller and one auditor. However, below

the surface, transaction creates an interdependent web of shared lives. Frames are not "unmediated," but interact with "surrounding discourse" (Coste and Pier 304). Because of its layered nature, Shelley's framed narrative binds and obliges Walton to hear the tales of the Creature and Safie along with Victor's. Victor must do the same, hearing Safie's tale along with the monster's. By implication, each narrative contract extends beyond its original intended, consensual boundaried terms, moving outside the immediate dyadic circle of teller and listener, tying all persons together. *Frankenstein* is meta-contractual. Particularly, Walton's narrative pact with Victor permits him to engage in the storytelling agreement that the latter forges with the Creature. Walton vicariously and by implicit consent agrees to hear from the monster and Safie. This agreement binds him with beings that he has never met. The same for Victor.

Even we readers conclude a contract. Listening to Walton signifies our implied consent to hear out Victor, the monster, and Safie. Each contract constitutes an interpretive "reading" for the actors in the reading-experience circle inasmuch as an encounter helps a character understand another. Walton reads Victor and the beings in his friend's tale, and Victor reproduces that act with the Creature and his tale's characters. Each man agrees to read others beyond the scope of his immediate interlocutor's experience. Because *Frankenstein* continually explores embedded mental processes, Shelley creates meta-interiority as part of narrative investigation. O'Dea argues that the novel moves backward from the Creature's interior to Walton's exterior (para 11). Meanwhile, we readers enter into a contractual community with characters and author, agreeing to participate in text and, at a deeper level, with them. Rauch argues for the epistemological experience of this engagement:

> Shelley's critique of knowledge permeates the novel as a whole. … The novel is thus self-consciously constructed as a kind of "knowledge text" that functions in the tradition of the "thought problem." ... Shelley's narrative technique is an inclusive one, conscripting the reader into a participatory process that is diametrically opposed to

Frankenstein's isolationist and exclusionary methodology. … [T]he author of this text has not only assembled a set of narratives for the reader, she has allowed the reader to become part of that structure. (229)

Rauch implies that Shelley's work is meta-epistemological. One mind's knowledge explores embedded states of knowledge.

Frankenstein's storytelling agreements and contractual narrative, as well as its framed construction, represent a tension between separation and assimilation. Shelley's narrative community encloses a conflicted polar space of segregation and inclusion; individual characters seek and represent singular identity and independent articulative expression, but also desire interaction and companionship with others. Her tales each enjoy their distinct, demarcated spaces in the work. Because she defines where one ends and another begins, the reader is able to ascertain when a new subject articulates his history. John Frow notes this delimitation as a separating boundary between realities (27), and John Lamb argues that the "[t]he thematic focus of Gothic fiction … is the nature of identity" (307). Conversely, the tales collectively incarnate fluidity of narrative as each connects with and flows into another. *Frankenstein* creates stable narrative spatial delimitations for placement and position of each character's speech. Connecting them through shared social values (e.g., sympathy) destabilizes those boundaries. Observing that Victor is "unsocial," Walton "endeavor[s] to win his confidence" (15). The Creature, "bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us," implores Victor to grant social tendernesses toward him (72-73).

Balancing these demonstrations of interpersonal drives are the articulations of desire for individual self-expression from both: "Listen to my tale" (16, 73). Ultimately, each character's storytelling rests on a tension or paradox in frame narrative, namely, the unassimilable assimilation. Through telling and narrative, each hopes that his story will join him to society with

another, satisfying social needs, but will simultaneously permit him to retain his individuality, his unique history. Victor references "strange incidents" and "impossible" events singular to his experience, relating them to Walton (16). His Creature asks to "speak in [his] own defence," to tell his uniquely "strange" story even as he pleads for society with his creator (73, 74). Shelley's narratives singly and together reflect the inner conflict of storytelling: the simultaneous desire to join with community as a social creature, but to preserve one's singularity through self-expressive tales and unique life-text.

Characters who hand over their stories surrender some of their subjectivities to the community consciousness. *Frankenstein*'s community becomes the public sharing of private desires, thoughts, and history. Tellers and telling are additive regarding knowledge. Nelles points to frames as "epistemological embedding" because they communicate knowledge and underscore "who imparts what to whom" (86). Narration births, using tale to reproduce knowledge; where one had it, now two or more do. More, community and narrative become focal and union points of internal self and outer-world space. Through story, individual subjective consciousness transcends to a like societal self-awareness. Each awareness shares the common desires for companionship, sympathy, and mutual understanding. Shelley's narrative is a series of transmissions, story linking teller and receiver as a micro-society. Brooks notes that the nineteenth-century novel concerned itself with repeatedly staging transmission and problems with transmissibility; the frequent use of frame reflected the question of "where an inheritable wisdom is to be found" (27-28) and passed on. Each transmission constitutes a reading—or metareading—by a listener. Passing on narrative forces socially proper, unselfish behavior through the medium of language, compelling the teller to consider others in his relation. Of embedded narratives such as *Frankenstein*, Duyfhuizen notes a requisite experiential "legibility"

of a tale: "[T]he narrator must translate experience and … discourse into a language that is intelligible to the listener and appropriate to his or her position in the narrating situation" (16). Through relation of a single tale, two or more actors share the same understanding and knowledge. The novel's frames use oral relation to transform individual desire and impulses into collective subject nature with the same character and composition. With linkage of single tales, the story alters its personality from private to communal.

In so doing, the framed structure births shared, communal experience and meaning. Narrative is "a favorite frame for humans to make sense of experience … and identity" (Wolf "Framings of Narrative" 127). *Frankenstein*'s readers encounter the polar tensions of individual versus group in this space. Addressing *Frankenstein*'s treatment of character perceptions and reality, Dionyssios Agiomavritis argues that Walton and Victor imperil(ed) their mental conditions with neglect of communal dialogue by which to gauge their grasp on reality. Isolation of mind from collective interaction creates warped, false conceptions of truth. Separation births metaphysical chaos:

> There are occasions … when those around us espouse behavior that exhibits traits of lawlessness and unreasonableness … and ceases to be a measure of moderate conduct. When one surveys the community and can no longer identify the anchor of true order, that reference point of common sense, which the middle level of existence [Aristotle's Golden Mean, i.e., living moderately and eschewing excess] represents, one becomes seized by a disorienting sense of crisis. … [O]ne initially suffers the need to pull away in the hopes of salvaging an authentic experience of *truth*. … [One must] move towards a more intimate appreciation of *truth* that develops through the cultivation of individual souls. (65; emphases the author's)

Frankenstein's embedded tales serve as counteractive antidote to solipsism and its perceptual extremes. In its operation, shared tale compares perceptions of truth for validity. Meaning and meaning-making move from private mind to public scrutiny. Frame narrative is able to create and fashion significance at different levels. Shelley's characters relate their singular ontological

conditions and experiences, impressing their individual marks on the world with storytelling. They self-read. Walton's early letters reveal an insatiable desire to relate his personal story; they employ the egocentric "I" frequently. Victor narrates a personal tale concerning strange "powers and occurrences" (16). Victor and monster alike urge their listeners to hear their unique accounts. The latter desires an impartial hearing of his particular history, characterizing it as a courtroom testimony.

Through storytelling, Shelley links individual meaning with collective, fashioning the latter at least somewhat from the former. Each character through public recounting reconnects with the personal significance of his private existence and condition. Merging private and public with narrative, he bonds more tightly with self even as he unites with society. The Creature's defense is his "own" (73); furthermore, he forms a subjective self-image as an unfairly accused party and "bound" to Victor (72). Meanwhile, Victor regards himself in his narration as cursed (16). His story underscores a personal perspective of existence as deterministic. Moreover, Victor sees his narration as revealing and adding a sober dose of reality to the public consciousness: "I do not doubt that my tale conveys … internal evidence of the truth of the events of which it is composed" (16). This internal-external reciprocity manifests itself in two ways. Walton and the others need the presence of public space for a teller to reaffirm and revisit the meaning of his private story, existence, and identity. Moreover, they exercise individual agency in helping impact and transform, even if slightly, the public subjective dynamic with the addition of a personal tale to the community conversation.

BUILDING COMMUNAL UNDERSTANDING:

FROM PRIVATE EXPERIENCE TO COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE

Narrative experiential organization and meaning-making express themselves in *Frankenstein* through four interrelated mechanisms or thematic areas: beginnings, development, answers, and knowledge. Each aspect works to contribute to an ontological understanding of self and community. Narrative's use of tale to integrate and cohere experience foregrounds Gothic's predisposition to set up, then explain the mysterious. According to Wolf, "[f]rames are … basic orientational aids that help us to navigate through our experiential universe" ("Frames, Framings, and Framing Borders" 5). Characterizing the mode as affective limits our understanding of the intellectual depths at which it operates. In fact, Gothic is epistemological in nature. In literary narrative, we see its writers use story, including deliberately created gaps in story, to invite the reader toward knowledge and understanding of the natural world and people. *Frankenstein* incorporates a consistent sequential model into its narrative structure: unresolved question; teleological intent on the listener's part that expresses itself as inquiry; exposition; and, finally, creation of knowledge. Regarding the first in order, Shelley constructs narrative to explore and determine origins. The work commences with unfolding Victor's youthful fascination with alchemy. If the child is father to the man, the reader understands the man more fully and deeply by comprehending the child. Victor's narrating his Edenic beginnings helps the reader make sense of just how far he falls from grace in his Faustian overreaching. Shelley takes pains to unfold the Creature's "birth." Because of his passage from dark to light and his initial confusion in encountering the world, the monster experiences a quasi-natal event much as an infant might. This happening underscores the Creature's experiential movement toward knowledge and understanding as something akin to childhood development.

Shelley meshes origins with process narratively as completion to beginnings. *Frankenstein*'s accounts serve as sequential expositions of how motivations and experience develop, explanations that contribute to and raise levels of communal knowledge and understanding of reasoning and logic. Characterizing Gothic merely as affective response limits understanding of its narrative personality. The mode's focus on interiority lends itself to investigating all aspects of the mind, including the cerebral. For Gothic, how a perspective evolves becomes just as significant as the product of that evolution. While Shelley's 1831 introduction avowedly admits her intent to create *frisson* with narrative, her constituent tales uncover how the various characters' intellects work and arrive at answers. Catherine Moreland arrives at her outlandish conclusions through overactive logical processes. Austen takes great care to limn out the paths of logic that her heroine employs in surmisals. Walton and Victor become willing auditors through a desire to understand underlying rationales to their fellows' behaviors. As a mode, Gothic offers the reader a reading experience that encounters exploration and close examination of characters' reasoning processes. *Frankenstein* does not stop with individual subjects. Rather, its narratives help blend the private intellect with the collective mind. Storytelling merges two minds. Through the telling of their existences, characters are able to integrate their experience into the larger fabric of collective wisdom and cognition. Individuals are not the only entities that inquire. Listeners by the very nature of their auditory engagement become investigators for knowledge. Shelley casts listening partly as intellectual quest for experience. Victor hears out the Creature with the expectation of ascertaining whether the latter is truly wicked. Indeed, audience becomes examination into intellect and moral fiber. Walton's listening arises from a desire to understand the nature and origins of Victor's mental suffering.

In each instance, a character wants—nay, craves—exposition and process. Notably, both listeners express these wishes with the intent of action; Walton yearns to alleviate his friend's pain and Victor desires to determine how he can contribute to the Creature's happiness. The monster's request, according to Bentley, blends self and society: "Shelley renders the connection between subjectivity and collectivity as flexible and dynamic [so that the creature can] "fit" oneself to social norms and yet also formulate demands upon society to be responsive to one's own particular circumstances" (331). Each narrative event in *Frankenstein* embodies an investigative phenomenon in which a character contemplates some practical action on his part to address another's emotional needs. However, before he can address emotional needs, he must perform an intellectual journey through the interior paths of reasoning that lead to emotional suffering.

Before this teleological action can transpire, narrative must become a mechanism to integrate two experiential worlds, those of listener and teller. Shelley's accounts represent a hybrid paradox of individuated absorption. *Frankenstein*'s stories begin as emblems of self-expression, but conclude as devices that blend the teller and listener into the social group. Minds that incorporate new ideas into their spaces never return to their previous configurations; because the teller fills the vessel of another's mind with a related experience, Shelley shapes narrative as an agent of social and intellectual transformation. Moreover, it alters not only external social relations, but also interiorities. Narrative operates at separate levels as a unifier. At the lower tier, listeners act as individuals. Listening bonds two private subjective natures into one with common understanding of experience. In an overarching sphere, each listener stands in for the community and its collectivity. Shelley's auditors play a dual, blended role, occupying the liminal space between private and public. Each narrative exchange shapes listeners into two personalities: a

blend of private subject and communal being. Indeed, her narratives reside in that overlapping sphere. Walton notes that Victor's suffering separates him from the human race. The explorer's expressions of compassion have the intent not just of connecting with Victor with another human being, but to restore him to fellow-feeling with the entire race. His role as note-taker implies the possibility of private reading tomorrow and for the general public the day after that. The Creature tells Victor that the compassionate listening of one man will inspire him to love all mankind. Convinced by the Creature to listen, Victor states his intention to engage partly because of his social duties toward his creation. He characterizes it superficially as only creator to creature, but his word choice of the word *duties* underscores the societal dimension of his auditory act.

Shelley's structure further fashions the work as meta-intellectual. That is, listeners' minds exercise themselves in processing information about other minds. Furthermore, the work acts as embedded intellect; Walton's and Victor's roles as audiences grant them access to minds that they have never met. *As such*, Shelley's work embodies multiple experiential unions beyond those of immediate listener-teller dyad. Because the auditor acts as a representative of humankind generally during the act of hearing, Shelley intends to fuse and integrate experience and experiential spheres at multiple levels. Individuals share and combine ontological understandings personally, dyadically. Moreover, the teller's story weaves and assimilates his private experience into the public existential, epistemological tapestry.

Shelley's third narrative device is the creation and answering of mystery. *Frankenstein*'s storytelling acts here to organize experience and make meaning in two broad phenomenological areas: the acknowledgement of existential mystery as reality and the human need to answer questions. Lamb notes Frankenstein as emblematic of the mode's existential facet: "In its investigation of what constitutes being, the Gothic novel is best suited to the exploration of

ontological crisis and ontological insecurity" (306). Narratives individually and collectively embody empirical inquiry. Singly, each character conducts auditory investigation into a tale in order to determine behavioral and psychic etiology. Almost as scientists, listeners involve themselves aurally to determine the operative laws behind human demeanor and the tableau of the universe. Indeed, the novel's narrative *telos* rests partly on oral story as its own laboratory; listeners assume their roles as positivist researchers to ascertain the principles upon which the spaces of world and mind work. Victor promises to relate to Walton strange incidents that will "enlarge your faculties and understanding," things "you have been accustomed to believe impossible" (16). Walton listens in order to solve a mystery about Victor's disturbed mind. In so doing, the explorer will understand better the social duties of a friend. The Creature calls his account strange. Victor listens in order to determine how to bring the monster happiness; moreover, a fair hearing permits the former to understand his social self through satisfaction of moral duty. Both listeners investigate the cohering laws behind behavior with a deontological end.[2]

Overall, *Frankenstein* is an empirical concatenation representing one long, extended investigation. Walton's questioning impulses go well beyond the Arctic. Indeed, he explores the mind, plumbs the depths of experience. Shelley constructs this exploration as multiple tiers. Before he can fully understand Victor, Walton must understand the Creature and the motivations that drive him. In this way, the novel is meta-empirical, exploring Victor's investigation of the monster as well as Victor himself. More, before we can comprehend how the monster drove his creator to vengeance, the explorer must ascertain why the Creature resorted to the murderous

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[2] Deontology: a branch of ethics that bases action on moral duty and obligation

rage that ignited that indignation. These single and combined narratives foreground another facet of Gothic intellectualism. Shelley's characters are psychiatrists. Victor begins with exploring life beyond death and later engages with the Creature's mind in order to alter its existential condition. Similarly, Walton begins with questing geographical secrets and ends with investigating a troubled mind also to alter an existence. *Frankenstein* emblematizes Gothic's predisposition toward establishing and answering questions. Shelley created her work as multiple mysteries and one huge puzzle. More than affective, the mode serves as literary positivist investigation into existence to determine how mystery interfaces with known experience. To achieve this effect, Shelley narratively alters the significance and role of science and the scientific in her work. Readers begin with investigative projects such as polar and reanimative and ends engaging with a subtler empirical journey into mind and its workings.

Inquiry produces understanding as its fruit. *Frankenstein*'s ultimate goal in organizing experience and meaning making is the creation of knowledge. Characterizing the Gothic as merely affective discounts appreciation of the mode as intellectually teleological. That is, its literature contemplates and implements the exploration of experience with the objective of creating epistemic foundations for persons and community. Works such as Shelley's cohere character and reader sensibilities into a greater comprehension of how a subject's mind will relate to its environment. Furthermore, they seek knowledge of how universe and natural world work. Shelley constructs single and collective narrative as pragmatic. In fact, storytelling serves utilitarian purposes. Shelley's language choices concerning characters' reasons for auditory involvement echo or imply the vocabulary of nineteenth-century utilitarianism,[3] with its

[3] Utilitarianism: a nineteenth-century political philosophy with proponents such as Jeremy (cont. from the previous page) Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). Bentham's "greatest happiness principle" espoused as its teleology the greatest happiness for individuals and society generally.

emphasis on practicality and happiness. Bentley foregrounds the presence of Bentham's thought in *Frankenstein* as foundational thought for the formation of community (326). In each event, characters narrate or listen in order to accomplish some practical end. Walton's "first task" is assurance of his sister (5). Victor assumes the role of narrator, but considers his tale in the light of utility. Not only does he desire, as he asserts, to enlarge Walton's understanding, but questions whether his account "will be useful" to his friend (16). Victor's stories add to the public understanding, but he cautions Walton that only certain types of knowledge are beneficial, others dangerous. Further, Victor continues his pragmatic approach with the Creature. He will listen to the monster's tale so that he might achieve something useful in "render[ing] him happy" (74). *Frankenstein* highlights Gothic's nature as a creator of knowledge and understanding through the exploration of experience. Yet, this production operates bilaterally. As literary mode, it investigates for the mind how the universe operates, with the equal exploratory quest as to how the mind will relate to its world. Shelley's narrative functions epistemologically as a reciprocity or a revolving door. As a two-way portal, story communicates to intellect the world's character and, in reverse, relates this intellect back to the universe by defining that interaction.

Shelley's four narrative meaning-making devices (initial mystery, developing investigation, unfolding of truth, and knowledge-creation) eventually perform cooperatively to transform subjective sense experience and perception to social knowledge, reason, and collaboration. Tale becomes a figurative, metaphysical transfer of self from isolated subject to community. In her storytelling, she accentuates Gothic's ability to create understanding of the cosmos through the charting of experience, even if respecting the abnormal. Experientially, *Frankenstein*'s narrative content and structure function jointly as a mediating gateway between personal phenomenology and public epistemology. To accomplish this end, storytelling acts as

both process and product. Each segment, however, functions differently to realize that metamorphosis. Individual narration, reflecting process, acts as the self-centric (as opposed to selfishness or solipsistic self-centeredness) expression of private consciousness. Product, on the other hand, functions as communicentric. At its conclusion, a narrative intends some act that validates and reaffirms the significance of social values. Storytelling moves beyond just sharing of story, but designs to bind teller and listener more tightly with interconnective act. The sequential nature of both Victor's and the Creature's tales mimetically recall the progress of intellectual development from childhood to maturity. Victor traces his history from his naïve origins to his sad, bitter wisdom as an adult. The Creature's history begins with a quasi-natal experience of awakening to an unfamiliar world, proceeds to learning language as would a child, then his autodidactic experience with the books. These works help his mind develop with four things that a growing subjectivity learns as part of its experiential condition: emotional self (*Werther*), vice and virtue (*Lives*), identity and self-image (*Paradise Lost*), and origins (scientific journal). Both storytellers' word choices foreground the nature of process that underlies intellectual growth; words such as *progress, discovery, unfolding*, and *unravel* weave themselves through these narratives as sequential disclosure that seems to imitate the development of mind (33, 83, 94, 96). Each story commences with a childlike perspective of the world that recalls Piaget's observations of juvenile egocentricity.[4] Victor becomes self-absorbed in his alchemical and scientific pursuits. Meanwhile, the Creature begins his existence as loving and trusting, believing the world to be the same.

       Shelley fashions individual narrative in order to transform self-preoccupation into social

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[4] Jean Piaget (1896-1980), a clinical psychologist, produced pioneering work in child development, which he divided into stages of mental progress. The egocentric period is ages 2-7.

propriety and values. Narration and listening serves as devices that attempt to alter egocentricity into unselfishness and consideration for others. A character's private experience adds information and wisdom on which the collective may or must act for some individual or social good. This newfound wisdom guides and directs the socializing acts to follow. Victor pleads for Walton's collaborative assistance in tracking down the Creature. In turn, the Creature connects himself interpersonally with his creator with the request for a project that will later birth another social bond, that of companionship. After the Creature finishes his account, Victor repeats the justificatory words he spoke before listening, namely, that the monster's arguments weighed with him rationally (113). Ultimately, the foundation of the *Frankenstein*ian community's knowledge rests on self and the individual. Narrative builds society out of the materials of subjects' personal epistemic states. That is, before characters can connect socially at some appreciable depth, tellers must relate their private stories. Only then can community possess knowledge and understanding. Once he has connected emotionally and intellectually with another human being through narration, the *Frankenstein*ian character merges his subjective self with the collective and becomes a member of it. What the work reflects is story's satisfaction of need, not just desire. Before Walton and Victor can perform their respective social acts, they must listen and listen fully. Story fulfills the needs of tellers for sympathy and understanding and of listeners to grasp the character of their obligations. Robert Waxler characterizes Shelley's narrative as a chronicle of such needs, including that for social connectiveness (34). If desire is the father of *Frankenstein*'s narratives, necessity is the mother.

Imagining Gothic as a mode that focuses on isolation and detachment does pale justice to its nature as relational, connective. Much like science, Gothic uses narrative to investigate and explain cause and effect; Shelley uses oral account to uncover cause. Establishing connection

rests partly on determining geneses; discursive interaction uncovers causation. As a narrative mode, it examines the interrelation between self and universe and self and community. Shelley's tales assume a quasi-scientific teleology, namely, seeking origins of observed effect. As a mode, Gothic represents multi-inquiry; *Frankenstein*'s stories explore not just experience, but recondite *reasons* for these. In literacy practice, inquiry regarding effect must proceed beyond surface text to hidden space: "When we read, we usually base our construction s upon [a] certain kind of causal logic; we look for the causes and consequences of a particular event elsewhere, in elements unlike the event itself " (Todorov 74). While narrative performs this role generally, Gothic "stranges" those connections. *Frankenstein* underscores the role of inquiry as both world-relational and social-relational. The two spheres overlap but do not completely unite. Gothic's empirical slant probes the connections between personal subjective nature and society. Walton's inquisitive nature impels him to learn about the hidden drives operating within Victor. Beyond desiring to comfort his friend, the explorer listens for a self-interested reason: why his ambition might be Faustian. Victor listens to the monster to understand the rationale behind the latter's special request. Vicariously, the monster interacts with the cottagers for answers concerning human behavior. Inquiry unearths these hidden impulses. Catherine Moreland's cogitations lead her to fabricate sources of thinking in General Tilney's actions. Moreover, storytelling joins cause with consequence. For this reason, Victor resolves to understand not only the monster's experiential history, but also how and why the being ended up unhappy. As with Walton, Victor has a personal interest to gratify in hearing out the Creature. That interest lies in determining his relation to others via social-moral obligation. Shelley fashions the spirit of inquiry with two benefits in mind; characters probe with both personal advantage in mind as well as remembering how auditory study will result in help for another.

Ultimately, *Frankenstein*'s narratives singly and together serve as social empiricism, characters inquiring into each other and their unseen causative motivations. By its very nature, listening compels empiricism. Auditory engagement with story necessitates patience with process, with gradual, even piecemeal, accumulation and coherence of data. Moreover, the act of coherence must wait until collection ends. Progressive piecing together of narrative informational bits imitates the reader's daily existence:

> In whatever way, and whatever circumstances the reader may link the different phases of the text together, it will always be the process of anticipation … [that] transforms the text into an experience for the reader. The way in which this experience comes about through a process of continual modification is closely akin to the way in which we gather experience in life. And thus the "reality" of the reading experience can illuminate basic patterns of real experience. (Iser "The Reading Process" 56; see also Todorov 78)

At a metareading level, Shelley's reader must replicate the characters' waiting processes. Iser observes that narrative imposes this obligation of patience on the reader: "Now, if communication between text and reader is to be successful, clearly the reader's activity must also be controlled in some way by the text. … The control cannot be understood as a tangible entity occurring independently of the process of communication (*Prospecting* 33). If relating narrative constitutes inchoate but developing process of assimilation into community, conclusion of relation completes that process. Reader as metalistener must evolve into social being—as a member of the community—along with character listeners. Curiosity and its satisfaction both act as foundations to Shelley's society.

Shelley's narrative metamorphoses individual curiosity into collective discovery of knowledge. Her work's tales transfer possession of knowledge and singular ontological state from the private domain to public ownership. Through unearthing and transfer of this corpus of wisdom, storytelling moves beyond a "literary" role or character. Storytelling permits the community to engage in empirical investigations into causation, natural laws, general operative

principles, and experiential observation and encounter. *As such*, the novel's accounts singly and collectively transform Shelley's fictional society into a narratologically scientific community. Each of her narratives lives in a liminal space between the literary and extraliterary. In the latter sphere, tale moves into areas of psychology; linguistics; and philosophy and metaphysics, including deontology. The result is the narrators' turning conversation into "science" or quasi-scientific empirical method of discovering the operations of mind.

Frankenstein constitutes an overall, extended literary scientific experiment in psychology and behavioral science. She fashions the experiment at multiple levels. Her language consistently reflects the scientific or quasi-scientific nature of her work's stories. Walton desires to understand the origins of Victor's grief as would a counselor or psychiatrist. Before he begins relation, Victor asserts the "evidence" behind his story (16). Victor listens to the monster's tale in order to understand the nature of moral duty and happiness; his audience with his creation embodies a study in ethics, in fact, utilitarian ethics. Here he "weighed the various arguments" of his creation (74). The Creature listens to the cottagers' interactions and leisure reading as curious inquiry into human behavior and language. His word choices indicate a decidedly positivist perspective of experience. Language, he states twice, is "science," in one case a knowledge that he elevates as "godlike" (83, 84). The Creature repeatedly characterizes his reading as more than light enjoyment, in fact, as the close, diligent, industrious study that a researcher might demonstrate in investigation. He calls the DeLaceys a "school in which I had studied human nature" (97). In his speech, the Creature is just as much a scientist as his creator. His narrative, he says, reflects the scientifically investigative nature of the law court in its objective investigation of fact. Each listener becomes an empirical researcher of separate realms of

experience. Listening as a form of "reading" another transforms reading and textual encounter into a scientific endeavor.

Single and collective inquisitive spirit move *Frankenstein*'s narrative beyond even the social-scientific experiment. Inquiry, curiosity, question, investigation—Shelley invests narrative with these elements as a means of defining community. As single subjects, her characters both practice self-articulation and through listening understand better their social selves. On the communal plane, though, *Frankenstein* is a collective seeking its overall subjective persona. The work's framed narratives represent embedded inquiry, or meta-inquiry. Bleich notes that acquiring stories is insufficient for understanding; both single and collective readers must exercise additional intellect to synthesize information for the communal good (156). Narrative traverses beyond creating social bonds; more, it helps determine communal self-image. Through storytelling and auditory commitment, the work's society establishes and recognizes its guiding principles, its personality, its operative "rules." Walton and Victor not only come to understand the pervasive character of duty in society as a consequence of listening, but materialize that understanding through listening as a social obligation. Shelley's narrative acts the role as satisfier of communal duty. Both men also come to understand the general social costs of individual selfishness and egocentricity. *As such*, storytelling as quasi-economics evolves into a cost-benefit analysis and a communal exploration of the balance—or lack thereof—between self and community. These conditions depend for their effect on individual or intersubjective readings. Listening as sensory engagement becomes an interpretive activity, a decoding of a narrator's ontological condition.

In fact, reading in *Frankenstein* occurs as a tripartite phenomenon. Narrative explores consciousness; experience; and, ultimately, knowledge. Furthermore, Shelley structures this

event in stages of evolutionary development. Without mystery and question, *Frankenstein*'s narrative would not create community, or at least create it fully. Characters and their minds are puzzles. Through story, Shelley moves inward to character psyche for answers. Shared oral narrative connects two consciousnesses and experiential realms. The structure creates and embodies not just interaction, but, more, characters' mutual participation in each other's experiences. Auditory "reading," even brief, signifies involvement with ontology. When they listen, characters' experience extends past a teller's private nature to comprehending the human condition generally. Although a listener, Walton is the first interparticipative talebearer. He shares his aspirations with Victor, who reciprocally offers an admonitory account. Their narratives share a common motif: frustration and misery that have adulterated noble ambition. Because Shelley fashions the novel as a morality play, the work serves up a universal truth that helps community understand itself as a moral creature. Similarly, Victor unfolds his story— albeit brief—of wretchedness and misery before the Creature's relation. In reality, creator's and creation's tales mirror each other as like narratives of pain and tortured souls. Creating another moral to her cautionary fable for societal benefit, Shelley sketches out in detail the misery and woe pursuant to isolation and detachment from social bonds; in fact, the moral extends to underscoring listeners' and tellers' inescapable lot in life as social creatures. *Frankenstein*'s story births auditor-narrator pairs whose reciprocated hearings constitute exchanged readings in their own right. Shelley channels these occurrences as mutual sensory participation in subject existences as a vehicle for society's discovery of its identity.

CONCLUSION: GOTHIC AS INQUISITIVE COMMUNITY

Shelley consistently employs dual motivations to initiate, perpetuate, and conclude narrative and exchange of story. Walton listens to Victor out of curiosity and to determine a course of action for aiding Victor. Victor's motives regarding the Creature's story are similar. In each instance, *Frankenstein*'s narratives individually and together originate in inquisitive impulses and teleological desires. Through their own words, both men persistently underscore the significance of narrative as both process and product. Neither is more important than the other. That is, the work satisfies two vital subjective and communal needs with story. Unfolding signifies process that becomes an enticing invitation to inquire and speculate; concluding narrative permits readers and listeners to determine the next step in listener-teller relations. *As such*, *Frankenstein*'s collective, public knowledge ultimately rests on and finds its source not in the group, but in and on the individual subject; without the self's inquisitive drives and its desire to hear story, the community would not learn individual experiences. These two drives of inquiry and teleology constitute the links that connect and unite the storytelling nexus. With embedded narrative, Shelly creates listeners who read interpretively through the acts of sharing and listening. Narrative community arises through proactive participative construction of cues. The novel builds that community on the sensorium; decoding of others' experiences necessitates active, involved listening.

     As such, *Frankenstein* foregrounds Gothic's predisposition toward a dual literary reading experience. Specifically, the mode offers textual encounter in visual literacy. Beyond this experience, the writer invites the reader to conjecture interpretively concerning the suspect and inexplicable in people and the world. Other narrative types, particularly murder mysteries and detective fiction, permit the same too. However, these genres lack the supernatural and weirdly

abnormal. Gothic explores—"reads"—the strange relationships between self, community, and universe. In this light, Shelley's work incorporates a reading experience that travels beyond the existences of individual characters and introduces permutations of reading that characterize the Gothic encounter. *Frankenstein*'s text encloses metareading in that we readers meet characters who themselves enjoy books. At a deeper level, we encounter listeners who inquire—"read" interpretively through nonverbal cues—both into others and into those strange relationships. Gothic's readers are able to form conclusions about those abnormalities even as they examine into characters' interpretations of the same things. Consumers who enjoy *Northanger Abbey* do not just read of Catherine's adventures, but also intellectually process and experience her surmisive reading of people and things. What Shelley presents is a meta-interpretive project. Embedded interpretations in *Frankenstein* incarnate Gothic's reading as both direct (immediate encounter with readers and events) and indirect (conjecture and conclusion). Shelley's community engages in both activities.

The mode transforms reading into decoding as much as fact, moving the phenomenon beyond eye and ear to intellect. Here Shelley creates a twofold understanding of interpretation; furthermore, she divides this activity into stages. *Frankenstein* serves as a Gothic emblem of altering the level of reading experience towards deeper involvement with narrative. At one stratum, Walton, Victor, and the Creature construe cues through silent observational reading of the characters they encounter. More actively, they involve themselves at a personal level as audience. This latter event in reality acts as an extension of the first. Listening permits further and deeper interpretive engagement that begins with initial meetings, brief dialogic exchanges, and internalized readings between characters. Reading nonverbals foreruns reading of extended tale. Shelley's narrative sequence implies that silent construction precedes interpretive listening.

Before playing audience to Victor, Walton already decodes certain of his friend's behaviors and demeanor to determine extent of his suffering. Victor's account really only permits more use of the interpretive faculties that Walton had already been exercising long before listening. Meanwhile, Victor construes his creation as unhappy. In fact, during pre-listening he infers that the monster might not be as completely wicked as he thought. Victor's consent to be audience constitutes a concession to the possibility that his initial condemnation might be erroneous. The encounters between both pairs embody a dual understanding of inquiry and interpretive reading between characters: first internal processing of outward cues and signs, then the external act of audience. What the novel's narrative really accomplishes is an extension of reading into the public realm of what has begun in the private. In *Frankenstein*, the former enlarges on the latter. Indeed, listening expands on reading that was already in progress. "Reading" in the novel transpires in two steps, observation and audience.

Inquiry in *Frankenstein* metamorphoses narrative into an empirical device. Shelley fashions character motivations for telling and listening as desires to understand the operative laws of human experience and the world. At their roots, component narratives are research projects into source motives. If empiricism entails accumulation of information, conjecture, and interpretation, such a process of inquiry supports and becomes extended, ongoing reading of the cosmos. Shelley's auditors embrace narrative from the need to comprehend cause and effect. Walton sees Victor's grief, a consequence. Before he can administer emotional comfort, he must understand the origins of the pain. What motivates Victor to play audience to the Creature is unearthing the etiology of the latter's misery. Shelley creates narrative as emotionally empirical to balance listener intellectual need for knowledge. For her, storytelling addresses human needs at multiple levels. The intellective nature of gathering information intends, at least initially in

interpersonal encounters, ministrations of affective comfort for tellers. *As such*, the cerebral side of listening for understanding has the *telos* of satisfying social needs of sympathy and emotional balm. Narrative serves as a linguistic laboratory that tests and records outcomes. Victor's narrative, more than cautionary, details a disastrous effect that proceeded from an unsound cause. If science addresses reproducible experiments, Victor admonishes Walton not to replicate his own failure. Victor's encounter with the Creature is empirical too. He listens, he says, after evaluating—testing internally—the monster's arguments. His research, so to speak, has multiple, interconnected rationales. Acting a role akin to that of the impartial researcher, Victor concedes that he might upon conclusion of audience entertain extenuating causative motivations for the Creature's deeds. An additional objective to inquiry lays in the nature of the monster's special request. Underneath his motives, Victor inquires as a means of understanding the moral laws impacting his role as creator-parent. Even the Creature grasps narrative's empirical nature. His employment of the courtroom metaphor positions storytelling in a figurative arena for the testing, weighing, interpretation, and reading of evidence.

Ultimately, narrative's sources in the spirit of inquiry and empirical drives transforms *Frankenstein*'s characters into a single scientific community. That science transcends experiments in reanimation or polar secrets. Narrators explore—or, rather, research—experience and consciousness. Walton and Victor practice a subtler science of story, one that they did not originally intend. Even the Creature is a scientist. His clandestine observations become inquiries into the nature of language and human relationships. In fact, the monster remarks that he wished to gather sufficient information on the cottagers and interpret their demeanors carefully before approaching them. Shelley fashions her work's narratives as science projects. Not just for interpersonal connection, storytelling serves the additional purpose of collection of information,

interpretation, and determination of cause and effect. *Frankenstein* underscores Gothic's ability to transform reading not just into an intellectual endeavor, but into science itself, with Shelley's reader as a scientist and researcher in his or her own right. Her work evolves into a metascientific literary piece that permits readers to inquire into the inquisitive. The image of *Frankenstein* only as a novelistic community of readers discounts the deeper nature of Shelley's characters as reader-empiricists. *As such*, her public becomes a part of the novel's community too.

In so doing, narrative serves to organize and cohere experience. If science reads the world's mysteries and imposes orderly, systematic understandings of cause and effect, storytelling in *Frankenstein* incarnates the human desire to comprehend a seemingly inexplicable, sometimes confusing existence. Walton wrestles with how to connect with his mysterious guest. Meanwhile, Victor struggles to grasp what he sees as his deterministic existence; what aggravates his misery is frustration over a life's path that he sees as beyond his control. A significant portion of the Creature's narration concerns his awakening to and ignorance about the confusing world into which he has emerged. His struggles do not end with full intellectual development. Employing numerous questions in his speech that incarnate inquisitiveness, the monster's tale demonstrates persistent perplexity as to the purpose of his existence and the reason for his misery. Each narrator experiences at some point bewilderment over how to relate and react to something in his environment or experience. The Gothic narrative experience at heart is really a reading of relationships. Shelley's characters investigate orally the interconnections between self, community, and universe. While all narrative performs this role in diverse ways, Gothic intentionally stranges these relations to reflect existence of unexplained events and motives. Leaving these question marks as narrative gaps invites readers to explore and answer mysteries. Shelley's story empirically charts the evolution of experience from

beginning to end. Characters' tales unearth origins and unfold process toward answering puzzles. Eventually, tellers create knowledge from the products of consciousness and its growth or change. *Frankenstein*'s accounts are essentially birth narratives. The reader encounters minds in their nascent developmental stages and watch as these subjects change with experience, good or bad. Even story conclusions are births. At their terminus, narratives become mechanisms for the completed procreation of knowledge that characters share through oration; this knowledge ultimately will touch on some relational issue. If science inquires into and determines relationships in the natural world, narrative connects self, community, and universe with each other in unearthing and clarifying how they should interact with each other.

The next chapter explores how *Jane Eyre* incorporates the Gothic dual reading experience of direct and interpretive reading as a narrative spatial paradigm. At certain points, Shelley's novelistic structure splits reading and narrative into two halves. Before Walton and Victor each listen to tales, they interpretively read the characters before their eyes. Before each tale, a potential listener already internally fabricates his own narrative for another; Victor is an ethereal suffering soul and the Creature is evil, a cause of pain. Both men encounter characters whose presence and observable miens constitute known text to read. However, observant reading conveys only a small portion of knowledge about a character's nature. They have read only with the eyes, not the ears, except perhaps briefly. Storytellers still possess yet-unknown histories. Through narration, tellers open listener access to their experiences. Listening thus becomes a navigation of previously hidden space. Chapter 3 examines *Jane Eyre* as a Bluebeardian narrative that positions Jane—as a figurative Bluebeard's wife—in a structure that encloses overt and hidden narrative spaces. Thornfield's third floor as unknown space embodies story that

invites empirical investigation by Jane and reader. *As such*, Bertha's domain becomes a hidden

part of existential experience to explore.

CHAPTER 3: BLUEBEARD'S INVITATION:

JANE EYRE AS BLUEBEARDIAN REPRESENTATIVE OF THE READER

As she tours Thornfield with Mrs. Fairfax, Jane Eyre remarks of a hallway that it is "like a corridor in some Bluebeard's castle" (120). Jane's comment unwittingly underscores Thornfield's character narratively and spatially. Her casual observation also points to both Jane's position within the manor's space. The Bluebeard tale and *Jane Eyre* both present an unsuspecting woman in a house that encloses two distinct spationarrative areas: familiar and unknown or hidden. Independent inquisitive spirit uncovers the latter. Charlotte Brontë fashions Jane as a Bluebeard wife figure who must interpretively read and decipher a house of subterfuge. Carol Farkas argues that "while [Jane] may be unwilling, or unable, to pursue the association, for the reader it is unavoidable" (55). Patriarchal violence and sinister intentions thematically link the two texts (Lydon 24). Rochester is a Bluebeardian "unnatural husband" (Anderson 118). Her labor is twofold, though. She must read through both patriarchy and alterity. Both Rochester and Bluebeard script their public image, but in each case the silent ex-wives dictate the true narrative impetus. Their very presence hangs as clouds that drive their lords' concealing activities. Farkas notes that Bertha resists and defies confinement; her existence governs Rochester's secretive actions (58). In their recalcitrance to control, Bertha and Jane are doubles. Bluebeard's wife and Jane represent the independent agency that enters to resist and penetrate the patriarchal controls of their respective domestic spaces. At its root, the Thornfield episode pits two competing spationarratives against each other: normal Jane and Other Bertha. Sandra Gilbert terms Bertha the work's "central confrontation" (781). Like the wife, Jane is a reader in open space decoding secretive environment; even under patriarchal control, she acts the author in scripting her

inquisitive agency. Tony Tanner links text with subjectivity: "Jane Eyre has to write her life, literally create herself in writing: the narrative act is an act of self-definition. Given her social position the only control she has over her life is narrative control" (15). Conversely, Bertha is the true, hidden text; her alterity's very presence maintains a tight, controlling hold over residents' minds and mouths. As Carine Mardorossian asserts, during this period of the work, "Rochester is not as much in control of the discourse as we thought" (19). Through this episode, Brontë foregrounds Thornfield's Gothic nature. As a house, it narrates two stories, one open and familiar to Jane and one secret which none tells her. Overall, the Gothic narrative experience generally is a Bluebeardian-Thornfieldesque narrative house that encloses hidden story spaces among the open textual areas through which the reader navigates.

Jane Eyre becomes a figurative Bluebeard's wife in occupying a house whose macronarrative encloses smaller narratives inside its total physical area. Essentially, Thornfield narrativizes space and spatializes storyline. In the work, "space is textualized and text is spatialized" (Talairach-Vielmas 123). Marie-Laure Ryan argues that narratives are "inscribed on spatial objects" and "situated within real-world space" (424). Brontë frequently applies the word *regions* to both space and psyche; moreover, the work equates mental state with architecture (Chase 64, 65; see also Tommasso 84-85). In her daily routine, Jane negotiates the familiar space and story of the bottom two floors. Bertha and the third floor—"story"—are the smaller hidden, strange tale within the larger. Barbara Waxman states that it "acts like a minor character in the narrative" (250). Occasionally, that latent plotline ruptures into the familiar with Bertha's unexplained visits below. This mystery invites Jane's empirical inquiry respecting the manor's mysterious events. Impeding her quest are more narratives, all deliberately false and misleading or elusive. As deceptive authors, Rochester and Fairfax intentionally create mendacious accounts

or willingly refuse to enlighten Jane with truth. *Jane Eyre* foregrounds Gothic as a Bluebeardian

narrative paradigm that purposely conceals spaces of hidden storyline within the larger known

story with the objective of arousing reader curiosity and inviting intellectual investigation. The

fairy tale is a "leitmotiv" in the work (Talairach-Vielmas 122). Bluebeard's wife receives keys

that inflame her inquisitive nature. Jane encounters enigmas whose natures awake numerous

questions. Discussing Jane and the wife, Maria Tatar casts Gothic as detective story that engages

"investigative curiosity" (69). Although her inquiry is less diligent and more easily frustrated by

residents' pushback, Jane does possess figurative keys of doubt and unanswered inquiry that

persistently encourage her to attempt opening doors of knowledge. Armstrong expands Jane's

literacy to nonverbal; she reads faces (107). Moving further, Deanna Kreisel remarks that the

characters "have recourse to many reading methodologies other than phrenological" (108).

A French fairy tale, the story of Bluebeard became a familiar part of European culture as

early as the seventeenth century through Charles Perrault (1628-1703). The tale also appeared in

the 1812 publication of *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Hungarian composer Bela Bartok adapted the tale

to opera in 1911. Named for the hue of his facial hair, wealthy Bluebeard seeks a wife. Hanging

over his local reputation is the mystery of previous wives who have disappeared. Bluebeard

desires to marry and finally persuades the daughter of a local widow to wed him after he has

feted the family. A month later, he leaves on a business trip. Bluebeard entrusts his bride with a

keyring and permits her to invite guests while he is absent. She may access any room in the

house and enjoy its opulent contents. However, he calls attention to one key whose room he

forbids her to enter. Ultimately, curiosity overcomes her and she unlocks the room to find his

previous wives' corpses. On his return, Bluebeard discovers her disobedience and before he can

execute her, his wife's two brothers slay him. By the time she wrote *Jane Eyre*, Brontë would have been familiar with the Perrault and Grimms' versions.

As such, Jane Eyre, like Bluebeard's wife, stands in for the reader in negotiating and encountering Thornfield's readable and unreadable spaces. Jane's existence is liminal throughout the work (Peel 9; Hennelly 108). In fact, the house is narratively multispatial. Brontë constructs Chinese boxes into these spaces as part of Gothic obfuscation for reader pleasure. One such puzzle manifests itself in physical area. In her daily activity, Jane traverses familiar space as the manor's first two floors. Here she meets with the overt textual realm that presents itself for quotidian interpretive reading. She recognizes and grows comfortable with people and objects in this area. Only eventually does Jane receive the invitation to read into Thornfield's hidden spaces. Even then, Rochester's regulative control over Jane's extent of knowledge about the house splits her reading into two incidents and restricts the first occurrence. She nurses Richard Mason in the outer room while strange sounds nearby mystify her. That room constitutes one spatiotextual section of Thornfield. During this event, her interpretive reading of house and incidents is incomplete, confusing. Only after discovery of Rochester's marital secret does Jane penetrate the inner sanctum of Thornfield's murky narrative levels. As such, the house serves as a Chinese box nesting textual and spatial tiers that Jane gradually accesses. Karen Chase emphasizes the work's "charged system of spatial relations"; this arrangement is not just "adornment," but "the imaginative conditions of the novel"; Brontë "confront[s] emotional urgencies by … locating them in terms of … high and low" (66, 62; author's emphasis).

At a linguistic level, Brontë fashions another such puzzle narratively. Thornfield possesses three contiguous, occasionally overlapping storyrealm worlds. Open physical textual area or "reality" presents a familiar space that deceives Jane with a message of safety. Her realm

exists parallel to gray and dark narrative spaces. Underneath the placid surface lays the submerged reality that is the third-floor secret and the person of Bertha. A tranquil "veneer" masks "discord, deceit, and madness" (Farkas 55). Meanwhile, Thornfield houses the elusive or even deliberately misleading storyline or lines that the manor's residents regularly fabricate regarding the secret. While there, Jane "constructs the building as a repository of other stories" (Talairach-Vielmas 124). Rochester concocts tales and hides truth out of shame. Ever the faithful servant, Fairfax observes the class rule that binds menials to silence respecting employers. A house is a "psychic state" (Bachelard 72). In each case, *Jane Eyre*'s characters construct embedded boxes—spaces—of falsehood or obfuscation that complicate Jane's search for understanding and impede penetration into the truth. Jane interpretively "reads" Thornfield's spaces and its happenings for elucidation, and the others write or rewrite space and story to conceal. Of the novel W.J.T. Mitchell observes that "the possibility of action, understood as self-initiated movement in space, … is continually undermined" (99). The novel's progress is an alternating cycle of concealment by some and eruptive disclosure with Bertha's intrusions. In a perversion of reality, Rochester, Poole, and Fairfax create fictitious, gapped narrative that comes to operate as Thornfield's new reality or truth. What Brontë constructs is a meta-authorial work in which Thornfield's residents, figuratively wresting some creative control from Brontë's hand, author their own version of Thornfield's narrative and its spatial story. Both divided space and misdirecting narrative underscore the character of Gothic reading experience. As a reader of people, events, and the house, Jane occupies and navigates overlapping spaces of fabrication and revelation as she struggles to understand her world's truth.

Interpretation of the Bertha-Jane relationship usually focuses on their doubleness; this characterization largely neglects the narrative rivalry between them. Rejecting the image of a

passive Jane, Lisa Sternlieb emphasizes Jane's continual proactive drawing of contrasts between

herself and Bertha (468-69). Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's treatment of Jane mostly restricts

her to the role of Bertha's rage-filled duplicate vis-à-vis the patriarchy. Jane is "the emblem of a

passionate, barely disguised rebelliousness" (337). What Gilbert and Gubar underscore is Jane's

independent, self-willed spirit. However, their feminist treatment mostly privileges female-male

power relations and neglects inter-female competition under patriarchy.

Bertha is only one female problem for Jane. Jane's position is "ambiguous" because

Poole and Fairfax collude with Rochester as "Bluebeard's helpers" (Lovell-Smith 201-2). Gilbert

calls them "keepers of other women" who share Jane's patriarchal chains (789). Jane's first

conflict with authority involves her aunt; no male authority exists at Gateshead. She must

contend with female resistance at Thornfield on the narrative level: "Bertha Mason and Grace

Poole twist Jane's female stories into mysterious scripts of muteness" (Talairach-Vielmas 122).

Gothic feminist scholarship intimates the presence of contest between female characters for

control in patriarchal space. Diane Hoeveler opposes Bertha with Jane for domination of *Jane

Eyre*'s narrative:

> Jane does not know that her real enemy, the Gothic antiheroine [Bertha], will have to be
> destroyed in such a way that Jane—the heroine—can never be suspected of wrongdoing.
> …
> Bertha enacts … the revenge of the gothic antiheroine on her avatar [Jane], the gothic
> feminist. She promises through her violent actions to warn as well as punish her more
> docile sister by standing as a living object lesson in the consequences of sexual excess
> and pain.
> …
> Jane is ready to extinguish her. … [N]ow she is ready to destroy the attraction to the
> hyperbolic gothic codes that Bertha embodies. (213, 216, 220)

Gilbert and Gubar, too, recognize that Jane must triumph over female resistance to inquiry.

Fairfax and Grace Poole evade Jane's probes. Poole doubles the tacit competitive atmosphere as

"she recurrently figures in Jane's bewildered view as a stand-in for Bertha as the agent of

domestic violence" (Plasa 70). Various women "are important negative "role models" for Jane, and … suggest problems she must overcome before she can reach independent maturity, which is the goal of her pilgrimage (Gilbert and Gubar 350). Gilbert and Gubar here note the existence of inter-female tension as necessary to materialization of Jane's autonomy. For Jane to achieve subjective potential, she must overcome the work's "expendable" females through reason and virtue, something the other women fail to do; Brontë must write Bertha out of the story as part of the fruition of Jane's selfhood (Hanley para 24).Any resistance by Jane toward Rochester's patriarchal rule necessarily involves facing the invisible power that Bertha holds over him. By implication, that state includes coping with women under the same sway. Arguably, Jane's real contest in not so much with patriarchy as with what it refuses to reveal.

Gothic feminist scholarship occasionally requires its Gothic heroines' maturation through struggle with both genders. Some brand the final step here as a full realization of independence and intellect: "Jane Eyre's history may be read as the story of an empowered narrator, which describes her gradual, though partial release from conventional bondages, both social and fictional" (Bodenheimer 388). Laura Green argues that Jane "incarnates … principles of liberal individualism, with its emphasis on the self-development of the subject" (25). For Hoeveler, Brontë and her fellows made Gothic feminocentric; passive-aggressively subverting the patriarchy, they cleverly recodified male spaces. Authors such as Brontë competed with patriarchy indirectly at the ontological level:

> The female gothic writer attempted nothing less than a redefinition of … power in a gendered, patriarchal society … . … [I]n challenging [the] codes of masculine privilege, she possessed … access to the untrammeled desire and energy to reshape her version of "reality." … In her triumphant act of self-creation she rejects her subjugation and status as "other" (19).

Similarly, since patriarchy scripts the governing narrative for women, Jane and the Wife have to "writ[e] a way out of Bluebeard's castle … [and] counter male models of creativity" (Pyrhönen 20). Anne Williams explores Gothic heroines' "realization" through engagement with challenging environments. Addressing the Eros-Psyche myth, Williams argues that these characters' maturation operates under ignorance of ambient threats; appearances may deceive and the world may be dangerous, so the heroines must endure danger and trials (149).[1] Through these experiences, Psyche achieves the cognitive skill of adaptability to her world (153, 155). Brontë's characters grow in subjectivity only through assertion of their individualities upon hostile environments (Kroeber 36-37). Jane materializes into an autonomous subject despite patriarchal rule. She "grows into a voice capable of dialogical confrontations with other narrative voices" (Peters 220). At another level, she must address inter-female competition to bud intellectually: "In a sense, … the mystery of mysteries which Grace Poole suggests to Jane is the mystery of her own life, so that to question Grace's position at Thornfield is to question her own" (Gilbert and Gubar 351). Carol Bock paints Jane's maturation as political self-actualization, a power struggle to assert her own readings of the world against others' fictions (102).

Addressing female "realization," Williams characterizes the Eros-Psyche myth partly as hostility between Psyche and her "antagonist," Aphrodite (153). The goddess is "the female" who becomes Mother Nature, "the material circumstances of life within, against, and through which the "psychological" element is slowly forming itself" (153). Williams describes Psyche's

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[1] Eros and Psyche: in Greek mythology, Eros (Love) loved Psyche (Mind), but would not reveal himself, coming only under cover of night. Goaded by her sisters, Psyche discovers his appearance and he flees. His jealous mother, goddess of love Aphrodite, imposes almost impossible tasks for Psyche to perform as a precondition of regaining him.

intellectual and subjective "realization" because of the complex tasks that she must complete. One such actualization is the character's increase of mental aptitudes: "The series of tasks imply a not-yet-self's experiences of a world increasingly complex and multidimensional. The tasks also show Psyche acting more and more decisively and boldly with each labor" (153). Jane and Psyche are doubles. Jane's difficult labor is to read through the difficult opacity of Thornfield's spationarrative. In her quest, she encounters two evasive, secretive females. Jane "realizes" her empirical readerly intellect as an active inquirer, skeptically doubting both Grace and Rochester. Gothic feminism critiques the female position under patriarchy. However, some Gothic heroines must encounter other females' resistance to readings because of patriarchal rule. Inter-female tension and rivalry offer heroines the chance to grow and self-actualize cognitively and subjectively.

Jane's "reading" Thornfield and self-realization necessitate competing with both spaces and the Other. Her status has placed her in a complicated position. The British governess's social standing, Sally Mitchell notes, was "ambiguous, because she was neither family nor servant" (183; see also Gilbert 788). Andrea Tange explores the "liminal spaces" between the middle-class woman and the governess, boundaries "less stable" than between the former and other servants (180). According to Tange, the typical Victorian middle-class home enclosed segregative spaces that reinforced class demarcations vis-à-vis servants (36, 60, 61). However, social standards required the Victorian woman to create a peaceful, orderly domestic space reflective of British "civilized" culture. This role fed a British ideologically imperial attitude of superiority (Gleadle 84). Thornfield serves as British-colonial narrative rivalry, that is, which domestic female "text" will predominate: "Claiming he would like to legitimate Jane's womanly influence over him by placing her in the position of lady of his house, Rochester is later

discovered to be a man who would rather replace his unmanageable foreign wife with a woman whom he assumes represents the ideal English domestic character" (Tange 35). Tange's and Gayatri Spivak's works imply a spationarrative struggle between two ideological spheres that overlays Jane's decoding of the house's secrets. Brontë embeds the British-colonial Other polarity starkly into the contrasting portraits of Jane and Bertha. As the British woman, Jane is demure, "proper," controlled, and rational. Conversely, Bertha's alterity expresses itself as animalistic, bestial, irrational, and destructive. Jane's "reading" of the manor is employment of calm reason to grasp the inscrutable chaotic primalism that haunts the house. Essentially, Bertha's colonial-Other intractable primitive impulses oppose Jane's "civilized" British intellect.

As a model of reason, Jane achieves selfhood because women such as Bertha fail to demonstrate rationality (Hanley 13). Such reading entails overwriting English cultural narrative onto and erasing colonial. In asserting inquiring intellect over hidden bestiality, Jane attempts scripting over Bertha's "text." Spivak argues that Jane's entrance into Thornfield's spationarrative aids her self-actualization subjectively through ideologically nationalistic dominance in that realm:

> [There is] Rochester and the mad Mrs. Rochester as the legal family and Jane and Rochester as the illicit counter-family.
> …
> In terms of narrative energy of the novel, how is Jane moved from the place of counter-family to the family-in-law? It is the active ideology of imperialism that provides the discursive field.
> …
> Bertha Mason [is] a figure produced by the axiomatics of imperialism. Through Bertha Mason, the white Jamaican Creole, Brontë renders the human/animal frontier as acceptably indeterminate, so that a good greater than the letter of the Law can be broached.
> …
> [W]e might say this [Law, a divine injunction] is the register not of mere marriage or sexual reproduction but of Europe and its not-yet-human Other, of soul-making.
> …
> It is the unquestioned ideology of imperialistic axiomatics, then, that conditions Jane's move from the counter-family set to the set of the family-in-law.

> …
>> [N]ineteenth-century feminist individualism could conceive of a "greater" project than access to the … nuclear family. This is the project of soul-making beyond "mere" sexual reproduction (247-48).

Carl Plasa argues that Jane's reading also is semantic assertion of the narrative of British subjectivity over colonial. As part of that prevailing, she usurps the colonial linguistic identity of servitude germane to Bertha and applies it to herself as a subject of Rochester's rule:

> As one confined to and subversive of what is literally a domestic space … Bertha metaphorizes Jane's own predicament as Englishwoman. Conversely, Bertha is a figure for the very literality (colonialism) that Jane exploits as a figurative system through which self-representation is facilitated; Bertha stands in, in other words, for the 'rebel' or 'revolted slave' to whom Jane systematically likens herself … throughout the novel. (74)

As an "other" ignorant of what others in Thornfield know, Jane commits linguistic expropriation from the colonial as part of her own narrative self-creation. This figurative servitude includes her subject position at the manor in the area of ignorance of the manor's true story.

Jane Eyre's colonial-Other relationship is a critique of Gothic reading experience. Spivak's argument emphasizes several significant points for Eyre's reading of Thornfield. Jane's time there occurs in two stages. Although an occupant, she enters and resides as a de facto outsider. Achieving true "insider" status entails possessing the knowledge that other residents have. To accomplish this feat, she must push against not only Bertha herself, but also others' concealing countermoves. Jane's only real tool is an empirical mind—an "enlightened" British mind; she attempts to understand her existential and subjective position within Thornfield as part of her "soul-making." Spivak's thought has implications for Gothic reading experience. Initially, text is alien, unfamiliar or *unheimliche* to the reader. The reader stands outside the space of knowledge about its contents. During reading, the reader holds a liminal position: privy to some, not all, knowledge. Only through thorough penetration into the narrative does the reader completely lose outsiderness. If Bertha is the uncivilized narrative that challenges, Jane is the

reader who rescripts wildness and mystery into enlightening, coherent knowledge and familiarity.

NAVIGATING STORY SPACE: BLUEBEARD'S HOUSE AS NARRATIVE ARENA

Beneath the Bluebeard and *Jane Eyre* narratives lay houses that become contested spaces. The two stories are inextricably intertwined, with the latter as a "major reading" of the former; not only does Jane enter a house of secrets, but Brontë even corporealizes those spaces onto Jane: "[Rochester's] restrictions affect Jane physically: her body absorbs impressions whose significance she must not probe openly" (Pyrhönen 7, 10, 21). More than just a structure with separate physical areas, the house embodies those demarcated spaces in competing accounts of reality. Physical space and narrative form an intersubjective relationship. Both tales emphasize an uneasy convergence of two realms, mental and material, that mirror each other intellectually. In their physical surroundings, structures narratively act out their respective female residents' interiorities. One one side, superficial domiciliary calm plays to characters' assumptions of safe domesticity. The underside is the presentation of alluring mystery that elicits curiosity. According to Kathy Mezei and Chiara Briganti, "Inevitably, the spaces of domesticity and of fiction shape the people who inhabit them; conversely, people and characters create and shape the spaces they inhabit" (840). Observing that Bluebeard's house mirrors his psyche, Heta Pyrhönen argues that Jane's "quest for knowledge relies on relating material spaces to mental states"; she must "read spaces" to probe interpersonal relationships (15). On one side, tale assumes a material, tangible identity. Room and floor serve and act as individuated texts that invite wife's and Jane's interpretive, surmisive readings. Reciprocally, these areas infuse narrative space and influence the character of storyrealm. Narrativizing space permeates the

material world with a textual personality subject to character reading. Spatializing narrative

imbues storyline with a foregrounding of the ability of physical area not only to tell a story, but

be the story. As Pyrhönen asserts, there is an "intimate link between physical and mental space in

the topography of Bluebeard Gothic" (22). These tales underscore the nature of Gothic reading

experience as both a realm and phenomenon of contested space. That is, the overall narrative

encloses a series of competing storylines, each striving for dominance in the macronarrative.

At its root, the contest lays in the house and its residents as authoring and authored

narrative. Within both domestic space and narrative are competing agencies that write and

rewrite physical area and the story it represents. Bluebeard and his wife vie to determine what

history his house will contain: concealment or revelation. Similarly, Jane's inquiries at

Thornfield reflect her desire to alter both events and secretive history of the house. An author

creates and a reader reads. Sometimes a reader may usurp at least partial control over the story

and rewrite the script that incarnates the character of the textual encounter. Pyrhönen notes the

struggling literacies in the Bluebeard legend: "a series of entangled writing and reading contests"

and "strife between a master poet and his successor" (19). Agency over story creation may

transfer to the reader. She exercises that agency through active empirical inquiry, intellectual

engagement with the narrative. To do so, she must enter a contested region between truth and

deception. In fact, Gothic serves as an arena for conflicting versions of reality narratively and

spatiotextually. The conflict morphs into a struggle between concealment and revelation, usually

oscillating between the two poles. More than a realm of interpersonal competition, Gothic as a

literary mode is a space of conceptual, metaphysical conflict, namely, between creating falsity

and revealing truth. Reader engagement with competing accounts complicates and alters Gothic

to a zone of conflict between inquiry and anti-inquiry, empiricism and resistance to elucidation. A reader investigates and the author impedes enlightenment.

Essentially, Gothic becomes a competitive space between writer and reader. More, its reading experience evolves into a contest between them for authorship, in fact, the dominant role of author of the tale. Resisting the reader's desire to know, the writer intentionally clouds and controls amount of and access to information. Her reader, equally an agent of resistance, attempts to rewrite the author-reader relationship with proactive inquiry and application of intellect to text. Ultimately, the Gothic reading event transforms into an additional, separate, overarching narrative of the author-reader interaction. Particularly, the experience becomes— *is*—its own tale. Beyond the Gothic tale is the larger story of the reading phenomenon itself as a contested space between writer and reader. In *Jane Eyre*, Brontë intentionally hides Bertha from Jane and us. This space multiplies into diverse complexions. Brontë masks Bertha behind numerous deceptive faces: Rochester, Fairfax, Grace. A candle presents itself as self-placed because the placer is absent. Essentially, Gothic reading possesses the potential of multi-layered spatial struggle between author and reader. Its central motif concerns who controls the scripting of both writer-reader interrelation and textual encounter.

Implicit in this competition is contest of wills. Gothic reading experience pits the author's will to bury against the reader's will to unearth. The Bluebeard tale casts him with the initial authorial control over the script. His wife will eventually usurp that control. Indeed, the Bluebeard tale is a contested area in which the wife's agency empowers her with increasing authoriality through the tale. Initially, the tale is Bluebeard's writer-creator space. He has inked a murky tale of mysteries that pervades the local storyscape. Spatiotextually, he has authored numerous dark tales that permeate proximate space around him. Questions leave gaps. Bluebeard

offers to close these voids with invitations to participate in his feast. If marriage is its own

narrative, he further induces the young lady to partake of it and the house with him. To the world

and his wife's reading eyes, he has created a superficially deceptive story of glittering luxury and

safety. Bluebeard has populated his house with chosen opulent objects as part of created textual

space. The secret room constitutes the darker authored realm, the real story. Here, too, he has

filled narrative area with objects of his choosing, equally as dark. If Bluebeard wants a wife, an

author needs a reader to materialize the purpose and effect of text. A house needs an inhabitant to

become, by definition, a house. His invitations materialize that intent. Bluebeard's

encouragement to her to roam the house freely becomes the author's inducement to readerly

wandering through narrative. Entrusting her with the keys recalls a writer's invitation to access

textual information. In fact, Bluebeard invests his wife with the power to unlock the storyspaces

of the house with her keyring. Each room reinforces the deceptive narrative of safety and

familiarity. Furthermore, drawing special attention to the certain key oxymoronically constitutes

enticing invitation in the very act of forbidding. Tatar notes the contradiction in communicating

trust while inviting disobedience (52). Here Bluebeard intentionally places a gap in the text that

he created and offers for her inquiry. Essentially, the contradictory action of prohibiting, yet

affording the means of, transgression simultaneously calls attention to and closes off a narrative

space to reading and opens inquisitive impulses for further reading. Apparently, Bluebeard wants

his wife to read further; he demonstrates desire for repeated discoveries (Kim 407). Bluebeard's

inexplicable behavior foregrounds Gothic reading's concealment/revelation dialectical tension.

His wife is free to participate in the history of the house with other partakers.

When he departs, Bluebeard becomes an absent author. His voluntary self-withdrawal

from the textual space of the house underscores a tension in Gothic authoriality and the reader-

writer relationship. Revealed narrative information constitutes an author's presence in and dominating control over both story and the character of reader interaction with text. Conversely, deliberate omission of facts and details signifies authorial absence. Gothic writers intentionally remove themselves from their narratives with refusal to clarify or divulge. Ironically, though, absence can be as much control as presence. Bluebeard's departure signifies willful refusal to enlighten his bride. Similarly, Gothic authors temporarily depart the narrative through creation of narrative voids to prevent full reader understanding.

Spatiotextually, Bluebeard's house emblematizes the nature of Gothic reading experience. Bluebeard authored its history and furnished it with objects and corpses that reflect his creative control over its plot. Within are multiple subplots. Each room is a tale that reflects the nature of and dovetails with the macronarrative. Each marriage and corpse constitutes a microstory in the home's annals. Ultimately, the structure is a house divided. Two parallel narrative spaces exist under one roof. Beneath the innocent tale of opulence lays the submerged tale that operates not just as story, but also as anti-narrative. The secret room exists as a story space of hideous evil that resists Bluebeard's carefully engineered surface text of beauty. In reality, the house reflects—is—the mind of its author-owner. According to Pyrhönen, "[H]is domestic architecture echoes his psyche" (15). Bluebeard's subjective nature possesses spaces of darkness and secrecy behind his public, open persona. Fanny Lacôte correlates the morbid chamber of Bluebeard's house with his dark heart (213). Its domestic spaces mirror the wife's psychic structure too. The secret room embodies the empirically inquisitive and desirous part of her intellect. As such, the structure enfolds two separate spheres of reality. Its spaces reflect the difference between knowledge and "knowledge." The Bluebeard tale genders these metaphysical elements of the house; the wife's reality and knowledge remain within the bounds of the familiar

spatial area she sees daily in the house, while Bluebeard's epistemic reality extends into the room

of death. Just so, the Gothic reading experience permits the writer to limit the bounds of a

reader's reality and epistemological state even as the writer's own reaches into narrative's dark

spaces. The wife navigates the known space of the house and its rooms, coming to know its

history. Meanwhile, the secret room is the true reality under the apparent, and completes the

history. Division of narrative realities drives the pleasure of Gothic reading, offering the reader a

familiar textual sphere and hiding or hinting at a true realm of reality inside the narrative. Truth

and falsity become separate storyscapes, each an anti-narrative of the other.

The wife as reader enters the house and rewrites its spatiotextual existence. Reauthoring

through participative inquiry follows initial readings. Essentially, the Bluebeard tale is a

narrative of increasing reader agential rescripting of space. That agency transforms the house

into reader-author space. The Bluebeard tale constitutes embedded accounts of creative

(re)authoring that overwrites onto Bluebeard's original text. Indeed, the wife and her presence

serve as competing or resisting anti-storyline to her husband's fabricated account of his home's

reality. In suggesting the fairy tale as "double-plotted narrative," Tatar asks, "Just whose story,

then, is it?" (53). Additionally embedded is inter-female narrative conflict. If patriarchy authors,

the curious woman reauthors. The dead wives subtly dictate Bluebeard's story, his need to script

a clean public image. Although dead, they "live" as a space that controls him and exerts power

over his secretiveness. His new bride, an animate agent, struggles to uncover the home's

"buried" narrative. A living wife resists the secret tale of dead women. Her discovery overwrites

the text of alive female will onto the power of lifeless female. Narratively, we see a wife, though

at her spouse's mercy, assert superiority over him through gradual retextualization of his own

house. At its heart, the Bluebeard story is a portrayal of two embodied, vying subjective

narratives, one of controlling concealment against one of inquisitive desire. Tatar suggests it as conflict between familiar and strange (17); the tale "pit[s] wife against husband" in an "arena" (69). Conceptually, the house metamorphoses into two opposing minds. His wife's power over space and events grows steadily. Before she enters the house, that agency already exists. Phenomenologically, she first reads, then rereads, Bluebeard's appearance through perceptual change respecting his beard's color. Subsequently, she participates in his life's story through active, independent decision to marry. Beard and matrimony serve as the first layers of the Chinese box that Bluebeard himself is.

The tale's remaining events are a chronicle of a reader-wife who wrests authorial control from Bluebeard and determines the plot's direction. Yet, he invites both the reading and rescripting. She is free to exercise her volitive agency in the entire space of the house with use of all in it. Bluebeard's departure alters the narrative power dynamics of the house. While present, he controls his wife's movements and level of knowledge of the space. This condition constitutes "authorship" of the house's affairs. Absent, he cedes that control to his wife's will and intellectual impulses When an author is temporarily absent from the text, the reader can create the missing elements in the story. The wife populates the domestic space with chosen characters, her guests. With her encouragement, they too participate in the stories of the house by visiting the rooms. In doing so, they establish an additional embedded story of enjoying the space of the absent author-owner. In fact, the wife is the one who unlocks the rooms. In abandoning her guests as the tale of hosting that she has created, she seeks out more alluring text, the secret room. Its secrecy lends itself to her creation of an imagined history of house and room, a rewriting of a space that she has not even seen. Her entry into the room completes the narrative with a reader's penetration into authorial secrets. Disobeying his command, she resists his

creative control over the house. Her injection into the Bluebeard tale completes the uncovering

of the secret; as a reader, the wife acts the role of revealer and discoverer. Furthermore, while

Bluebeard authors the corpses and their concealment, she pens the revelation. He began; she

finishes. Hiding the key, attempting to clean the bloodstain, and delaying her execution

constitute further resistances to his scripting. The last pushback permits the wife to redirect the

narrative through the introduction of two characters not of Bluebeard's making—her brothers.

She has participated in multiple embedded narratives: the marriage, Bluebeard's reputation, his

life, his mind, the house and its rooms, and the death-room. Indeed, the invitation to the feast, the

marriage, and his installment of her in the house are also figurative keys that permit her to

commence unlocking his persona. Entering each, she rescripts its story through autonomous

agency, empirical inquiry, and resistance to his authority. Although the spatiotextual writer of his

own house, Bluebeard empowers his wife with keys to unlock narrative areas ranging from his

suspicious life to his rooms and psyche.

Those keys open spatiotextual realms. Ultimately, they unlock the shift in and

restructuring of narrative power relations between author and reader. Even more, they unlock

reader agency. The wife is the Gothic reader whose intellectual keys access narrative secrets.

With multiple tools, she accesses numerous talescapes. Narratively, Bluebeard's keys

emblematize power and realization. Transfer of them embodies the shift of dominance over

physical and textual space. Power of access grants gap closure. Furthermore, the keyring's

transfer augments the wife's interpretive reading abilities and equalizes the author-reader

relationship. Bluebeard refashions the keys as readerly invitations to explore and participate in

story. As such, they represent desire and inquiry: desire to cross borders, empowerment of

readers, and filling of voids. The keys are focal points of borders. Bluebeard contradictorily

issues two invitations: encouragement to explore the house and alluring, forbidden-fruit enticement to unearth through erection of prohibitory barrier. In unlocking, the keys permit breaching of boundaries. Implying it as resistance to Bluebeard's spatiotextual dominance, Tatar refers to folklorists' terming the bloody key as disobedience (20). The wife's reading transforms from appearance to submerged reality, falsity to truth, "knowledge" to knowledge, familiar to hidden, vague secret to concrete evidence. Essentially, the keys bring metaphysical, epistemological balance to a relationship unequal in both areas; accessing the room endows the wife with the same knowledge of reality and truth that Bluebeard possesses. Her reading effects a rebalancing beyond his physical superiority. Besides possessing greater bodily strength, Bluebeard also expresses ascendant power relations philosophically and intellectually. Her interpretive faculties, which he has aided, allow her to decode and possess as her own truth and knowledge as discrete narrative spaces. Essentially, his truth and reality become hers too. A clean key is ignorance and innocence. Conversely, a bloody key incarnates knowledge and understanding. Her actions cause the bloodstain, her agency materializing secret into knowledge.

Along with the corpses is the cadaver of any remaining authorial control by Bluebeard. Arguably, surrender of the keys to his wife is the surrender of his mind; she can "read" his character through the spaces and objects with which he has populated his home. The keys open psychic spaces, not just rooms. The wife's unlocking them permits reading of her husband. Williams casts the Bluebeard story as female "nature" reading male "cultural" mind. Spatial arrangement of the house mirrors distribution of power in patriarchy's favor (44). According to Williams, "[t]he psychic as well as the physical space of the castle bears its marks [deeds and dark history]" (45). Similarly, Tatar argues that the fairy tale really is at bottom unlocking of Bluebeard's mindscape (49-50, 53, 69; see also Pyrhönen 15). Ultimately, the keys open portals

to Bluebeard's psyche; she unearths the hidden textual spaces of his mind. If she accesses rooms in the house, concurrently she is entering the different sections of his mental landscape. Her use of them permits access from one narrative level to another. As emblems of power relations, the keys foreground Gothic reading experience's implicit author-reader struggle for control of textual space.

Embedded narratives invest keys and reader inquiry with special significance. Agency assumes more meaning because of the Chinese-box construction of the legend. Essentially, the more boxes, the more foregrounding of the necessity for and stimulation of proactive reader participation. In its stages, the Bluebeard story is a penetration from outer to inner. This movement incarnates shift from familiar to dangerous (Tatar 2). His wife unlocks Bluebeard's mysterious life through marriage. After she assumes residence, she moves to accessing the various rooms and finally the sanguine inner sanctum of his existence. Her journey parallels the narrative penetration from physical appearance and outward public persona to his innermost mind. Bluebeard is a Chinese box. One layer shows opulence, a deeper one murderous reality. Our first hearing of him involves a suspect history of vanished wives. The second encounter is the gracious host. Subsequent experiences entail luxurious domesticity and a suspicious key among others that promise safe rooms. As mysterious plot element, he encloses multiple, embedded narrative levels; his public reputation and house act as surface story, the secret room a separate account of reality. The secret room's bloody pools mirror the concealed true nature of an equally bloody psyche. Where single-level narrative requires little invitation to inquiry, Gothic embedded boxes enhance the need for, the significance of, the unlocking empirical keys of reader investigation. Multi-tiered narrative requires more active reader participation, more proactive use of keys.

ROCHESTER'S KEYS: JANE BECOMES A BLUEBEARDIAN READER-WIFE

Jane Eyre's Thornfield Manor is more than domestic space. Brontë fashioned the house into a spatiotextual Gothic novel. As to physical area, she domesticates pregnant open and hidden spaces. Each area not only contains its own narrative, but in reality *is* its own talerealm. The novel "freight[s]" physical and metaphorical space with meaning; the manor's material spaces possess psychological functions and space is a projection of character (Kreisel 102-03). The novel links physical space with mind (Pyrhönen 15, 22). During her stay, Jane discovers Thornfield to be multiple spaces and numerous stories. Asserting that [f]ew novels are as spatially *articulat*e as *Jane Eyre*," Chase remarks that individual rooms have "distinct personalities" (59). Moreover, she must cope with and attempt to penetrate several Chinese-box structures. Spatially, she must encounter a house with inaccessible rooms and an unreachable secret. Farkas notes the symbolic role of locks, keys, and doors in the work, along with an "infectious" "locking up of truth" (54, 55) Paralleling this conundrum are multiply-embedded false, elusive, or cryptic narratives that residents fabricate to hide truth. Jane's reading of Thornfield is "layered and complex" (Locy 113).

Yet, Thornfield symbolizes and incarnates impediment to knowledge, with Gothic erection of "epistemological boundaries" that the environment emblematizes (Farkas 50). Jane becomes an interpretive reader decoding—or trying to decipher—confusing physical and story spaces. Talairach remarks that Jane "constructs the building as a repository of other stories," that she "decode[s]" and "decipher[s]" the manor" (124). Transforming herself into an empirical inquirer, she establishes herself as a competing narrative of revelatory investigation that resists counter-story of subterfuge. Thornfield becomes Gothic narrative space and Jane the Gothic

reader navigating opaque text. Jane's residence at a manor with locked doors and "hidden knowledge" compel Rochester and her "to act out the Gothic formula of mystery and concealment which their surroundings represent" (Farkas 56) Additionally, the manor serves as an arena of contested space; Jane seeks with agency to rescript into a tale of discovery what Rochester and Fairfax have authored as concealment. Molly Hillard herself uses the term "contested space" about the work, casting it as "a place where fantastic and realist … narratives actively vie for control" (57).

Thornfield stages Gothic reading experience ontologically. Jane's arrival into its physical area constitutes entry into two spatial realities, objectively true and manufactured. Within these zones of falsity and truth lay real narrative and mendacious tale, each as resisting, competing anti-narrative to the other and overlapping. Injection of Jane into the dynamic adds another storyline, this one inquisitive, that also competes. In fact, she is both detached recorder and impassioned informant against her environment (Hillard 53). Ultimately, Thornfield is a space of contested reality. Jane's experience in reading this space foregrounds Gothic's tendency to destabilize both reality and undermine attempts at perceptual engagement with it.

Conflation of truth and lie births the manor as a spatiotextual Chinese box that leaves clues for Jane. Piercing Thornfield's opaque embedded narratives entails progression from the vague to the tangible. Initially, Jane hears only a strange laugh. Its disembodied nature emblematizes not only murkiness in the manor's text, but dissociation from anything visible, physical, or material. Brontë's intentional divorce of Bertha's laughs and growls from any perceptual encounter with her physical being foregrounds Gothic's penchant for heightening its effect through disconnecting cause from effect and leaving causative explanation in the dark. As of yet, the laugh poses no threat. Bertha leaves progressively menacing spatiotextual material

"clues." Jane experiences the destructive fiery effect of an absent causation, but Bertha creates no harm. Brontë again detaches cause and effect with Richard's inexplicable wounds; this time Bertha has caused actual injury. Jane penetrates spatiotextually to an outer room and can hear the suggestions of threat through disembodied growling from the hidden text of the inner room. When Jane is further out spatially from the closed room, she hears only a slightly disturbing laugh, a disquieting but not ominous textual and narrative clue. Occupying the area next to that room, that is, spatially more proximate, she now encounters a more menacing hint to the true story. The nearer her spatial approach, the more threatening, suggestive, and revealing the text. A hanging tapestry covers the inner room's door, further concealing the true, embedded tale inside. Its presence heightens the Gothically dramatic and ominous experience of reading this space (Borie 113). Rochester has authored yet another narrative barrier to reader illumination. Brontë fashions that space as narrative gap. Narratively dissociated from their cause, injuries and sounds constitute inviting textual clues that provoke reading. Present causation occurs later. Jane witnesses and reads through mediative clues the physical presence of Bertha, but does not understand why she lives at Thornfield. Her final narrative decoding occurs with entry into the inner room and answering that question upon a second physical encounter. As its own Gothic reading experience, Thornfield's narrative progressively plants telling textual evidences of deeply embedded realities.

The first confusing narratives are Rochester himself and the house. Jane's initial encounter with Rochester comes through his housekeeper's oblique, murky account. Farkas notes his iron dominance over the house even in absence (55). Just as Jane's earlier "reading" experiences of Bertha arrive through sounds detached from a body, her first rencounter with her employer arrives through the mediation of cryptic descriptions of him from Fairfax. The initial

absence of Rochester and Bertha from the text underscore Gothic's proclivity for early narrative

divorcing of description and clue from body and visible presence as inducement to further

reading. Essentially, Gothic separates qualities and causation from the objects to which they are

naturally attached. Additionally, this absence doubles the activity and pleasure of reading

experience and empirical inquiry, allowing as a separate event the "reading" of the absence and

then, later, offering the presence as a second interpretive experience. Fairfax becomes the initial

elusive raconteur. In fact, her relation is the preliminary, outside box. Fairfax serves as the

deceptive portal to a shrouded storyrealm. Throughout her conversation, she consistently

equivocates regarding Rochester's character. Her description of him affords either a confusing,

undefined characterization, occasionally even a perplexingly dual personality, or a sketchy

portrait of her employer. As an author, Fairfax leaves gaps in her account of Rochester,

providing vague or indirect responses. Brontë establishes the Thornfield section to "engage" Jane

"in working out the solution to Rochester's mystery" (Bodenheimer 397). Moreover, her

narrative scripting of the first tour conveniently omits certain spaces on the top floor; authorship

involves concealing select areas of the third "story."

Fairfax's writing conceals in more than one way. Besides outright silence, she reveals

truth laced with incomplete revelation. Her admission of having heard of no ghost omits the

haunting presence of Bertha, whom Jane later happens to characterize as spectral. Her denial of

legends and stories carefully neglects revealing that Bertha is no myth. Obliquely, Fairfax hints

at the Rochester family history of violence, knowing well of Bertha's psychopathic nature. All

Fairfax implies is that the family history is uncertain, questionable lore. To dismiss this

ostensible history, she moves to mention the family narrative as peaceful; spatiotextually, she has

authorially altered the storyline and thus Jane's perception and reading of it. Bertha's unnerving

laugh appears to Jane to infuse a supernatural dimension into Thornfield's space, but Fairfax counters with a contrived natural explanation involving servants. During their first exchange, Jane is already seeking answers. Although a secondary character, Fairfax acts the role of a Gothic subnarrative with deceptive, elusive language that intends to confuse—or at least not aid—Jane's reading of spatial text. Although Jane improves as a reader, her interpretive literacy is still immature for "explicating reality" (Bock 82).

Bertha's attempted destruction of Thornfield foregrounds competing authorings and reauthorings of space. Gothic reading experience embodies implicit power struggle. Reader and author compete for agency; one conceals through textual smokescreening and the other reveals through continual interaction with that text. Essentially, text is a staging-point and contest arena, a space for shifts in power relations. The fire serves as a focalizing event for multiple agents that either fight to unearth or strive to hide. The latter rewrite or, better, overwrite their versions onto space even as Jane struggles to read it. The Gothic reading event often underscores the tendency of submerged narrative to rupture into open surface storyline. This second talerealm acts as anti-narrative, reality opposing apparent truth, that resists reader elucidation. Even as Jane wonders what alienates Rochester from the house, Bertha intrudes into the second floor as counter-narrative that disturbs Jane's familiar space. In fact, she destroys boundaries through escape and obliterates Rochester's attempt to shield Jane from knowledge of her (Farkas 58). There are textual hints of danger with disembodied sounds in the hallway and an abandoned candle. Jane's reactions constitute a proactively resistant retextualization. Where Bertha seeks to assert a tale of fiery destruction, Jane counters with interpretive reading that incarnates preservation and watery extinguishing. Both actions occur in the same space of the manor. Jane becomes the author-reader that actively restores both story and space to safety and order. In a reversed role, Jane

temporarily usurps agency from Rochester, who consistently pens falsity and evasion, and pushes him to seek answers for the conflagration. Her employer quickly recaptures authorial agency. Disappearing into the hidden space of the third floor, he returns to fabricate an explanation and mislead Jane. Moreover, Rochester admonishes her to keep the incident silent even as she insists on truth. His actions cast him as a Gothic writer. Rochester alone reserves the privilege not only of knowing the truth, but of accessing textual space that contains that truth. Additionally, he refuses to explain its nature. Prevarication and intentional misdirection pair with active discouragement, even suppression of narrative quest, to frustrate Jane's inquiry. Rochester is an unreadable "text" that deliberately creates "gaps" in Jane's understanding (Bock 84). In leaving her in uncertainty, he gives her the inviting keys of doubt and questioning.

Like Bluebeard's wife, Jane tries using those keys outside of Rochester's influence. As an independent spatiotextual reader, Jane attempts unlocking Thornfield's opaque narrative through the enigmatic Grace Poole. Rochester offers Poole as a "key" to his mystery, in fact, "the original key" (Pyrhönen 36, 40). Grace is a figurative Bluebeardian corpses' room or, more precisely, a Bluebeard herself. Not only is her station Bertha's space, but her possession of the secret emblematizes her as that hidden realm erupting into Thornfield's familiar narrative area. Jane's initial encounter with Grace is her first real opportunity to unlock the third-floor secret. What transpires reflects a usual narrative frustration in the Gothic reading event. Seeing Grace on the second floor, Jane tries figuratively to access the third-floor room from a remote spatiotextual region; this reading experience occurs far from the embedded secret spatiotextually, thwarting a premature narrative disclosure for her interpretive activity. Poole is more than a person. She becomes a story space for the key of inquiry to open. Furthermore, Poole acts as a Rochester surrogate, an additional resisting author. Jane perceives her exchange with Grace as a

subtle power struggle between two narrative spaces; her agency inquires and Poole's repels with linguistic cleverness. Actually, Brontë fashions her as narrative red herrings that elicit independent readings from Jane. Jane's conversation with Poole becomes an arena in which one woman eludes and falsifies and the other interpretively surmises concealment. As such, Poole is a reader's invitation to participate in story. Jane accepts the invitation, autonomously assuming the role of independent author. Following their exchange, Jane creates her own explanation of Poole's continued presence. This new script is Jane's conclusion that Grace is the real author of the manor's mysteries; what results is a metanarrative event in which Jane inks her own version of Poole's backstory. According to this script, Rochester is not the true spatiotextual creator of the manor. Rather, he is a ghostwriter that authors in obedience to Poole's command. Brontë conceptually extends the competing metaphysical narrative spaces of Thornfield to authoriality: Rochester is the counterfeit scripter, Poole the true writer. Additionally, Jane conjectures two contradictory accounts about her employer, one that he is an independent gentleman, the other that a lowly servant dictates his life story. Jane's experience emphasizes Gothic's misdirection regarding narrative space. Readers sometimes unlock what they believe is the realm of truth, only to discover its mendacity. As a Gothic reader, Jane also finds that author-reader relations entail competing narrative spaces of veracity and lies.

Jane's first dialogue with Grace stages the latter potently as figurative Bluebeardian room and key. Lovell-Smith's and Gilbert's descriptions of Poole as a "Bluebeard's helper" and "keeper of other women," respectively, paint her as an inscrutable narrative element. She hides a dreadful secret. If Bluebeard caches corpses in a dark recess, Grace's mindspace conceals her master's shame. In fact, her collusion makes her as much a jailer of Bertha as Rochester is. In furnishing his home's spaces opulently, Bluebeard created a fairy-tale mask of domestic serenity.

These rooms are prevaricative areas that compete narratively with the gruesome room that is truth. Indeed, each room authors a different version of the home's true persona. They mislead reading into misreading. During her exchange with Grace, Jane actively tries to unlock and access—read—her mind for extent of knowledge about the fire. Her engagement in chat with the lying Grace constitutes entry into a deceptive room. Poole's face presents innocent inscrutability to attempted reading of nonverbal cues. During this episode, Brontë foregrounds the proactive empirical nature of Jane's Gothic reading. While she remains largely content to accept Rochester's control of affairs, Jane repeatedly demonstrates the intellectual drive to pursue penetrating, probing lines of questioning. Sometimes these lines are lengthy. Her initial transaction with Fairfax is a long series of queries about the master and his family. After Bertha's nocturnal visit, Jane persists in pushing Rochester hard for an explanation. In fact, her queries and objections are vigorous and skeptical in the face of his dismissive attitude.

In three instances, Jane actively examines, ever seeking core truth. In Jane's first encounter with Grace, Brontë's descriptive language of her conversation with the servant recalls the assertive empiricism of the law-court. Jane tells us explicitly that she will test Grace, examine her, that Grace committed a crime and has guilt (175-76). Grace cross-examines, resisting Jane's inquiries: "She appeared to be cross-questioning me" (176). The quasi-court proceedings here strive to establish true narrative in the face of resistive falsehood from a witness. Like a lawyer, Jane pushes, asking questions to which she knows the answers. Additionally, she makes argument, that is, that Pilot cannot laugh. Grace counter-inquires to probe Jane. In its play, the interaction portrays two competing female authors, two mutually resisting writer spaces that mirror Thornfield's spatiotextual division. Jane as the space of truth probes the mendacity that is Poole. What follows is a Gothic reading experience for Jane. The

night before, she authors the true narrative of events during the blaze. Her independent

interpretive reading of peril moves Jane toward proactivity in the manor's space. Lisa Sternlieb

calls it "resourcefulness and efficiency" (470). The next day, Grace intentionally rescripts the

same episode into her own contrived version. Her revised account erases any and all of Jane's

agency or role in the incident. One woman authors with agential action and the other rewrites to

eliminate the first from the picture. In fact, Poole's revision supplants Jane's involvement with

Rochester's agency; he, not she, doused the fire. As Rosemarie Bodenheimer argues, the sense

that Jane lives among "manufactured tales" becomes clear as Grace tries to "write her out of the

story" (397). The new account not only rewrites the script, but alters the narrative of the master's

room, transforming the room itself. Previously a space of peril, it becomes a stage of Rochester's

courage. Jane's reading encounters a rewriting, or overwriting, of falsity onto truth. If Jane reads

the truth, Grace attempts to promote misreading of the same narrative and facts. A Bluebeard,

Grace tells Jane to lock herself in her room for safety. Self-confinement to one small space in the

home would isolate Jane from the grim truth, create a deceptive picture of security, and render

Jane a Bluebeard's wife who remains ignorant of the proximate threat of death.

At literal and figurative narrative levels, Grace metamorphoses Thornfield's spaces of

truth into areas of misrepresentation. Jane's initial exchange with Poole transpires as the latter

helps to restore the damage to Rochester's bedroom. She and her fellow servants work to erase

the previous night's tale of destruction with a newer dissimulative one that projects order and

regularity. Essentially, they alter the room from truth to lie. That falsehood becomes the new,

redecorated truth. Rochester as manorial Bluebeard condones narrative reshaping of his domestic

space to deceptive depiction. Grace's labor on her physical environment here mirrors and

parallels her contemporaneous efforts to transform the room by reauthoring the nocturnal

incident there. In fact, Poole performs this creative action on the entire episode; more, it imposes itself onto every member of the household. Erasing Jane from the account, she rewrites the sequence as Rochester's agency. Ironically, her narrative action renegotiates and transposes reading of class lines with a servant's hegemonic investing of her master with greater control over events. Her account reinvents Rochester's personality, dismissing any tendency toward laughing. Meanwhile. Fairfax she narratively incapacitates and the other servants she removes spatially from proximate contact and thus awareness. Poole's clever taletelling extends to renarrativizing Jane herself. Namely, she rescripts the latter's phenomenological and experiential incident, terming it a dream. Brontë infuses Grace with sufficient ability to transform and reshape ever-widening narrative circles. Moving outside the manor, Poole even invents for Jane's reading the storyscape of the neighborhood itself. The lies and evasion that conceal Bertha inside the house serve as microcosmic mirror of the same false image of Rochester and his status in the surrounding country. Ultimately, Grace is a dissimulative Bluebeardian roomspace; however, that room expands in figurative size to impact and alter—retextualize—both an entire household population and the ambient geographical space beyond Thornfield.

Poole is actually part of a doubled enticement to Jane's reading. As a space and storyrealm, Bertha's room is a microcosm of Thornfield. If the manor contains narrative regions of truth and falsity, the room itself births twin, interrelated enticements to interpret. These invitations arrive in the persons of Bertha and Grace. Indeed, the room's two resident women incarnate the narrative spaces of the house. Bertha is the reality and Poole the falsity. As opposed realms, both women serve as dual texts, each paradoxically a discrete but interconnected enticement to read and interpret. In their actions, both women embody aspects of the Gothic reading phenomenon. Bertha serves as the hint or suggestion, physically absent from reader sight

and staying vaguely in the background as an undefined, unexplained entity. She leaves clues (candle) and impacts her environment tangibly (fire, torn veil), but does not reveal herself. Conversely, Poole is the material presence. However, she exerts as much resistance to disclosure through linguistic evasion and deception; bodily present, she practices semantic absence. Bertha's later visit to Jane's bedroom becomes a similar event, for the madwoman appears as a body, but does not speak. Brontë authors them as spatiotextual interlopers into the second floor, shaping each as an intrusion of narrative void and absenteeism into Jane's interpretive area below. In her familiar region, Jane reads Bertha through secondary textual clues. Candle, fire, and veil are mediative, vicarious mechanisms for decoding Bertha, and she reads the evidences. Bertha is present only through effect and consequence. Meanwhile, Grace is present as a body to read, but the signs in her language contain voids that invite Jane's conclusionary reading.

Overall, Poole and Bertha incarnate the two reading opportunities available to Jane at Thornfield. As a Gothic interpretive decoder of signs, she has bodies and language as texts to read. Brontë complicates her plot with narrative confounding and conflation of Bertha and Grace into a single textual being. From a storytelling perspective, Bertha and Grace merge into a unified body; residents mislead Jane by attributing Bertha's acts to Poole. Jane believes Grace to be the cause of the fire, unwittingly remaking Bertha into Grace. Grace then uses linguistic legerdemain that obscures any identifiable sign of Bertha. In fact, inventing false narrative, she replaces the responsible character with Rochester and causative event with a dream. Other residents complicate and rescript the plot too. Fairfax and Rochester both attribute to Grace what is really Bertha's responsibility. Under Brontë's hand, the residents of Thornfield all become Gothic writers whose creative intent is to confuse and impede Jane's reading.

To that list of Thornfield's creative writers we can add an unlikely name: Bertha. The manor's madwoman becomes just as much an author and narrative maker as the others. One need not speak to relate or fabricate story. By her presence and actions, Bertha acts as voiceless narrative voice. Yet, this presence is menacing and at certain times apparitional; her deeds are destructive and imperiling. Together, these elements characterize Bertha as a Gothic writer in her own right. She is a narrative space, impacting and directing Thornfield's spatiotextual existence both actively and passively, or indirectly.

As an active author, Bertha adds to the manor's story through threatening actions. If Thornfield is textual area, Bertha attempts its ruin. Paradoxically, she creates through destruction. Contriving Gothic narrative often oxymoronically requires construction of informational gaps through annihilation of text and storyline. In this way, the mode casts the author as a destructive creator—or creative destroyer. Within Gothic lays a birthing/obliteration dialectical tension that relies for its aesthetic effect on the conflicted creative production of gaps through destruction of narrative wholeness and the intentional planting of emptiness in place of that unitary line. Even as she starts the fire, Bertha tries to kill Rochester and erase him from the domestic spatiotext. Tearing the wedding veil constitutes attempted eradication of the marriage narrative from Thornfield's chronicles. Brontë's clues incorporate figurative destruction of Bertha as presence and as literal body; we hear sounds without seeing a person, find a candle without its placing hand, and witness bloody wounds whose causative agent remains invisible. Bertha is a present absence. In fact, she "seems to lack personality or individuality; she is all sign" (Lovell-Smith 202). Her narrative life as scripter of events is a Gothic conflictedness of authorial existence and nonexistence. That is, her actions and their harmful consequences are signs—textual and material—that point to a responsible being, but Brontë hides her away

sufficiently to position the woman as invisible, a nonbeing. Hoeveler foregrounds Bertha's identity as "abjection," "objectification" (218). Carl Plasa diminishes her identity by depriving her of linguistic existence; there is "denial to Bertha of independent textual significance" (62). She is "voiceless" and "ceases to *mean* in the terms set by the novel" (Kreisel 113; author's emphasis). Even Jane describes Bertha as insubstantial, incorporeal specter.

Gothic writers alternate between presence in and absence from their texts. Absence births increased interpretive necessity and opportunities for the reader. Bertha interchanges between intrusive visits to the second floor and a return to an upper haven that removes her from the lower space. Essentially, Brontë's madwoman oscillates between presence that both impacts or makes narrative and absence that leaves behind informational voids—narrative creation in itself—that spawn mystery and provoke questions. Such alternation fashions Bertha into a hybrid of gap and closure. These vacua constitute unavailability of the author that parallels Bertha's vanishing return to her room. Even when Bertha makes her nocturnal visit, she does not make vocal response to Jane's observational reading and questions. Jane considers her possibly unreal. Similarly, Gothic writing periodically removes, makes remote, authors from readers' interpretive efforts. If Gothic writers plant material destructive and ominous clues, Bertha places them too: fire, wounds, blood, torn clothing. Her independent, volitive ability to leave hints positions her as an author whose space of—or *as*—verity resists and competes with other residents' efforts to invent lies about her. Brontë's novel transforms Bertha into a figurative Bluebeard. The madwoman's creation and placement of numerous evidences of her presence in the house constitutes her manufacture and handing over of inviting keys to Jane as inducements to further inquiry.

Representationally, Bertha is an emblem of the uneasy Gothic gap/closure dialectic. Brontë channels this dichotomy through the reality of Thornfield's patriarchal culture, particularly the secretive shame that permeates the manor's environment. Pyrhönen terms it "the void pulsing in its centre the traumatic enigma of Bluebeard's vault" (63). The Gothic house affords us with "the obscurity present within" (Lacôte 205). This feat materializes in two ways. In representing this tension, she doubles Bertha as absent body: removal from space, then narrative erasure. Kreisel observes that Brontë's failure to distinguish Bertha's space linguistically reflects patriarchal deletion of her from acknowledgement. The space is "nondescript," "a blank and featureless space outside the bounds of human habitation" (104, 102). According to Kreisel, the third floor emblematizes patriarchal amnesia, "resistant to representation and memory" (111). Bertha cannot "claim any space in the mansion"; "her existence is never important enough for her to be a real social being" (Chi 101, 102). Bertha's actions are potential informational closure for Jane that others frustrate. Ironically, each obstruction only fuels more of her curiosity. As Farkas notes, "[A]s with most secrets … in [*Jane Eyre*], the more one tries to lock them up, to suppress the truth, the more dramatically they find ways to free themselves" (56). The more absences from physical sight, the material clues that Bertha leaves, the more insubstantial her figure appears, the more Jane can—***must***—read to understand Bertha's spatiotextual presence and impact. Although unintentionally, Bertha asserts her being with visits and actions. Each event is active self-insertion into Thornfield's space and narrative. Each is her assertive creation of part of the manor's history. After each incident, residents' subterfuge endeavors to delete her from the domestic narrative and render her a nonbeing. The Thornfield episode encloses an alternating existence/nonexistence polarity that plays out at multiple levels. One operates between Bertha and the others. The madwoman

establishes—indeed, imposes—her presence and will on the domestic space; residents' speech erases them. She is living story; residents recreate her as non-narrative. The oscillation plays out in Jane too. Struggling to understand affairs, she persistently asserts the existence of an unknown narrative element in the house, a mystery within the spatiotext. Residents insists on its nonbeing, e.g., a mere dream. Consequently, not content with trying to erase Bertha from being, they move to obliterate Jane's confidence in it. Their attempts also attempt erasing her confidence in her "reading" abilities respecting her world.

As a body that repetitively appears and vanishes, Bertha incarnates spationarrative foregrounding/downplaying polarity. Patriarchal ignominy compels Thornfield's residents to devalue the significance of her presence or influence on the manor. The lunatic's very body bears the visible marks of patriarchal shame (Montweiler 119). Gothic reading experience often highlights mystery in narrative information, only to diminish its import in order to arouse reader curiosity. At times, Brontë affords us hints with strange sounds and then an unidentified personage in nocturnal visit; at others, she hides Bertha from us. Bluebeard's presentation of opulent, pleasant domestic space softens the morbidity that exists in the house. Thornfield's residents persistently minimize the impact of Bertha's presence. A few dismiss her deeds' ominous gravity. Rochester and his female colluders fragment her body, diluting her identity; Bertha represents "loss of self" (Kreisel 110). She is merely figurative and psychological figure (Gilbert 796). To Fairfax, she is some servant laughing. One characterizes her as an inebriated servant. Poole blithely limns Bertha as a dream. Rochester does likewise, treating Jane as a mere child when the latter describes the nocturnal visit. This episode becomes a battle of readings and interpretations, who will author Bertha and events. Observing that Rochester misreads where Jane reads, Bock notes that he "refuses to acknowledge what he sees" (87). The residents

practice "an interpretative strategy which resolutely denies Bertha's literal presence as a character" (Plasa 61). If it cannot erase Bertha completely, patriarchy and connivers discount any significance to Bertha's agency. Rochester's characterization of her as part dream, part actuality transforms her, as well as her body, into multiple mendacious "rooms." Bertha is "split off" from Jane, fragmented (Hoeveler 220). These "rooms" paint a false portrait of the actual woman.

Just as Bluebeard's wife accessed domestic areas that presented a façade of innocuous security, Thornfield's residents downplay Bertha as unimportant, harmless, imagined. Narratively, she becomes various bodies (safe, unreal, valueless). Brontë shapes these bodies into figurative Bluebeardian and narrative spaces. She achieves this feat through residents' misleading tales about her. Patriarchy and colluders appropriate additional narrative power from—and over—Bertha because they "speak" for one who cannot. She lacks power of speech and cannot even relate her own life's narrative. Residents remove her semantic power; Bertha is an unspeakable signified (Williams 47) and unstable Otherness signifier (Plasa 61). To Kreisel, she is "dead letters—dumb signs and mute tokens—of failed interpretive practice," "the avatar of voicelessness" (112, 110). Additionally, her bestial nature robs her of narrative worth; as an indeterminate body, she possesses "weakened entitlement" to the Law of the patriarchy (Spivak 249). As prevaricators, they not only expropriate her of narrative self-creative agency, but also use this power to make Jane misread the house. Rochester pre-narrates falsity, so misreading has been part of a preset misreading (Pyrhönen 35). As a female body, Jane is trapped and "can't master story" (Talairach-Vielmas 122).

Brontë multiplies "reading" activity for Jane through Bertha's indirect influences on Thornfield. Her madwoman is also a passive, even vicarious, narrative creator. As adept practitioners of linguistic subterfuge, the manor's residents fabricate false or evasive accounts

regarding Bertha and incidents. Brontë shapes Bertha as Thornfield's epicenter of truth and falsity. As authors, residents remake her presence and identity, her impacts, even her very body into new story. They rewrite her persona or, more specifically, overwrite their storylines onto hers. Gothic's effect originates at least partly from superimposing mendacity onto truth. Bertha actually becomes diverse contrived narrative spaces. According to different resident descriptions, she is variously an unnamed servant, Grace Poole, a ghost, and a dream. Indeed, depending on the narrative rendition at the moment, Bertha is both material and immaterial, both physical presence and imagined incorporeality. To conceal her presence and identity, residents must invent falsehood. Her existence and deeds motivate others to recreate her linguistically. As such, she births story through others. When she leaves clues and commits destructive acts, Bertha is a presence inasmuch as she becomes a causation, a source of harm and danger. The actions and their effects establish her as a truth, a reality, in the house. Others' refashioning her to their narrative desires foregrounds her absence. She need not be present physically for others to lie about her. In fact, that absence and its figurative nonexistence are necessary for their prevarications to become the new truth. Their narrative reshaping robs her of being and actuality, making her a lie and a nonbeing. As ghostwriters, Rochester, Fairfax, and Poole appropriate creative control over narrative from Brontë and (re)author the novel to their desires. Such augmented confusion heightens Jane's Gothic reading experience. Not only must she read Bertha herself, but decipher the woman through multiple veiled narratives from three persons. In fact, Jane's bewilderment arises from the madwoman's simultaneous, conflicted narrative existence as truth and lie; the woman is present, even if only indirectly through material evidential clues such as candle and wounds, but figuratively absent because of narrative mendacity.

Bertha establishes herself as presence, even asserting it, while residents resist with talespace that relates nonexistence. As such, the struggle between two different authorialities in the house foregrounds the being/nonbeing dialectical tension within Gothic reading. A reader's experience spends its energies of inquiry trying to determine what truly exists from what is invention; moreover, the reader must separate as threads the storyline that establishes actuality from that which indicates the imagined. Ironically, the madwoman is both narrative and non-narrative. That is, her existence establishes her as actuality. Rochester and the others counteract that textual existence by trying to make her an unstory. She self-creates, they destroy. Bertha becomes a murky spatiotextual Chinese box of devious talebearers, disembodied sounds, and planted tangible clues (candle, wounds, veil) through which Jane must penetrate in order to decode Thornfield accurately. Bertha herself is a Gothic author. On the one hand, she creates narrative proactively. Conversely, she permits others, who reshape her into a mere fiction, to erect narrative barriers concerning her that confound piercing.

Thornfield serves as a metastructure for the spaces it contains. It is not just narrative spaces of truth and falsity. More, it houses a subnarrative domestic world: Bertha. She becomes a corporealized Bluebeard's home because of the various talerealms she has come to emblematize through the fabricated explanations that residents create about her. Bertha is not just a body. In fact, narratively residents birth and piece her together like Frankenstein's Creature through invention. She self-creates as a true presence by visiting below and creating havoc; residents assemble a figurative physicalized body of fictions. Narratively, Bertha is a hybrid of presence and nonpresence; Rochester calls her "half dream, half reality" (331). As pieces of falsity that residents stitch together and animate with invention, she acts as a Bluebeardian house in enclosing multiple narrative spaces. These regions become "rooms" for Jane to unlock with

inquiry. Bluebeard's wife accessed the areas of her husband's home, but not the truth; each room ultimately told—or contributed to telling—her a false account of the house's true history and horror. Similarly, each resident's lie or evasion constitutes a space that relates an untrue picture of Bertha. Rochester, Grace, and Fairfax, along with their mendacious actions, are inviting "keys" for Jane's interrogative drives. Yet, persons and tales are deceptive Bluebeardian rooms. Jane's access to these prevaricative spaces constitutes Chinese-box metareading; she reads first Rochester, then Grace, and finally Bertha through others. That is, before encountering the actual subjects of accounts, she must interpretively read them initially via other residents' narratives of them. Jane's experience is the Gothic employment of textual mediative cloaking or cloakings to deceive the reader. Residents cloak Bertha textually.

Rochester's characterization of Bertha as part dream, part actuality transforms her, as well as her body, into multiple mendacious narrative "rooms." These rooms paint a false portrait of the actual woman. Just as Bluebeard's wife accessed domestic areas that presented her with a façade of innocuous security, Thornfield's residents downplay Bertha's menacing presence and acts as mere trivialities. Every lie or evasion molds Bertha as insignificant, harmless, or imagined. Narratively, she becomes various bodies. Brontë shapes bodies into Bluebeardian rooms and narrative spaces; residents' tales mislead Jane's reading by attributing Bertha's person or physical being to another's. Lies and narrative subterfuge multiply the bodies that Jane must read and through which she must read to attain truth. Residents' explanatory tales emblematize the Gothic literary experience in shifting consumer attention from reading the bodies of true agents to other, apparent but misleading ones. Reading becomes the misreading of physical being. Depending on the tale that (re)fashions her, Bertha is either material or incorporeal. Explanations frequently represent her class position falsely, altering her from aristocracy to

servant. Fairfax and Rochester characterize her as Grace—a different body from the one Bertha occupies. To Fairfax, she is also briefly an unnamed servant, body without identity.

Grace serves as a misleading Bluebeardian room through bewildering demeanor. Brontë's descriptions of Bertha recall those of an animal; beyond strange laughs, the madwoman growls and gurgles. Grace is quiet, reserved, taciturn, unemotional. Furthermore, for Jane her sober mien applies the lying countenance of sanity to a mad one. Jane's key of inquiry enters a narrative room that speaks dishonestly of peaceful order and stability while it conceals a secret compartment of violent psychopathic history. Other contrived narrative "rooms" empty Bertha of any decisive influence. She intentionally starts a fire. Yet, Grace reinvents its etiology as accidental. As such, Poole not only erases any intent behind the fire, but, more, removes any causative will—and with it a being with volition—from its origins. The causative body metamorphoses from Bertha's hand to Rochester's sleeping with a candle. In its deceitfulness, Grace's account attempts cleverly to shift the spatial position of the culprit candle narratively from the hall to Rochester's bedroom. In fact, the etiology she offers recreates Bertha into Rochester. Like the others, Grace remolds one body narratively into another. From a corporeal perspective, Grace transfers causation from one physical being to another. Through subterfuge, Grace frustrates Jane's empirical, quasi-scientific inquiry into cause, in reality narratively altering the source of the conflagration.

Explanations fabricate the positioning of Bertha spatially. Grace's and Rochester's rationalizations move the madwoman from external reality as material body to the internal perceptual phenomenon of a dream. The room, as it were, shifts location from outer world to inner space, with Jane's mind as Bluebeardian apartment, or so residents would contrive it. Rochester reinvents Bertha's body as an immaterial ghost. His ultimate characterization of his

wife as dream/reality blend hybridizes her as part body, part nonsubstance, straddling the worlds of tangible and imagined existence. As Brontë's manorial Bluebeard, Rochester adds these more confusing rooms for Jane to read or, rather, misread. Through the novel, Jane gradually wends her way through Thornfield's safe areas to the final upper and inner room of truth. Bertha's room, the inner room, is figuratively a Bluebeardian room of death; Rochester treats her as dead to him, insignificant to his life anymore, and to the neighborhood she is for all practical purposes dead—nonexistent—as a narrative or as part of Thornfield's story. She is socially "dead" (Lovell-Smith 202). Paralleling this odyssey is her Bluebeardian investigation of multiple narrative apartments whose collective innocuous face belies the home's ugly history. Spatiotextually, Bertha and the subterfuges that adhere to her transform her presence, identity, and very body into a Bluebeard's house, complete with spaces of canard and veracity.

CONCLUSION: GOTHIC AS A TAKING OF THE KEYS FROM BLUEBEARD

Gothic reading and its phenomenological condition are spatiotextual struggle. Bluebeard's fairy tale in reality constitutes how a wife ostensibly under her husband's power shifts the dynamics of their relationship in her favor. Discovery of his secret equalizes that relation at a narrative level. Through her volitive agential inquiry, she rescripts the personality of Bluebeard's house into a more familiar space for herself. Bluebeard no longer retains sole epistemological control over his own home. Jane Eyre too vies with Rochester and his servants to read and decode Thornfield accurately. She is "constantly observing, watching, and scrutinizing" (Farkas 60). Like a Gothic novel, though, the manor contains multiple narrative strata and mazes under Rochester's domination; besides himself, there are Fairfax and Grace Poole. Jane's inquisitive impulses must compete with three opaque storyline zones, creators of smokescreens. Bluebeard's and *Jane*

Eyre's tales foreground Gothic reading experience as a writer-reader power struggle and the mode's commentary on power relations within the text of narrative and physical space. Gorilovics addresses the fairy tale's numerous reinventions and reimaginings that reveal author desires and anxieties (1-2).

Gothic reading is performative. In fact, its reading occurrence is a performative event and its narrative space a realm for role playing. The very act of encountering and interpreting text transforms narrative into a focalizing stage, or staging area, in which actors play out their respective functions. The author has the opportunity to play the part of author and creator. Rochester and Bluebeard have structured and inked their various psyches onto their home spaces and exert control over the sequencing of their storylines. Meanwhile, the reader attains the prospect of acting the role of both reader-interpreter and writer. Even more, the reader has the chance to assume the part of rewriter and, through inquiry, continual reading, and conjecture, to usurp or at least partner through creative imagination and emerge from textual encounter as co-author. The wife and Jane Eyre commence in their respective domestic spaces as passive entrants. Through interpretation and decoding of various signs in their environments, they metamorphose into increasingly proactive agents capable of writing their wills and agency onto the spaces they inhabit and navigate. Performativity leads to materialization and realization. That is, the text again serves as a staging region for both reader and author to play their roles to fruition. The author must have and write text to be a controller of access. Bluebeard's keys and Rochester's mandates or prevarication emblematize power over narrative. Meanwhile, the reader must have text and encounter with text in order to realize her role first as interpreter, then as autonomous writer or rescripter. Materialization becomes transformative for the reader. Indeed, reading and the reading experience are metamorphic events. The further she reads and the more

independently she decodes for herself from the text, the more the reader alters her persona to that of author or co-author. If will and agency are their own narratives, Jane and wife assert their own spatiotextual identities into the homes they occupy. Eventually, the reader moves to resemble the opponent who withheld information from her, the author.

Gothic reading experience draws its strength at least partly from an unlikely source: science. Bluebeard's wife and Jane Eyre are both practitioners of this branch of knowledge. Text and narrative serve as spaces for science, with Gothic as a scientific research pursuit or project. Because the reader inquires and forms theories and conclusions during the reading event, she practices empirical investigation into causation and motivation. She researches using textual information and data and quests to understand foundational operative laws and rationales in nature and people. Linguistic space of narrative and physical area in the material world serve as spaces for investigation into the world's secrets. Wife and Jane seek out answers. Since readers conjecture during their consumption, Gothic narrative transforms the houses in both tales as laboratories for the formulations of hypotheses. The mode serves as a medium not just for aesthetically imaginative activity, but empirical and scientific creativity too; in this way, the mode expands ingenuity beyond just the literary and into the concrete. At heart, Gothic reading practice is positivist. Author encouragement to read toward discovery invests the reader with agency. The reader becomes a participator or, more precisely, a co-participator in creating narrative. Her creative role is dual. In conjecturing or forming conclusions from textual gaps and clues—"keys", the reader actively closes gaps with her imagination. In this role, she is the paradoxical closing opener, unlocking gaps in order ultimately to fill them in.

The reader fabricates story independently, as though two authors are laboring in tandem. Indeed, the Gothic reading experience is not completely subservient to the author's direction.

Rather, the reader is semi-autonomous, scripting out her own answers where the author leaves lacunae. Progression through Gothic narrative entails persistent alternation between two authors, original author and reader. Because it permits reader agency, Gothic reading becomes its own narrative of birth and budding of reader subjectivity as story co-creator. Readers personalize storyrealm text to their desires. Readers write too. Textual encounter transforms the consumer into a producer, at least an author-reader hybrid. In its character, Gothic reading is actually an unstable experience and identity; the reader is sometimes purely a reader and at other times the reader-author duality. Reading metamorphoses the narrative space from author to reader space; through internal processing of information, the reader rewrites that space. An author shares the creative process with her reader. Indeed, the Gothic narrative region actually constitutes a collaborative workspace for both author and reader. Reading becomes its own plotline inasmuch as the event is a story about how the reader transforms to being a coauthor during the process. Essentially, the reader herself is a narrative space. Gothic textual experience serves as a macronarrative about how the reader reads.

This phenomenon of dual authoriality occurs because of the Gothic author's conflicted, even paradoxical, role as creator. Her performative role as author possesses an inherent tension. Such authors are Bluebeards. Their narratives are their concealing houses. Like Bluebeard, the writer is the resistant inviter, offering keys to revelation but impeding reader effort at piercing secrets. If the author is a Bluebeard, the reader becomes the wife in a strange marriage that allures but bars. The author is also a permissive authoritarian. She offers the keys, even calling particular attention to them, but restricts quality and quantity of information. Recalling Shelley's work, the author is a Frankenstein's Creature eluding its pursuing creator even while leaving food and directional signs to invite further chase. Reader becomes both friend and enemy.

Bluebeard took a wife, but regards her as a threat to his secret; Rochester loves Jane, but her presence and any potential gain in her knowledge imperils his marriage plans. Between author and reader there exists this strange blended association in which the author treats her reader as both narrative collaborator and opponent to tease. Ultimately, Gothic narrative space is dichotomized performance. Its world is a mutually antagonistic but interdependent dialectic of encouragement and frustration.

Authorial conflictedness and reader agency create Gothic narrative as contested space, writer and reader competing to control narrative information and interpretive reading. The text stages and plays out power relations between both actors. In fact, its mindscape is two minds that overlap and struggle, the one dominant and controlling, the other inquisitive and conjecturing, two clevernesses vying. The context of this relationship fashions the space into gradual, progressive transfer of ownership from author to reader. Beginning as the author's sole property, the narrative through reading and unfolding becomes the reader's possession because of inquiry and revelation. Overarchingly, Gothic reading experience alters consumed text into metanarrative. Beyond the textual encounter with fictional characters and events lays the author-reader story. Reader interaction with Gothic is its own narrative. That space encloses the tale of writer-author competition. It encompasses the story of two actors' power relations—as well as tracking its shift—and how a reader's interpretive activities pierce textual veils and transform author text into reader text. It charts struggle, competition, agency, and transformation of the reader. Additionally, there is the macrostory of the guiding mind behind the work. The reader does more than explore characters' worlds, minds, and motives. Like Jane Eyre and the wife, she plumbs the author's private narrative too.

CHAPTER IV: GOTHIC AS SLEUTHING:

THE DETECTIVE WORK OF *DRACULA* AND

THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

Investigating the mysterious Edward Hyde, attorney Utterson quips, "If he be Mr. Hyde, … I shall be Mr. Seek" (Stevenson 8). Equally a seeker, Dr. Van Helsing tells his comrades in finding Dracula, "How shall we find his where; and having found it how can we destroy?" (Stoker 238). *Dracula* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* include elements of the detective fiction genre in that characters quest to answer questions of the mysterious and diabolical. Additionally, each man seeks a creature who bears the marks of criminality. Utterson's investigation hopes to determine the nature of the Jekyll-Hyde connection and locate Hyde. Similarly, Van Helsing enlists help to track down Dracula. In each work, the author foregrounds the Gothic as a form of detective fiction. Utterson uses various texts, a material object, and oral reports in efforts to construct a portrait of the Jekyll-Hyde relationship. Each of these things constitutes a physical clue, a sign of an invisible signified. More the scholar, Van Helsing employs erudition and science to conjecture Dracula's location. Each man plays detective in tracking his quarry; each applies empirical, positivist faculties to the mystery at hand. Van Helsing asserts that empiricism is his team's ally: "[W]e have on our side … sources of science; we are free to … think' (Stoker 239). The doctor's extended comments on modern science and long exposition of Dracula's history and nature emphasize his need to arm his colleagues with knowledge and comprehension that will defeat Dracula. He stresses the significance of intellect and learning in fighting vampirism: " [T]he teachings and records of the past give proof enough for sane peoples" (238). Stevenson characterizes Utterson's desire to solve the mystery of

Jekyll's will as intellectual and imaginative (8). Furthermore, the possession of limited

knowledge incites the attorney to probe his client's affairs further (6). Utterson and Helsing both

become interpretive "readers" of their environments, decoders of cryptic or incomplete signs for

solution of a persistently burning question. As "detectives," they are dynamic intellectual forces

(Landrum, Browne, Browne Introduction 5). The detective is not ineffectual intellect; in fact, he

or she uses mind to control the external world, and is intuitive too (Aydelotte 74-75).

Initially, each character is "outside" because of his inchoate knowledge of relationships

or movements and location. Gradually, through exercise of empiricism and investigation, each

moves to the "inside" as he gains more knowledge. Detective fiction and Gothic share the trait of

retrogressive narrative. Whereas most genres or modes move forward sequentially from cause to

effect, these two proceed in reverse: from observed or felt effect to cause. In most narrative

forms, motive or natural law acts as plot's beginning and moves outward into the world,

impacting and influencing behavior and events. The reader witnesses first the mind and thinking

that conceive motive, then how that motive affects words and actions in the external world. This

type of narrative proceeds from "inside" to "outside." Conversely, detective fiction and Gothic

move in reverse, tracing effect back to cause. Utterson employs clues and a lawyer's mind to

move backwards to the source of all of his tale's mischief: Jekyll's mind. Stevenson's work

concludes with an entry into the doctor's "inside." Meanwhile, Van Helsing moves from the

murky outer space of Dracula's *sub rosa* movements to locating the actual creature. To

accomplish his feat, the doctor must penetrate the mind of the vampire. Locating Dracula is not

enough. Van Helsing takes pains to detail the creature's mind and thinking processes for his

coterie: "[H]e is of cunning more than mortal, for his cunning be the growth of ages" (Stoker

238). Notably, Helsing here underscores the cerebral character of Gothic as intellect versus

intellect. Movement "inside" into Dracula's mind will require the ammunition of science, knowledge of superstition, and sufficiently prepared mortal intellect.

In each narrative form, science, or empirical thinking, and intellect do not just solve puzzles. More, they serve as narratological mechanisms for movement of the reader from "outside" to "inside." Along the way, Gothic reading also moves beyond just emotional response to a scientific experience. In enlarging delineation of this experience, we problematize our understanding of Gothic as sensual experience. Each work's main quester applies his reading to his detective work. Whereas Helsing applies previously-learned scholarship to deciphering Dracula's whereabouts, Utterson encounters texts of diverse character: holographic will, letters, a personal note, and two written statements. These texts either cloud or advance understanding and resolution. They help create a "divine tension between the exact and unknown" (Winks 86). In each instance, text and other material clues serve the empirical interests of their users. Furthermore, they constitute part of characters' investigatory practices. Consequently, their existence and characters' use of them foreground Gothic reading as much empirical exercise as affect. Utterson must speculate and form conclusions through writings, a broken stick, and oral witness to cohere a picture of his client's hidden affairs. At one point, he surmises, although incorrectly, a blackmail relationship between Jekyll and Hyde. Meanwhile, Helsing applies previously-gained knowledge to present circumstances in order to hypothesize the nature of Dracula's movements. Each man "scientizes" the Gothic with application of intellect to "read," then draw conclusions about, their environments and the creatures they pursue. The detective is also a scientist and a scientific observer (Woods 19). Similarly, the Gothic reader approaches her textual encounter partly as a scientist and detective. She uses material clues, e.g., text; oral account; and knowledge of general laws of nature and behavior with which to hypothesize,

speculate, and form reasonable conjectures based on observable narrative signs. Such signs can be figurative and semiotic, but all require the detective to "read" (Sweeney 9). These have the effect of engaging the reader's reasoning abilities; through exercise of inductive faculties, the reader practices "powers of invention" (Rzepka 10, 30-31). Specifically, Charles Rzepka asserts that detective fiction excites inductive reasoning through metonymy, substituting clues and signs for the unseen signifieds (17-18); metonymy grants access to these clues. This event mirrors the characters' inside/outside condition. Gothic reading experience emblematizes narrative movement from "outer" to "inner" through speculative activity and accumulation of knowledge through observation.

Overarchingly, Gothic appeals to the sensorium at multiple levels. One level plays to agitation and excitement, another to the calm dispassionate. As affective response, the mode appeals to the physical sensations and impulses of the reader, feelings such as fear, anxiety, thrill, *frisson*. At another level, Gothic reading is a sensual experience inasmuch as empiricism necessitates such venues as vision (observation of effect) and hearing (speech and sound).

One of the distinguishing marks of late Victorian culture was the increasing emphasis on science, empiricism, and rationalism in professions and society. Detective fiction arose "from the thirst for apparent scientific accuracy, from the need to see a rational world behind the chaos of the industrial revolution" (Winks 38). According to Robin Winks, the "subtext" of the Victorian era was desire for logical answers in its experiential realm, a solution "which is, despite all attempts at obfuscation, in the end seen to be orderly, rational, scientific, even mechanical" (91). Nature was a closed system requiring no supernaturalism to operate (Jann 273). Application of scientific methods and thinking permeated different branches of knowledge. Herbert Spencer fused Darwinian theory with economics to create Social Darwinism; in the free market, only the

entrepreneurially gifted survived and succeeded in competition for profit. Frederick Taylor's theory of scientific management infused organization into industrial production. Methods for validation of facts and knowledge changed canons of proof and evidence in such diverse areas as law, literature, theology, and history (Sargent 288). Fixation with categorization spawned classification of human beings. Earlier, the pseudoscience of phrenology typed personality traits deterministically with skull bumps. Philip Davis notes the "deep Victorian impulse" to map out in detail all the mind's faculties (165). Rzepka observes the era's "growing view that consciousness itself was divided" (42). Anthropology under such thinkers as Comte, Spencer, and Morgan classified human races and cultures. This interest in human typing and classifying the human creature penetrated into detection and police work. Cesare Lombroso, "The Father of Modern Criminology," introduced scientific methodology into the study of crime. His chief theory was the genetically deterministic idea of "born criminal." London's police force improved detective work with classification of criminal methods and development of more scientific methods for such identifications (Petrow 98). French police chief Alphonse Bertillon employed anthropometry, or biometrics, and fingerprints after observing that some human biological characteristics remain constant throughout life.

Anthropology and criminology became scientific mechanisms for reconstructing a past for the purposes of coherent understanding of that past. Neil Sargent notes that the era embraced a philosophy of history different from previous eras' views concerning relations of past and present (289-90). Through science, Victorian culture could achieve a satisfactory and comfortable perspective of its modern world. Rzepka argues that detective fiction inherited Victorian faith in science and reason as ways to organize a picture of history. This belief permeated such fields as paleontology, history, geology, psychiatry, and anthropology, which he

terms the "reconstructive sciences" (33); all of these rested on interest in history. This movement

merged with the rise of materialism. Rosemary Jann terms this belief system "reductive" (273).

Privileging the material over the spiritual and invisible became what Philip Davis terms "a socio-

economic form" (159). The economic facet sprang from the Industrial Revolution, with its

concomitant consumerism and commodification, "a concern with material needs to the neglect of

spiritual matters" (159). The Scientific Revolution fastened the view of Nature as mechanistic

(159). Positivism and focus on the physical world, not traditional biblical or Church teachings,

vested truth validity chiefly in the visible world and matter as arbiter of accurate human history:

> At some point during this transition [during the nineteenth century] from sacred to secular explanations of the past the increasing tempo of the West's reiterated crises of historical explanation began to change people's understanding of the relative priority and weight to be given to material evidence, to what we might call the physical 'clues' of history … . By the 1840s, this crucial shift in evidentiary priority was all but complete, at least among the intellectual classes in Britain: the unimpeachable authority of the sacred testimony that had shaped the thinking of early 'theorists of the earth' was rapidly giving way to the new authority of material 'clues' interpreted in the light of conflicting 'testimonies' … . (Rzepka 35).

Any reconstructive tasks of history would draw their strength from secular impulses rather than

metaphysical or religious.

Historical reconstruction involved application of intellect to the physical, not the

immaterial. This impulse infiltrated psychiatry with its emphasis on the "mental universe"

(Rzepka 37). Freud's psychoanalysis attempted case-history tracing of mental disorders to their

psychic roots. Between this field and detective writing, "[t]he narrative movement is … similar:

[both] work back through time, searching for causes and connections to recover meaning that

explains the present" (Pyrhönen 52). According to Rzepka, detective fiction's development

occurred in tandem with that of the "narrative" of the reconstructive sciences; its writers sought

"ways to engage their readers' inductive and analeptic [retrospective] powers of invention" (33,

37). Detective writing adapted anthropology's scientific methods (Woods 18). According to

Helmut Heissenbüttel, detective work is a type of combined retrospective author-readership

reminiscent of the sciences. The detective "tries to reconstruct a trace out of individual accidental

marks … [and] out of individual strokes deciphers at first a script and then a text. The crucial

thing … is the script" (84-85). Overall, according to Rzepka, "positivism and historicism are

closely intertwined" (44). Detective writing reflected the era's interest in history and

reconstruction of the past.

       According to Yu Scheglov, the era's educated bourgeoisie looked to the detective genre

to satisfy two contradictory impulses. On the one hand, the Victorian reader desired adventure,

motion, and danger. Contemporary writers had to balance this craving with middle-class desires

for comfort, safety, and domestic tranquility. Science, intellect, enlightenment, and calm

rationality allowed for both:

> This world, uniting the terrifying and the safe … offers a combination of conditions in which the most sober of citizens would agree … .
> This theme is a sort of utopia created 'in the interest' of the comfortably off Victorian man-in-the-street: the educated middle classes [and others] … . The theme is a product of the world-view peculiar to this social stratum; on the one hand, an attachment to his calm, enlightened … life and to the civilization and progress which guarantee this comfort (discussions about the virtue of technology, about the nineteenth century as an era of material prosperity …) … . … In addition, the European bourgeois of the late 19th century is keen on science and strives to keep up with it. He wants to learn, without too much effort, as much as possible, about the world he lives in. Hence the genre of scientific journeys [such as as the works of Verne, Wells, etc.] … . (58-59).

Infusion of science and empiricism into literature such as detective writing fed a Victorian

bourgeois self-image of the rational, positivist reader.

       Scholarship links detective fiction with the Gothic because of shared traits. Sandor

Klapcsik asserts that the detective genre is a subgroup of Gothic and that the two trace back to

the same historical origins (48). Character investigation of mysteries in traditional Gothic

represents desires to bring coherence in explanation to a world that appears chaotic. Geoffrey

Hartman notes that Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* initiated this formula. According to Hartman, in

both Gothic and mystery "appalling facts are made to fit into a rational or realistic pattern" (217).

According to scholars, the original, or classical, Gothic (ca. 1764-1820) gave birth to detective

fiction and endowed it with classical Gothic conventions. Among these traits were "hazily

defined substrata of horror," disintegration of traditional belief systems, and burgeoning

individualism (Landrum, Browne, Browne Introduction 2). Nils Clausson argues that the Gothic

revival at the nineteenth-century end not only emerged contemporaneously with the detective

genre, but blended with it at various points, e.g., the works of Stoker and Doyle. The *Hound of*

the Baskervilles, for example, "show[s] itself to be simultaneously both Gothic tale and detective

story" (65). In its machinery, the detective genre is an heir to classical Gothic. To Britta Martens,

that Gothic served as older knowledge that paved the way for the new that was detective writing:

"The Gothic novel is arguably the "missing link" between the old epistemology of earlier crime

narratives and the new epistemology of detective fiction" (214). Detective writing finished what

Gothic began, namely, bringing more order to investigatory impulses: "In the detective story, the

detective figure who investigates the secrets of other characters systematizes and

professionalizes what in the Gothic novel tends to be a more random process of detection by a

character who is usually directly affected by the secret" (217). Both categories of literature, notes

Austin Freeman, challenge the intellect in multiple ways, placing demands on "creative artistic"

imagination and logical analytical faculties (9). Detective fiction borrowed or inherited from

Gothic; to some degree, such as with systematization of detection, the new genre organized the

raw material that it received. Stevenson himself had an impact on both literatures (Dryden "The

Gothic" 97).

One common trait between Gothic and detective fictions is the use of retrogressive narrative. Paradoxically, each is retrograde progression, advancing by moving backward. Moreover, their movements are, arguably, counterexperiential. Detective writing "raises questions about cause and effect" (Winks 119). Everyday life presents our mental processes with linear progression from cause to effect. Conversely, detective and Gothic literatures are antilinearity or, perhaps more precisely, heterolinearity. Both recreate—reverse—understanding of causal sequence; effect precedes cause, and narrative or episodes begin at the terminus. In detective writing, we see crimes and clues, the product, first and without the causative agent. *Jane Eyre*'s candle, sounds, and fire detach Jane from the visible creator or placer. In *Dracula*, Stoker shows Lucy's condition but not its rationale. Stevenson provides texts and a broken stick, but not the maker of these—the person of Hyde. In both literatures, the author intentionally reverses and deconstructs the linearity of causality and the reader must reconstruct normal sequence through reading and conjecture. Where most genres move from concealed to unfolding, Gothic and detective fiction progress from open to hidden; Dennis Porter characterizes the latter as motion from the "open" story to the "hidden" story (29). Detective story, he also argues, is movement from loss to recapture and the merging of two narrative "times":

> The effect of the crime is revealed before the statement of its causes. This means that detective fiction is preoccupied with the closing of the logico-temporal gap that separates the present of the discovery of crime from the past that prepared it. It is a genre committed to an act of recovery, moving forward to move back. The detective encounters effects without apparent causes … . [H]is role is to reestablish sequence and causality. (*The Pursuit of Crime* 29-30).

Often, detective and reader move formulaically from materiality of clues to the unseen world of mind: "The regulatory principle … governs the method of the detective who seeks to forensically reconstruct the past by reasoning backward, from visible effects to their concealed causes, to discover the animating will behind the mystery" (Sargent 289).

Heta Pyrhönen characterizes this retrogressive ratiocination as abductive reasoning. In this process, one blends observed effect with postulated rule for formation of conclusion. According to Pyrhönen, abduction stimulates two parts of the mind: conjecture exercises creativity and testing of hypothesis develops the reason (68). If the author confuses our sense of causality, detective writing is "sequence made sensible" (Winks 119). Transposing cause and effect, along with opportunities for reconstruction, operates as demand on intellect and reasoning. Elliott Gilbert notes of traditional detective fiction that it begins with a "complex tangle of events … toward a moment of clarity" (33). This narrative paradigm constitutes an invitation to reader exercise of empiricism. Investigative impulses redefine effect; consequence itself becomes "cause" of inquiry through continued reading. Scholars often point out the Aristotelian nature of detective fiction. Arguably, both Gothic and detective literatures are Aristotelian quests to determine the "prime mover" of events.[1] Timothy Steele argues that "the detective story is undeniably Aristotelian in a variety of ways" (556). Among the classical elements in the genre, he observes the privileging of plot over character. For Steele, a preeminent Aristotelian element is "communication of the knowledge accruing from [the] investigation" (557).

The previous three chapters' works incorporate detective work into their Gothic narratives. Catherine Moreland acts the investigator into both the Abbey's true history and the General's purportedly diabolical deeds. Using logical processes, albeit amusingly overactive reasoning, she attempts to solve the "crime" of Mrs. Tilney's barbaric murder. *Frankenstein* generates two investigative pursuits. Walton desires to know Victor's history. The latter's audience to the

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1 Aristotle posited the existence of a Prime, or Unmoved, Mover who acted as First Cause of all things in the universe.

Creature's tale represents a probe into his Creature's thoughts before judging him and understanding his special request. In both cases, sympathetic listening constitutes auditory detective investigation of others' lives and motivations. At Thornfield, Jane Eyre probes space and others' narratives to ascertain the answer to the manor's mystery. Two events create Jane the detective. The fire is a "crime" that demands identifying a culprit. She encounters clues—strange sounds, a candle—without a creating agent. Residents' oral witness testimony deceives. Jane's quasi-legal investigatory "court examination" of Poole ends in the latter's resistance. Meanwhile, a torn wedding veil becomes material evidence that Rochester blithely discounts. All three works employ investigative fact collection as part of their Gothic narrative.

Stoker and Stevenson fashion their works not just as Gothic tales, but also as detective fiction. However, each "detective" reflects a different facet of detection in achieving his goal. Utterson collects information through texts, material objects, and oral report because he lacks knowledge and understanding regarding Jekyll's situation. In Stevenson's narrative, he is an outsider, ignorant of truth and gathering clues because of that deficiency; the attorney is "outside" Jekyll's mind and secrets. Van Helsing possesses knowledge, but not the culprit's person. Erudition and learning are his weapons. Yet, Dracula remains "outside" his reach. Utterson conjectures and concludes as he compiles information, moving from outer to inner as his knowledge increases. Helsing is "inside" in that he understands perfectly the vampire's thoughts and nature. Unlike Utterson, he has identified the culprit, but not Dracula's location. In this latter, Helsing is "outside." Like the police detective, the doctor understands and expounds upon Dracula's *modus operandi*. Knowledge is insufficient, though. He must apply that knowledge to ascertain location. Understanding is not enough; he must act on that knowledge. For Van Helsing, science provides the tools, but not the agency, to capture the vampire.

Application and action will both materialize and complete movement from outer to inner. Scientific thinking for Helsing forms the foundation for seeking and finding Dracula. Similarly, Utterson must play the scientist in actively observing and intellectually connecting scattered data into a coherent whole that tells us an accurate story about his client. In detective writing, analysis and reasoning lead to ordering of facts and, consequently, "to the reordering of society" (Gilbert 32). The focus is just as much on the detective's mind as the criminal's, focusing "on the representation of the subjective psyche in its attempt to make sense of a world of epistemological uncertainty" (Martens 211). Each man must interpretively read his surroundings and arrive at rational conclusions regarding them.

Both works foreground Gothic reading as scientific experience. In fact, the reader's presence reshapes each work as metascientific. Along with—indeed, standing beside—each man, she too must conjecture, learn, and connect bits of data during the course of unresolved mystery. The Gothic reader has the invitation to perform what Utterson and Van Helsing do: hypothesize, conclude, and apply empirical or explicitly scientific principle as an additional, participating colleague in the pursuit. Arguably, each detective piece has at least two investigators: "Readers of detective fiction derive enjoyment … from imitating the detective in trying to reconstruct the criminal's thoughts and actions" (Martens 203).

In fact, this invitation refashions Gothic reading as performative. The reader becomes a scientist too. Moreover, the detective reading performance and event occur alone; the reader performs as a singular intellect. According to Rzepka, the image of the detective operating as a rational individual descends from the Romantic exaltation of the individual; this figure not only exercised reason by himself, but also imagination and intuition with the aid of any else (45-48). The role of "scientist" does not confine itself to credentials of formal training. Utterson is an

attorney, not a scientific researcher. Yet, Stevenson's choice for detective is defensible. The field of law is itself highly empirical, positivist, concerning itself with collection of facts and information, exercise of logic and analysis. It fashions case-historical narrative as complete pictures of their clients' cases. Attorneys must use and any all available material clues, witness reports, and texts that strengthen their arguments. As investigators, they too treat evidence; they too work to trace cause and motive from observed effect., and (re)construct history from all available clues and data. A detective writer fits the offenses to the detective's talents; as a Gothic detective writer, Stevenson has done such for Utterson's legal talents (Aydelotte 74). Gothic reading experience does the same. Its practitioner experiences narrative as a movement from "outside," with its deliberately dispersed, cryptic clues, to an "inside" where the answer resides. Coherence and ordering of clues and facts endows one's environment with meaning and "persuades the reader that the world it describes is … understandable, that it is meaningful" (Aydelotte 70). During this course, the reader's exercise of empirical inquiry—even if that inquiry is merely impulse to continue reading—provides the mechanism for this transformation. Twin bound temporal reading activities occur that bind reader and detective into a single operating unit; the reader reads in "ideal time" and the detective collects clues in narrative "objective time" (Parreira 31). Regarding detective fiction, "no other genre of literary form implies such an exhaustive likeness between one who reads and the one who is read; they both share the same order of objectivity" (Parreira 31).

Gothic detection reading actually practices multiple levels of literacy and deciphering during the reading experience: towards author, detective, and criminal. Heta Pyrhönen argues that the detective acts two roles, both reader of the crime that the malefactor "writes" and author of the narrative of detection. According to Pyrhönen, "[t]he criminal as author and the detective

as reader are engaged in a rivalry over the possession of meaning" (34). Essentially, the reader

becomes a metareader of both characters. The effect is to add more demand on the intellect, and

thus augment the challenge.

THE INSIDE/OUTSIDE DIALECTIC

Jekyll's Statement underscores his heightened sensitivity to his nature's conflictedness.

Possessing a natural "impatient gaiety of disposition," he felt deeply a social compulsion to

"wear a more than commonly grave countenance" (Stevenson 42). Implicit in this struggle was

an understanding of the disparate spaces of inside and outside. Chapter 3 explored the concept of

contested spaces in Gothic narrative. There the argument positioned reader and author as

competing, resisting regions within the text. The emblem of the opposing psychocorporeal

entities of Jekyll and Hyde emphasizes the divergence between internal and external. On a larger

scale, Stevenson's narrative incorporates the reader's movement from outer to inner. If the two

eponymous characters persistently battle for control of the doctor's body, outer/inner serves as

pitched power struggle that plays out during Gothic reading event. Robbie Goh casts the drama

as a "deliberate "poetics of misdirection"" that turn reader interpretive energies away from

reading signs (176). Stevenson, for example, scatters clues; one means of leading a reader astray

is "control of presentation of facts and clues" (Pyrhönen 18). Ultimately, though, both the

protagonists and the novella foreground Gothic as a dialectical universe enclosing the mutually

resistant spaces of internal and external.

As a dialectic, inside/outside embeds two struggling actors into text. Author and reader

engage in a contest over narrative, the former intentionally withholding "inside information" and

latter actively inquiring after it through reading. Gothic detection is fused light and dark.

Pyrhönen terms it as "showing the reader everything yet simultaneously obfuscating its meaning" (18) Stevenson forms his reading community "through selective acts of disclosure and silence" (Frank 223). At the beginning of the Gothic literacy event, the reader is outside. Through the act, she moves to the informational and epistemic core of the text. The author emblematizes inside. As the inner, the author controls the core and its contents. Unlike other narrative genres, the detective novel makes a conflicted art of withholding and giving information (Porter "Backward Construction" 340; see also Martens 200). Namely, as creator, she dominates access to and release of both quantity and quality of knowledge, a dominion that extends completely backwards into and throughout the outer parts of the text. Narrative creation is a Jekyll-and-Hyde act of "contradictory duties"; the writer has a "double obligation … [to] provide the elements of a solution which he also renders difficult and surprising" (Caillois 7). Here Gothic subsumes question/answer under outside/inner; outside is the space that denies and defies explanation. As Gordon Hirsch observes, "[D]espite the search for voice, identity, explanation, and presence in [texts], the book insists on a kind of plasticity, absence, deferral, *differance*" (237; emphasis the author's). Subtly, Gothic inner/outer's effect relies on understanding both actors as subversive agents. Her position at the internal affords the author the opportunity to undermine her reader's attempt at discovery of truth. She erects roadblocks as narrative voids to foil her reader. Eyal Segal terms this resistance to gap-filling as "retardatory structure" (169). Conversely, the reading event fashions its practitioner as subversive of the author's efforts and dominance. The further she reads, the more she learns. Thus, the author-reader contest operates at a dual level; at the surface is the struggle over narrative control, at the depth the mutual sabotage that each actor perpetrates against the other. This undermining arises from reader expectations of collaboration; it is an "ethical" situation, with the reader believing

"that the author should play the game with him" (Thomson 143). In its power politics, the dialectic represents an intersubversive phenomenon on narrative's battlefield.

Gothic reading thus transforms in/out into a deeper, subtler dialectic: author/reader. Both establish their respective subjectivities on the boundaries of self (Thomas "Strange Voices" 90). Reading becomes a contest of intentions. Marjorie Nicholson asserts that "the detective story is a battle royal between the author and the reader" (119). At the core, the author works narratively to keep the inside in, the outside out. The purpose of text becomes to conceal. In fact, reading is repurposing; the author "inside" intends text to hide, while reading from "outside" refashions text's purpose as revelatory. Bernard Suits calls it the author's "game" with her reader (201-02). As inside, the author rewrites the normal intent of language as communicative and revelatory into text that hides truth. Observing that the detective fiction writer prevents the reader from guessing the truth prematurely, Edward Cone asserts that "a narrative writer's technique is his control of the reader's awareness of events" (554). This condition positions the author as dominant over the narrative. Inside equals power and superiority. Noting the detective fiction reader's proactive participation in its narrative, Peter Hühn remarks the "the novelist very often (I suspect) succeeds in proving … the superiority of his or her writing over the novel-reader's reading skills (464). Conversely, the reader treats storyline as reversible. Her literacy practice strives to turn narrative inside out. If the author constructs text to retard penetration to the inner sanctum of truth, the reader burrows inward. Reader and author incarnate two countervailing narrative movements: Stevenson's work is an "outside world working in" to the "inner sanctum" of Jekyll's home and an opposing "inside working out" of Hyde (Manlove 89).

The dialectic encompasses two embedded competing narratives, those of author and reader. At the surface, the author maintains dominance over information and its access. Entrance

of the reader serves as the submerged narrative of literacy that progressively undermines authorial hegemony within the text. Inside/outside casts the reader as a rebellious subject-actor. The previous chapter explored Gothic not only as an arena of author-reader rivalry, but as a shift in power relations from the former to the latter. Stevenson's tale is paradigmatic for this interactive model. Jekyll scripts a story that originates with his sole control over events and concludes with loss of that power to Hyde. In the literacy relationship, the reader acts the Hyde; as counterauthor, she rewrites the body of narrative into reader space and wrests gradual control of that body from the original writer. Literacy practice is the reauthoring of inside/outside. The Gothic reader reengineers herself to insidership. In so doing, she equalizes her relationship with the author. A reader's penetration to narrative's core represents the birth of the empowered subject-reader. Detective reading grants "personal empowerment," "a strengthened sense of self" (Hermes, Stello 222). In detective fiction such as Stevenson's, the reader emerges as a powerful adversary: "[There is] basically a contest between an author [criminal or villain] and a reader about the possession of meaning, each of them wishing to secure it for himself. (The contest *within* the novel is repeated on a higher level between the novelist and the actual reader)" (Hühn 456; emphasis the author's). Gothic narrative moves linearly backward to the natal origins of a mystery's truth. Along the way, the practice of reading procreates the empirical reader and births an altered author-reader association.

Merging these two dialectics highlights various embedded epistemological and phenomenological dichotomies that characterize the Gothic reading event. One such, truth/falsity, drives the others as a foundational duality. At its heart, Gothic is as much metaphysical as it is affective. Stevenson emphasizes the significance of interpretation "while simultaneously problematising the veracity of any 'human' reading and questioning

representational authority as inherent to and guaranteed within any text" (Norquay 30). Its authors write the ontological polarities of reality and appearance into its textual world for confusion and complication of literacy practice and activity. "Truth," present from the start, "is systematically disavowed and creates a special tension between knowing and not knowing" (Priel 446). There is a gap of "the marker of truth and a screen of truth," between "the story told" and "the story understood" (Priel 447). Gothic works to disorient sensory and intellectual processing. Part of this task is subversion of objective truth; outside not only undermines veracity and actuality, but also emblematizes proactive sabotage of these principles. This subversion undermines narrative sequence: "When fictional reality/truth value of an event is assessed, an intentional or unintentional action reveals how the linear arrangement of events is distorted to create false trails for prospective readers" (Flanders 224). In its text, the mode relies on the reality/"reality" divergence. The success and effect of its reading experience depends on constructing a false ontology or existential framework ("reality") narratively. As a mode, Gothic positions this half outside; the innermost text it reserves for existential truth. Appearance and falsity combine to resist reader cerebral penetration to central understanding. Detective narratives "constitute an attack … upon the certainty of the knowledge we may have of truth and deception (Priel 446). As outside, they become spaces that compete with empiricism's exploratory drives for narrative dominance.

At a deeper level, textual deceit and mendacity serve as outer-world barriers to the reading mind. Namely, both dialectics pit external authorial textual subterfuge against the reader's interior thought structure. Each actor assumes a different cerebral seat within those worlds; essentially, reality/appearance encloses a rivalry between two intellects. Inside is the author's prevaricative, concealing cunning. Opposite this mindsphere is the reader as outer entity

questing for grasp of reality. Richard Gaughan observes that the reader, "invited" to solve the mystery, tries to "reassure himself of the permanence of a truth" and "resolve all apparent conflicts between systems of meaning" (188). There is "a quest for authority within," an attempt to "identify [the] contested narrative space and to occupy it with his truth-telling voice" (Thomas *Detective Fiction* 9). Beyond serving as region of contending spaces of mind, true/false foregrounds the different purposes and uses of intellect in encountering narrative. Authorial mind deliberately reshapes reality, falsifies and misdirects. Efforts do not stop there. Epistemological disorientation is not enough. Authors act as anti-intellectual agents too. Beyond arousing and engaging the reader's rational processes, the writer appeals to raw, even primal, emotion. A scholar who writes of "inside" and "outside," Mark Madoff adds that the mode excites desire: "[T]he locked rooms of the Gothic [i.e., the "inside"] … enclose an ambiguity: they are repulsive, yet attractive, contemptible, yet fascinating, places. The contain what the reader should shun, while tantalizing the reader with glimpses of a forbidden space where he hears echoes of the forbidding laws of normalcy" (52). Gothic writing plays both ends against the middle. As part of misdirection and confusion, the mode's literacy practice casts the author as dialectical tension of reason/emotion. She employs powers of intellect towards provocation of both positivist inquiry and affective turmoil. In so doing, the reader acts as her own dichotomy, harnessing mind to inquire and experiencing Gothic's intended emotional range.

Wading through mendacity and agitation of emotion transforms the reader into a rebuilder or reconstructor, a narrative manufacturing subject. True/false and reality/appearance spawn the duality of fragmentation/coherence. Authors fabricate outside as disintegration. Building Gothic narrative paradoxically entails deconstruction of truth. Stevenson's work invests writing, speech, and language with a "deconstructive power" (Hirsch 239). If reality and truth

represent the coherence of knowledge into a comprehensible whole, the Gothic's authorial intent is to dissolve those ties. Gothic "constitutes a site of narrative and interpretive instability" (Hustis 998). Literacy practice must not only discover core reality, but also must rework or reassemble what authorial cleverness has deliberately disintegrated. Where an author has created incongruity, the Gothic reader must harmonize. With an empirical, even scientific, mind, the detective recombines and fashions "consistent correlation" (Alewyn 68). If truth is a cohesive composite of multiple bits of facts and information, authorial intent acts as a solvent that erases the subatomic bonds between them. Elemental to the cerebral literacy experience is the reader's practice of reversing the author's deliberate deconstruction of reality and restoring that actuality into an objectively veracious account of events. The reader recoheres signs and engages in "reconstituting the multivalence of everyday reality" (Hühn 453-4, 457); according to Eyal Segal, the author invites the reader to construct hypotheses as a parallel actor (167). Richard Alewyn observes this role of the reader (64-65). The author fragments reality; the reader heals it. Movement from outer to inner entails epistemic and metaphysical reconstructive surgery for the reading experience. As Hühn implies, this re-creation is dual because of a double story: the reader reconstructs the past while she also rebirths knowledge from its deliberate concealment (451-52). What the author disjoints the reader must reconnect.

Within these dialectics, Gothic narrative text encloses a tense relationship between order and entropy. The normal purpose of language and narrative are to disclose for epistemic coherence. Gothic text straddles the line between two poles, dispersion and coalescence. Mutual dependence binds them. Leo Braudy remarks that "[e]ach perspective, the explainable and the unexplainable, in some way requires the shadow of the other to play against (141).The reader must navigate between a structured plot and authorial piecemeal release of knowledge

throughout that plot. As such, the task of reintegration of knowledge falls to the reader. Inside is not only order, but also stability. Discovery of truth has the dual achievement of restoring order not only in the world, but in the reader's mind and processing of that world; detective fiction transforms fragmentation and the incomplete into "ordered and complete understanding" (Hutter 231). There, truth remains a constant. Jerrold Hogle characterizes Stevenson's work as a "body of discourse proposing to articulate a definite truth" (191). Revelation uncovers a fixed reality. While falsity emblematizes hermeneutic disorder, stoppage, and delay, "truth is what completes, what closes" (Barthes 119). Frank Kermode asserts that the detective story offers a view "that the world itself is simply coded, full of discoverable relations and offering closure (188). Similarly, Hutter asserts of the reconstructive nature of the genre that it is reductive, "with an insistence on total explanation (241). Meanwhile, outside is the opposite half of the dialectic: instability, mutability, and destabilization. Noting the similarity between Stevenson's work and the second law of thermodynamics as "molecular disorder," Donald Lawler foregrounds the presence of chaos in the work; Jekyll's experiments "function as agents of entropy … parallel[ing] the increasing disorder in Jekyll's moral life (255, 257). Not only might the author dissolve graspable coherence, but may even fabricate a conflicted disunified connectedness, juxtaposing, even joining, seemingly unrelated random events, words, deeds, or situations together. As Gaughan notes, Stevenson enjoys conflict and change in relations between terms, redefining them, and rearranging apparently stable order (187).

Creating mendacity and appearance destabilizes both certain knowledge and confidence in that certitude. Readers question whether they really know what they know. They may even question their sensual input and reliability. Gothic narrative deconstructs and destabilizes the reader's epistemic foundations. Readers expect this disturbance; they enjoy "the fissure of logic,

when the universe is unstable enough to create doubts about the supremacy of univocal rationalism" (Klapcsik 50). A textual encounter possesses the potential of subverting faith in perceptions and senses as reliable indicators of reality. Here external instability within the narrative reproduces itself mimetically in reader interiority. Such stranging of connections represents additional authorial misdirection or even prevarication. Beyond scattering bits of data through the text, the writer distorts truth into mendacity by characterizing or even implying such occurrences as unrelated, disconnected. The stable/unstable narrative dichotomy foregrounds Gothic's tendency to undermine epistemic certitude in both textual integrity and truth. Moreover, it represents weakening of reader reliance—and confidence in that trust—on mental capacities and sensorium.

Inherent in stability/instability is the dialectic of rest/motion. Gothic's narrative core follows Newton's first law of motion: a body at rest tends to stay at rest. At textual center is inertia. After outside's stirring the reader's mind and emotion to activity, inside permits her to rest. Truth that migrated elusively around the narrative, evading reader efforts at answer, now assumes a fixed, immovable position. Reading practice no longer moves about nomadically for elucidation; it settles itself into final knowledge. Counterbalancing inertial inside is the kinetic energy characterizing the outer. Although Gothic narrative intentionally resists literate penetration and impedes reader inquiry, its textual construction has a reader-friendly aspect. Information and data are not the only moving things. Narrative's outer layers represent mind in motion. In its practice, Gothic reading requires intellectual migration and nomadism. Norquay characterizes Stevenson as a "vagabonding reader" who is "attractively free from fixity" whom the text does not bind and who does not master the text (15). If the author disperses clues outside, the reading mind must exercise proactive initiative during empirical information gathering. By

its very nature, motion necessitates active participation. Outer represents creativity and narrative invention; it emblematizes positivist activity and the kineticism of investigative spirit. Construction entails dynamic engagement; to reassemble what an author disconnects, a reader must rebuild truth into a coherent whole again through energetic collection of data. Authors double the excitation. Emotion follows its etymological origin (*ex,* "out" + *movere*, "to move") in the author's incitement of affective agitation. Gothic reading encloses the polarities of process and product. The narrative core reflects finality and closure, the mind at rest.

As such, inside/outside incorporates mind/world as subdialectic. Mind as concept comprehends two understandings of internality. On a psychological level, there is inner life of intent, motive, rationale, and design. Mind represents the birth parent of speech and deed. Gothic carves out a space in narrative for that inmost experience, positioning it at the textual core. Narrative, too, has its innermost life of hidden, secret motives. It too has a guiding, directing "mind" at its center. However, the Gothic author's intellect is a divided, not a unitary, entity; rather, reading her narrative involves penetrating first through the writer's narratively deceiving mind and into her truth-telling, core psyche. The usual initial stages of Gothic textual experience appear as witnessing of outward products of mental processes: words, acts, and incomplete/cryptic communications. At the outside, the reader must cope with and attempt to decode internal design and character through what arrives into the outer world. In fact, the task is double; the reader must decipher both characters' and author's minds. Moreover, outside represents body. Both *Dracula* and Stevenson's work present corporeal entities whose external markings we encounter. Their authors, though, conceal the eponymous characters' true intents and psyches from us. A subclass of the mind/world dialectic is mind/body. Under both dichotomies, the reader navigates inside/outside as mind/material. Gothic reading experience

entails travelling first through elements of the physical world. As a mode, it charts material

manifestations of invisible design and motive or intangible natural law. However, the encounter

occurs without the reader's necessarily comprehending the actual driving mind behind them.

Outside in narrative is physical externality. Inside, though, is the construct of mind. There the

reader learns true motives or actual operative laws of the inexplicable. The core of Gothic

narrative emblematizes the mind as seed birthing consequent act and event. Discovery is dual

too; in addition to unearthing character thoughts, the reader understands the authorial mind too.

UTTERSON: ATTORNEY-DETECTIVE, ESQ.

From the beginning, Stevenson positions Utterson the detective as both outsider and liminal.

Weighing his client's situation, he muses, "This Master Hyde, if he were studied, … must have

secrets of his own: black secrets, … ; secrets compared to which poor Jekyll's worst would be

like sunshine" (Stevenson 11). Utterson is doubly "outside," not fully privy to the secrets of

either Jekyll or Hyde. He has little actual experience with Hyde; what brief personal encounter

he does have answers little of his questions. Additionally, Jekyll continually stonewalls him. In

each instance, Utterson gains limited, but not full, knowledge of the two men. Consequently, he

stands in liminality vis-à-vis both. Stevenson's narrative, arguably, concerns two detective

stories, not one. Utterson notes that both persons of interest have secrets. Stevenson's title

implicitly connects the "case" with both men, extending the inquiry beyond just Hyde to the

equally dubious Jekyll. If the tale concerns a dual personality, Utterson doubles his investigation

to both halves. The effect on both attorney and reader is now to multiply the difficulties, and thus

the intellectual invitation, in solving a puzzle that increases in mystery. Pyrhönen observes of

detection such as this one that writers employ fragmentation in presenting clues that tend to

make them seem irrelevant and delay revelation, ambiguity that limits usefulness of clues, and abstraction that restricts how the author presents (27-28). What Stevenson foregrounds in this inquiry is the liminal position of the detective. This figure stands "outside" because of limited understanding and must read people and clues, through which he moves to "inside." Utterson is not alone. The Gothic reader experiences outsidership too, or, rather, meta-outsidership. Specifically, since the reading process follows alongside the detective in time and space, the reader too must await narrative unfolding and share discoveries and epiphanies contemporaneously with the fictional detective. Two parallel narratives occur simultaneously: one of the crime, or offense, and one of the investigation (Todorov 44). The initial lack of a murder in Stevenson's story does not diminish its strength as detection; according to E.M. Wrong, murders or attempted murders were less common in the early days of the genre (25). Utterson's situation acts as emblem for the epistemology of Gothic reading experience. Both he and the reader occupy a phenomenological gray area that positions the reader between complete ignorance and full understanding. Liminality always remains during the process. Cessation of reading grants full—or fullest—understanding and completes reader metamorphosis from outer to inner. Stevenson's narrative serves as device to transform the reader into a detective too.

In addition to doubling the persons of interest to the investigation, the narrative once again multiplies and thus complicates Utterson's liminality with the number of mysteries to answer. The novella constitutes two detection paths: first a last will and testament, then a murder. The first section of the work concerns a private matter, the latter part moving into the public realm. Sargent notes of detective fiction the complicating nature of temporality for the detective: "Since the mystery is still continuing in the present, the detective has to orient his actions toward the present and toward the anticipated future as much as he does the past. … [T]he first task … is

not that of trying to reconstruct the past, but the rather more immediate problem of trying to figure out what is going on in the present" (295-96). Ironically, as Utterson attempts to move inward to Jekyll's psyche through the will and "capture" the blackmailer, Hyde's impulses move himself and the doctor outward into the community eye with a high-profile murder. During his investigation into the will, Utterson meets with Jekyll's uncooperative silence about the will's beneficiary. After the murder, Utterson's difficult position increases because he stands at the convergent overlapping of multiple circles none of which he really occupies because of multiplying mystery. In fact, he is aware of the epistemic penumbra that he occupies:

> "One word," said the lawyer. "Carew was my client, but so are you; and I want to know what I am doing."
> …
> "[F]or your sake, I hope you may be right [about Hyde's disappearance]. If it came to trial, your name might appear."
> …
> "And now one word more: it was Hyde who dictated the terms of your will about that disappearance?" (18-19)

If we consider that those who hold—and withhold—information are the "scripters" of a narrative, Jekyll and Hyde serve as collaborative authors keeping the "reading" attorney outside of any elucidating comprehension of his client's situation.

In merging all of the complex questions that Utterson must answer, "Incident of the Letter" underscores most starkly the true gray area in which the lawyer resides. Even deduction and inference cannot solve all immediately: "No testimony contains on its surface … all the information that can be extracted from it" (Sargent 293). Distance between facts and clues in detection increases the desired effect of instability for the reader and detective and the reader's ability to use her mind: "The further apart the qualities that have been combined, the less possible it is to guess in advance at the very possibility of their being combined, and the less obvious and the more awkward the means of realizing this possibility, the higher … the creative

power of invention" (Scheglov 52). As attorney, he must juggle two clients' situations, a

mysterious will, a murder, an absent person (or creature) of interest, an alleged blackmailing, and

a suppression of truth. Stevenson has woven all of these into a single byzantine fabric. Each part

fuses with every other inextricably into an impossible Gordian Knot for Utterson.

Narratively, Stevenson constructs an empirical legal investigation for his reader. Hirsch

notes the elements of the classic detective novel (239; see also Dryden "The Gothic" 100).

Enfield's oral account is the initial eyewitness statement. Stevenson's opening chapter title

employs the word *story* to underscore the tale as an investigative "case." It is a "legally inspired

form of testimonial evidence" (Lacey 110). In the middle, his titles' word choices foreground an

inquiry in progress: *search*, *case*, *incident*. This last term occurs three times. Stevenson's

approach to narrative viewpoint approaches third-person limited, a few times omniscient

(Utterson's dream). This detached style is mimetic of the typical police report, objective,

dispassionate, factual. The final two accounts he styles as written statements—Jekyll has a "Full

Statement"—that highlight the reader's "apprehending' and "identifying" the culprit at last.

Colin Manlove has observed the legal, courtroom cast to the story, with its collection of

evidence, a "lawyer's summing up," and a closing argument (88; see also Lacey 110). Narrative

progression flows toward the tale's propelling mentality; Stevenson concludes his work with a

deep, revealing look at Jekyll's internal life and processes that initiated the chain of events

therein. Peter Garrett says of the Jekyll's Statement that it "gathers up the threads of the

preceding episodes" (61). Reader investigation has progressed from eyewitness account to fact

gathering and finally to submissible legal documented evidence. In the same manner as modern

crime investigation has incorporated forensic methods, the reader too becomes a detective or

scientist applying method and systematization to inquiry. Jekyll is not the only positivist researcher in the text.

Stevenson positions Utterson—and by vicarious state the reader—liminally during the investigation. According to Gaughan, the lawyer is where known and unknown, spoken and silent, "converge and collide" (192). Jekyll's will mentions Hyde without explaining any connection. Until the conclusion, Stevenson situates all of the work's documents in a gray region. In "Incident of the Letter," a document supposedly enclosed as "inner" in an envelope ironically yields little elucidating knowledge; moreover, Stevenson conceals the actual text from us. The purported envelope, an enclosing external, could have provided intimate knowledge of a source, but has vanished. Meanwhile, Utterson's clerk Guest observes the liminal connection between two written pieces. Reflecting the simultaneous corporeal separateness and union of their authors, the handwritings conflictedly reveal through remarkable resemblance, but conceal in divergent sloping. What separates also binds them (Thomas "Strange Voices" 79), or, as Hirsch terms it, "a distinction without a difference" (238). The lawyer's various conversations place him outside or in a shadowy zone. In fact, most dialogic exchanges in the work possess hybrid disclosure and camouflage; they reveal, but only limitedly. Lanyon had removed himself ten years before from Jekyll's intimate circle and thus any relevant information about the doctor. His comments about Jekyll are cryptic, saying only that Jekyll's mind went "wrong" and entertained scientific nonsense (7). As outer, the lawyer is ignorant of Hyde. The focus of Stevenson's narrative "resides in the professional world's attempt to represent and fix Hyde's identity" (Rago 275, 277). Meanwhile, Poole, who has lived close to the doctor for decades, remains remote from any innermost knowledge about his employer. His account divulges little. According to Poole, Hyde is only occasionally inside the house, but a stranger to all. In fact, he

rarely enters the house interior, preferring to visit the outermost parts of the residence, that is, the laboratory. Hyde's visits to the house are themselves spatially and epistemically liminal; the servants admit him, but he remains outside acquaintance and at the fringes of the house proper. Utterson's first conversation with Jekyll blurs inner and outer. Jekyll intentionally omits specific details about Hyde and their relationship. Cryptically, the doctor remarks that Utterson does not understand his position. Even inside Jekyll's home and in private audience with his friend, Utterson is still outer.

Stevenson fashions his detective as quintuply "outside." Utterson's position is unique, a state that readers share. In fact, his investigation is a "reading" experience of intellect and imagination (Gaughan 192). The reader, to some extent, actually identifies with the detective (Aydelotte 75-76). Throughout the narrative, he must cope with five "insides" as one external to any elucidating answer. As Stevenson's detective, he is an outsider (Landrum, Browne, and Browne Introduction 4-5; Hirsch 234). Enfield was a firsthand witness to the trampling and suspect check on whom the lawyer must depend for reliable information. Lanyon becomes an "inner" who refuses to disclose the transformation; of whatever remains, he is ignorant, complicating Utterson's task. Meanwhile, both Jekyll and Hyde are insides to each other even as they serve also as mutual outsides. Each conceals the explanation for their association as well as origin from the other. In fact, Stevenson's narrative structure deliberately positions Hyde outside direct reader experience ninety-nine percent of the time. Even more, he is an elusive, nomadic "inside," moving throughout narrative but evading reader experiential apprehension. Theresa Adams observes that Hyde is monstrous partly "because it is mobile, crossing boundaries of space and class" (31). The fifth for Utterson—and for us—is the real truth. If he is an outsider to answer, we share his state as meta-outsiders. Stevenson's narrative structure promotes this

condition. The tale's viewpoint is exclusively Utterson's, following only his movement and thought. Until the end, the only "inside" we ever experience is his thought life. Goh asserts that the lawyer possesses "narrative centrality" and is the real narrator, with greater presence than the other characters (168). Even then, Stevenson still situates the reader as liminal participant; with the lawyer's narrative voice, he "suggests its intimate knowledge of Utterson and his world, while suggesting that at the same time that some of those particulars should not be articulated,' a narrative that "seems to proscribe while it describes" (Goh 166).

Multiple "insides" complicate the mutual situation. Solution of the mystery is not only the penetration of inside, but the fusion of numerous inners: "The job of the detective is to find the inner core of the personality and correlate it with the inner core of the murder" (Klapcsik 43). Utterson and the reader both are subject to multiple oscillative pulls from numerous directions. In fact, Lanyon, Enfield, and Jekyll become poles to which Utterson repeatedly gravitates for answers, only to have them either possess no answer or purposely withhold information. If the lawyer does not gravitate, sometimes he must move further away to procure an answer elsewhere; when Jekyll refuses him an audience, Utterson must go to Lanyon. When Hyde will not enlighten the lawyer, the latter must go to Jekyll for answers.

The Carew murder presents multiple in/out liminalities that obfuscate Utterson's inquiry and perpetuate his outsidership. Stevenson's only witness is an unnamed character, tangential to the narrative but close to the incident, who remains outside the private conversation between Hyde and Carew. Moreover, Stevenson creates epistemic instability in the incident; Dryden observes that "the nature of the crime is deliberately elided" ("Popular Culture" 16). She faints and delivers her account remote in time from the event. Goh describes her account as "speculative," "tentative," and "hearsay" (169). Garrett calls her "a kind of unreliable narrator"

(69). He remarks further that Utterson is not privy to the servant's experience, which "places him in an altogether separate space" (169). Meanwhile, an envelope affords a tenuous, inexplicable connection with Utterson. Even when the lawyer finally links Hyde with the murder, Stevenson plants murky puzzles. Utterson wonders why Hyde left the stick and burned the checkbook when an ordinary person would have not. Hyde is a mystery; he has few acquaintances and no ascertainable family—socially liminal. In fact, Stevenson fashions Hyde as a gray-space physical existence, an authorial act he performs throughout. No one has ever photographed him. The work positions Hyde ambiguously as being/nonbeing blend; lack of any photographic image denies him external material existence, and he lives only in memory's interiority. The maidservant saw him only twice. Ironically, a patently heinous deed, one with an obvious culprit, that should offer greater access to a mind's interiority births more removal from innermost understanding of the mystery. Utterson and the reader are more outside than ever.

Stevenson deliberately fragments his narrative not only to reflect stages of detective investigation, but also to portray and explore various states of mind during this type of inquiry. Particularly, these diverse conditions mirror narrative movement from "outer mind" to "inner mind." The novella represents a set of concentric circles flowing out from the private mind of Jekyll to the outer world; his decisions and choices have repercussions on the world around him, on other characters among his private circle and the public at large. Retrogressively, Stevenson's story development continually tightens the circle of mind as the reader moves toward and penetrates Jekyll's psyche. Persons, not objects, are at the originative center of detective writing: "History, detective fiction, and logic all believe that individuals are causes and that one must look outside the text, beyond the documents, behind the fact, to understand the first … cause … . … People matter, for their individual, discrete actions are causes, embraced within yet separable

from those collectivities of causation" (Winks 116, 118). Jekyll and Hyde are not the story's only psychic components; the narrative diversity reflects the splintered mentality of its eponymous characters. Enfield's account is the "outer mind." Knowing nothing of Hyde personally, he is the disinterested witness. He reports only what his mind experienced, how his thoughts processed the incident. Although unbiased as the objective bystander, he provides limited perception as one man. His lack of any intimate connection with Jekyll positions him as furthermost from Jekyll's psyche. Stevenson shifts the narrative—and with it to the reader—halfway closer to Jekyll's core mind with focus on Utterson's perspective. Here, though, psychic liminality clouds revelation of answers. Stevenson situates his narrative perspective between third-person omniscient and limited. We see the detached "police-report" recording of Utterson's movements and information gathering. However, the work records little of the lawyer's thoughts; detective fiction often limits or omits its detectives' ruminations as a method of holding the reader in suspense.

Additional gray space lies in Utterson's dual relationship to Jekyll. As friend, he is privy to certain secrets of a close friend, but must also respect boundaries regarding his friend's privacy. Conversely, as attorney and professional, he must request and know certain or any private information about his client if he is to perform his work in accordance with his field's ethics. The lawyer straddles this line carefully, simultaneously pushing his inquiry in his attorney persona, yet drawing back in his friend persona when Jekyll refuses disclosure. Essentially, Utterson possesses as much double-mindedness and dual character as his client-friend. This hybridity constricts his ability to investigate the mystery and complicates his task; as a professional, he must probe anything that bears on his client's interests, but as friend must limit that probe. Stevenson extends the dualistic motif of his work to deliberate complication and further shrouding of our picture of Jekyll's mind. Namely, he splits the doctor's mental life into

two. With its viewpoint as an outside observer, third-person limited perspective conceals Jekyll's

actual thoughts to us. Ironically, even in the privacy of his home, Jekyll still maintains secrets

from his friend and us; all we and Utterson see is a "public mind" that discloses only partial

information. He withholds his "private mind" from all. We unveil Jekyll's true mind at the end.

Stevenson's unveiling of the answer in his work follows detective genre conventions.

Writers of the genre typically separate revelation into various components for reader elucidation:

the suspect (who), any connections with accomplices, the instruments or weapons (what), the

methods (how), and the motive (why). The last two texts represent penetration into Jekyll's inner

mind. However, division of this uncovering into two texts itself is a Jekyll-and-Hyde split of

reading experience, each with its own revelatory persona. Lanyon's narrative answers the "how,"

the enigma of the connection, the "what" (a drug), and the "who." That is, the reader discovers

the process and relationship; this text displays the "identity mind," the paradoxical "corporeal

mind," of Jekyll and Hyde. It answers the nature of the psychic connection between them. We

know the "how," but not the "why." Jekyll himself solves the latter with his Statement. Detective

fiction and police investigations concern themselves with tracing observed effect in the outer

world back to originative motive. This work multiples the "why." The Statement actually reveals

a double motive reflective of the dichotomized minds of Stevenson's pair. The "good mind"

possessed the noble impulse to purify itself of its base companion. Ironically, while detective

fiction seeks evil motive and establishes the origin of actions in criminality and evil, the

novella's originating motivation in Jekyll is enhancement and empowerment of virtue. Hyde's

"bad mind" serves as the supervening, or secondary, cause in the chain of events that actually

commits the work's evils. By narrative's end, we have penetrated the inner sanctum of Jekyll's

will and thoughts. Progression from Enfield's oral report to Jekyll's textual confession

constitutes movement from outer, material world to core mind, the mentality that impacted the physical realm around it.

DRACULA: PROFILING, PSYCHOANALYZING, AND TWO DETECTION LOGICS

Attorney Utterson employs a lawyer's empirical, positivist approach in solving mystery. Stevenson permits him oral report, material clues, including texts, to answer questions. His "reading" entails collecting data and physical artifacts in order to fill informational gaps in his client's "narrative." As such, he approaches the enigma ignorant; the culprit is unavailable. Both situations render him "outside." *Dracula*'s investigators are liminally inside/outside from the outset. Specifically, they possess either sufficient knowledge or the subject's person with which to commence their inquiries. Van Helsing's scholarly pursuits have armed him early on to understand and track the vampire. As a scientist-cum-detective, he details the *modus operandi* and history of Dracula for his associates. Moreover, at one point Helsing profiles the vampire to prepare them for their gruesome task. In doing so, Stoker's aged doctor mirrors the contemporary Victorian attempt at "scientific" typing of criminality through general physical and mental markers. Meanwhile, Dr. Seward already has his subject, Renfield. All he must do now is track down the genesis of the lunatic's zoophagic behavior through psychiatry. *Dracula* is actually two detective narratives, with a pair of doctor-investigators who probe opposite ends of an interconnected mystery; Dracula and Renfield possess a supernatural bond. Seward's and Helsing's inquiries mirror the era's increasingly scientific character, respectively, of psychology and criminology. Both "read" their subjects through scientific, positivist lenses. However, each applies science differently. Van Helsing imports historical knowledge into the present, the modern, as would a criminal profiler. To track Dracula, he employs facts, positivist data.

Although a philosopher and metaphysician, Helsing is "one of the most advanced scientists of his day" (Stoker 114). Despite his work with traditions and superstitions, he asserts that he has science and intellect to combat Dracula (239). His "decoding" of Dracula through profile resembles the Gothic reader's intellectual experience in noting and categorizing detectible markers of threat or evil. Seward's building of Renfield's case history constitutes a "reading" of behavior as observed effect for determining psychic cause. His diary journals copiously record observations of external demeanor as preliminary to understanding Renfield's mind; Seward uses "outside" signifiers to decipher a mad "inside." His role emblematizes the psychologically detective facet of Gothic reading experience. Here the reader searches for motive. More, she seeks causation, not location. Together, both doctors quest, respectively, for evil's exact location and insanity's origin, culpable body and sick mind. Solving both will move reader and doctors from "outside" to "inside."

In their investigatory roles, Seward and Van Helsing incarnate two viable logical processes available to both scientists and Gothic readers. We also find both avenues in detective work. Stoker assigns more traditional logic to Seward because of the rigorous nature of modern scientific and positivist logical methods. His psychiatrist thinks with the concreteness of sequential logic, progressing in rather rigid steps. In answer to his mentor's treatment of life's mysteries, he laments: "At present I am going in my mind from point to point as a madman, and not a sane one, follows an idea" (192). As to Lucy's anemic condition, he admits, "I do not know what to think, and I have no data on which to found a conjecture" (190). He repeatedly sees Renfield's mind as "fixed" (62). In his portrayal of Seward, Stoker implicitly faults modern science for inelastic failure to consider improbable, even unthinkable and unbelievable, facts and realities because of unquestioning faith only in naturalism and the visible. Seward remarks that

he wants to master facts, implicitly limiting his experiential realm to positivist materiality (62). His logical process is inductive, observing specifics in order to draw general conclusions. In his journalistic narrative structure, he reflects this predisposition. Each entry logs one in an extended series of observations as he attempts to pierce Renfield's opacity. Indeed, each entry represents a link in a chain of observed particulars toward a "fixed point" (62). Seward's language and approach to questions reflects algorithmic thinking. That is, he reasons lock-step from point to point and does not consider that a problem may have more than one solution. As a thinker, he tends toward single-mindedness, following one path to the large exclusion of others.

Stoker ironically transposes young and old men as emblems of traditional and modern thinking. The youthful psychiatrist employs classical logic. In Van Helsing's words, the young doctor inflexibly adheres to modern science; he is "too prejudiced" (191). The elder doctor embraces the "new," even if it means blending science with tradition and superstition (191). Seward describes him as having " an absolutely open mind" (114). The older man's willingness and ability to blend old and new implies heuristic thinking; this process proceeds with flexibility, adapting to changes in environment through employment of multiple solutions to problems. Algorithmic process uses a single method to resolve issues regardless of success or failure of the method; conversely, in heuristic logic, failure of one method induces the problem solver to try another approach. For Van Helsing, what appears as irrational, illogical premodernism becomes an available, viable alternate for use should modern science fail. Essentially, tradition and superstition, far from being unsound and invalid, are mechanisms for adaptability in solving the vampire problem. Van Helsing's comments to Seward also demonstrate the trait of cognitive complexity, the ability to entertain multiple possible answers to a question. At one point, he chides Seward for adhering rigidly to induction, that he must "accept fact" and not neglect

deductive reasoning (191). Each doctor's interpretation of the world—"reading" of

environment—proceeds in a different manner. Stephan Schaffrath argues that *Dracula* is an

order-chaos dichotomy; it incorporates the struggle between two belief systems: an orderly,

structured, and explainable paradigm versus one in flux, dynamic, with unexplainable

phenomena (98-99). One decodes the universe's narrative inductively, but strictly sequentially,

the other with the amenability to speculate multiple possibilities for resolution of an issue.

Although not a policeman, Seward practices psychiatry as a detective. *Dracula* effectively fuses

detective work and psychiatry into a mutually reinforcing whole regarding Renfield's "case."

John Harpham notes that early psychiatry reflected and fused with study of criminology;

although Renfield is not an offender, Seward's investigation assumes the dimensions of tracking

a schemer. Criminology rooted itself in psychiatry because each field "came to be seen not as an

occasional slippage by normal persons, but as the expression of an aberrant characteristic that

inhered in the nature of the criminal" (129). From the start, Seward regards Renfield's mind as

an elusive subject to track and capture. Early on, Stoker's language choices emphasize the

doctor's self-image as a detective. Furthermore, he regards his patient as an intellectual

challenge. The catalyst for this curiosity is a need for cerebral stimulation; a particular day's

journal entry notes that he feels empty and nothing seems meaningful, so a visit to Renfield is the

cure for this emotional malaise (61). In the language of Sherlock Holmes, he considers Renfield

"a study of much interest" (61). His journal entries contain language that foreground his task as

detective work and appropriate detective fiction parlance: *mystery, can't make out, master of*

facts, trace, case, object, key (61, 70, 73). Like a detective, he profiles *modus operandi*: "There is

a method in his madness" (71).

Seward's approach to his psychiatric work is rather single-minded, recalling the sometime literary image of the dogged detective's zealous focus on only one suspect. The lunatic is so peculiarly fascinating that he is "determined" to understand him (61). Renfield is the only patient that appears in his diary; moreover, the doctor's narrative grants the patient abundant time and ink. Although he has many patients, the doctor focuses only on one to the exclusion of others in his asylum. By all lights, this one patient seems to absorb with a tight grip all of Seward's thought processes and reasoning. Stoker's narrative structure reinforces a seeming monomania with this single patient and the intellectual need to "crack" this case. Seward's incorporation of Renfield into his private diary goes beyond Renfield's scripting of his own case history for the doctor. Inclusion in the diary collapses the boundaries of Seward's personal and professional selves. Renfield's narrative spills over from the workplace into the diary's narrative and mindlife. In so doing, Seward, although an author, (re)creates the man as part of his personal life story. Furthermore, his personal journal entries, not his office files, detail his "readings" of the patient. Essentially, interpretive reading has moved from detached professionalism to private intellectual pleasure or fixation, perhaps even obsession. Instead of confining his professional literacy practice to workplace case history, Seward has expanded his decoding activity to his private persona, fused them. Journaling his work's views reflects a highly engaged, actively involved, perhaps somewhat preoccupied intellect's reading of its "text."

Through Seward, Stoker underscores the implicitly metacerebral nature of Gothic-detective reading experience. Writers insert their characters' hidden motives somewhere into narrative; this placement invests their storylines with directing "minds"—the coherence of a guiding principle—that drive plot sequence. Seward remarks in his journal that he wishes to penetrate the surface of his patient's instinct to its source (62). The reader must employ her brain

in exploring for and conjecturing about motive. Similarly, Seward's professional subjectivity

rests in using his intellect to probe Renfield's. As he reads his patient, his "study," through

observation, the doctor deems his quest as parallel to that of the typical detective of Doyle,

Hammett, or Christie: matching his brain against Renfield's, one mind's struggle to understand

another's inscrutable mental machinery. Seward couches his detective work in improving his

profession:

> Why not advance science in its most difficult and vital aspect—the knowledge of the brain? Had I even the secret of one such mind—did I hold the key to the fancy of even one lunatic—I might advance my own branch of science to a pitch compared with which Burdon-Sanderson's physiology or Ferrier's brain-knowledge would be as nothing/ If only there were a sufficient cause! I must not think too much of this, or I may be tempted; a good cause might turn the scale with me, for may I not too be of an exceptional brain, congenitally? (73)

Seward's image of his profession blends psychiatry with detection. Essentially, psychiatry is

detective work. Doyle's Holmes understands the machinery of the criminal's mind, in fact

stressing to colleagues that detection demands such grasp if it is to succeed; Seward attempts to

understand it in lunacy. Just as a Holmes or Poirot would desire to know what makes a mind

"tick," Stoker's psychiatrist desires "the key" to Renfield's madness. His remarks also pay

homage to another staple of detective fiction: recognition and availability of "laws" that govern

mind and behavior. In fact, Seward's interpretive reading, in his view, affords him opportunities

to formulate his own laws and theories. Using others' thoughts is not enough. The doctor's

comments manifest a desire to exercise creative, independent intellect to create his own theories

and arrive at his own, novel conclusions.

Understanding mental workings is insufficient. There must be cerebral dominance. With

its emphasis on the preeminence of intellect, the detective genre often pits one mind against

another to determine the locus of superior brainpower. The detective must actively employ her

mind as counterbalance to an opposing mind. In reading Renfield, Seward emphasizes his role as a mind of order as compensating force to Renfield's chaotic psyche. Indeed, in Holmesian fashion, the doctor contemplates Renfield's case as a battle of minds. His patient seems always deliberately to connive with "some settled scheme of his own, but what it is I do not know" (70); characterizing Renfield's motive in detective parlance as a *scheme* implies a perspective of the madman as an adversary, a rival. The patient's mind resists investigation inasmuch as no one can pierce the cloud of lunacy. Seward's mind countervails with rational, clinical observation. He characterizes this mental challenge as something from the laws of physics: "What I think of on this point is, when self is the fixed point the centripetal force is balanced with the centrifugal, when duty, cause, etc., is the fixed point, the latter force is paramount, and only accident or a series of accidents can balance it" (62). His language underscores significantly the reading of Renfield as movement from "outside" to "inside"; the patient's mad mind spins out of control, decentered, but Seward's intellect pushes the investigation back to the center. Detective fiction scholarship notes the role of the detective as preserver and restorer of communal-societal order after a criminal act has upset that order. Harpham characterizes the detective as a healer: "Criminals break the law and disrupt the social order, while detectives repair the damage they have done … . The criminal is active, the detective reactive. … [T]he detective … uphold[s] the standards of the community" (133). The detective "constitute[s] the last law on earth" (Winks 118). Seward's view harmonizes with this image: Renfield's thinking brings chaos and incoherence to the investigation, and the doctor's intellect restores the order that constitutes scientific understanding. In its effects, scientific thinking and approach predominate over disorderly thoughts. Empirical approach emerges the superior intellectual paradigm and power

the mediates that event; indeed, Seward characterizes his mind specifically as a paramount force, his goal to master facts (62).

In his detective activity, Seward privileges intellect over compassion. What results is an investigative figure who acts—and "reads"—with purely cerebral impulses. Involvement in Renfield's "narrative," his case history, is pure objectifying mind. Like a Holmes, he seems to be in the game of solving only for the mental challenge. Under the doctor's dispassionate observation, the patient becomes an object, a mere puzzle to solve. In fact, the most significant thing in his encountering Renfield is an intellectual awakening, personal mental development: "[T]he rudimentary idea in my mind is growing. It will be a whole idea soon, and, then, oh, conscious cerebration! you will have to give the wall to your conscious brother" (71). His comments betray an almost ebullient exultation in the prospect of intellectual growth. In fact, each session with the madman serves only to inflame more desire for feeding his mind, as he finds the man more interesting with each encounter (70). Seward's production of text as case history in *Dracula* constitutes his creation of narrative. However, arguably, he is only a ghostwriter; the real author is Renfield since it is the lunatic's actions that drive Seward's fascination and journal entries. In fact, the doctor's self-image is primarily as unemotional, objective, removed observer. In his view, the doctor does not really act any creative role as author; someone else, the Great Recorder, narrates his life (73). Renfield represents only empirical exercise. He is an object of clinical speculation: "I shall test him with his present craving and see how it will work out; then I shall know more" (72). In deciphering this mad signifier, the doctor muses that he will classify Renfield under a new category. Empiricism alone does not satisfy. Seward approaches the man as practice in sequential logic, an intellectual exercise in outside/inside progression. His consistent use of the term *fixed* implies perspective

that an absolute, core truth rests at the nucleus of Renfield's psyche (62). According to the

doctor, there is a "cause" at the heart of the man's zoophagy (62).

As a "detective," Van Helsing is a curious blend of attributes that suggest flexibility and

adaptable thinking. He is arbitrary and open-minded, yet resolute, self-controlled, and

indomitable in resolution (114). More significantly, the doctor plies a hybrid profession that

straddles old and modern: on the one hand, a philosopher and metaphysician, and, conversely,

"one of the most advanced scientists of the day" (114). These roles incorporate another

intriguing combination, namely, intellectual processes. As the former, Helsing is capable of

abstract thinking, working with the intangible, the invisible. This premodern half not only

contemplates vigorously on that invisible, but demonstrates amenability to accept it comfortably

as part of reality. The term *philosopher*, though, is shaded. It points to the contemporary

characterization of science as "natural philosophy." Jonathan Topham notes that this branch of

knowledge transformed in the nineteenth century from open-minded philosophy of "experience"

to "expertise" of a small community that "creat[ed] and validat[ed] scientific knowledge" (560).

His other half trades in the concrete, the seen. *Dracula* positions this side as "advanced"

positivism, embracing the material. Arguably, he reflects Victorian "attempts to reconcile

science and spirit by finding empirical proofs for spiritual life or to refute materialism by

expanding the boundaries of the real beyond the mere physical" (Jann 274; see also Hallab 173).

Stoker implicitly incarnates in Van Helsing a conflicted attitude toward science. Glennis Byron

notes an ambivalence in the author's perspective; on the one hand, he "assigns science a crucial

role in narrative movement" and allows it an "investigative stance," but has anxieties about its

potential to fail in that attempt (49).

Unlike Seward, whose mind inhabits the thinking and methods of modern science alone, Van Helsing's brain dwells in the liminal world between premodern and modern. Consequently, he is able to shift his approach alternately between the two when necessary. In his portrayal of Van Helsing, Stoker invests the doctor's intellect with a Keatsian negative capability that entertains for Seward more than one solution to the crisis of Lucy's health:[2]

> You do not let your eyes see nor your ears hear, and that which is outside your daily life is not of account to you. Do you not think that there are things which you cannot under-stand, and yet which are that some people see things that others cannot? But there are things old and new which must not be contemplate (sic) by men's eyes, because they know—or think they know—some things which other men have told them. Ah, it is the fault of our science that it wants to explain all; and it if explain not, then it says there is nothing to explain. But yet we see around us every day the growth of new beliefs, which think themselves new; and which are yet but the old, which pretend to be young. (191)

Helsing's remonstrance proposes an enlarged or even radically altered definition of modern science. In fact, his critique constitutes a reading of science itself for gaps in validity. To him, this contemporary empiricism is really ostensible "science" that fails to consider two significant realities. First, its positivism blinds it to the invisible. In his remarks to Seward, Helsing indicts "new" thinking   as limited intellect. The mind, he asserts, fails to consider the unseen as reality. Implicit in his critique is rebuke of modern overdependence on sensual experience alone to determine belief and knowledge—or their validity. Expressed in interpretive terms, his criticism faults contemporary intellect with deficient reading of its world; modern positivism fails in its ability to close gaps in experiential knowledge. Where there are voids in understanding the physical fiber of the world's text, modern science must be willing to close them with acceptance of the immaterial. Things invisible represent gaps in the world text that the mind reads and must close somehow with an explanation. In a long declamation to Seward replete with questions,

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[2] Poet John Keats (1795-1821) characterized "negative capability" as the ability to cope comfortably with ambiguity and uncertainty.

Helsing acknowledges and pays homage to the "mysteries of life" (191); the elder scientist is willing to recognize that even modern science may not answer all things. Science, he says, has vouchsafed these enigmas (192). He chastises "our science" as arrogating to itself the role of final, determinative arbiter of objective reality and truth. Consequently, this "science" represents failed, or at least inchoate, intellect. Essentially, it cannot close all voids of an understanding and knowledge that attempts interpretive reading of its world.

Reading also requires new delineation of terms as well as synthetic thinking. The second reality involves muddling of terms and deceptive packaging of ideas. This further criticism of "science" characterizes it linguistically as specious. Purportedly "new" beliefs are really mislabeled old ones. Helsing demonstrates powers of discrimination in distinguishing between premodern and contemporary thinking; in doing so, he implicitly exercises discernment between truth and falsity, or what he sees as these two poles. Arguably, Helsing redefines "science" so-called to science that incorporates both old beliefs and immateriality. What seems to him monolithic positivism, understood contemporarily as reliance only on the physical as "truth," is inadequate for deciphering a sometimes inexplicable universe. Rather, science is a heterogenous mixture, a composite. In effect, modern science is actually an old-new synthesis. Throughout his indictment, the doctor has interpretively read modern science and its narrative, found it wanting—gapped, and closes those gaps with his own (re)definition. The practice of reading benefits from such redefinition and synthesis.

Where Seward accepts the visible as the only valid truth, Van Helsing is willing not only to confront epistemic gaps, but to close them however he can. He exercises adaptable interpretive faculties in decoding his environment's mysteries. In his view, the universe is replete with voids that men of intellect must fill: "[F]riend John, am I to take it that you simply accept fact, and are

satisfied to let from premise to conclusion be a blank?" (191). In order to read the world

correctly, he must redefine or rethink science and truth. As Mary Hallab observes, "For all his

superstitions and holy wafers, … Van Helsing … relies on science, on physical causes and

effects—although heavily supported—just in case—by Christian prayer and even pagan magic"

(173). Success here leads to change in perspective and approach to decoding. Reimagining the

meaning of science and reality permits creative, even expanded, reading capacities. This reading

includes looking beyond the surface, beyond the gap, and seeing multiple opportunities of

closing that space. To Seward he requests, "[I want you] [t]o believe things which we know to be

untrue. … We shall have an open mind, and not let a little bit of truth check the rush of a big

truth, like a small rock does a railway truck. We get the small truth first" (193). Helsing allows

for linear thinking and its value, that is, the small truth first, but does not rigidly permit it to

constrict his reasoning methods where such might prove an impediment. Furthermore, he refuses

to accept only one person or method as determinative of all universal truth (193). Heuristically,

Van Helsing values diverse approaches and truisms to guide his deciphering activities.

His remarks on faith also demonstrate a willingness and ability to question "knowledge."

Detective genre scholarship observes in its treatment issues regarding epistemology. According

to Pyrhönen, "detective fiction explores, through the figure of the detective, basic problems of

knowledge and knowing" (51). The detective is "affected by the conditions of epistemological

uncertainty under which he or she must now work" (Sargent 289). One of detective genre's dicta

holds, or at least implies, that the reader must reengineer his or her thinking about possibilities,

even the term *possibility*. What she or he may judge to be highly improbable or even impossible

must for the purposes of reading become part of the ratiocinative mix during the solving process.

Following an American's perspective, Van Helsing affirms his agreement that faith is a faculty

that permits belief in the untrue (193). Espousal of the American's definition of faith articulates

an epistemological flexibility; notably, the doctor terms it a *faculty* or ability. Van Helsing is

amenable to reexamining not only how he denotes knowledge, but also what we know or think

we know. In fact, he is open to entertaining the unthinkable. Helsing's perspective parallels that

of Holmes: "[W]hen you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however

improbable, must be the truth" (Doyle 111). Viable interpretive reading of the world relies on

refashioning epistemological understanding to accepting the ostensibly impossible, changing a

"no" to a "yes" (194). Semantically, moving away from a "no" constitutes abandonment of

inflexibly stubborn denial and possible acknowledgement of another, unlikely reality or truth.

For this reason, Helsing regards premodernism, tradition, and superstition just as valid

and sound as modern science. For Jann, "[b]elief, as it turns out, is the basis not just of faith but

is, in Van Helsing's mind, the foundation of all knowledge" (275). Belief in them possesses

equal credibility with positivist experience. Essentially, tradition and superstition constitute

reality too. He treats them *as* reality. Moreover, they are not just as legitimate as modern science,

but, more science itself. Ironically, Helsing critiques modern science as a failure in tracking

Dracula, as unequal to the task:

> All we have to go upon are traditions and superstitions. These do not at the first appear
> much, when the matter is one of life or death—nay of more than either life or death.
> Yet must we be satisfied; in the first place because we have to be—no other means is at
> our control—and secondly, because after all, these things—tradition and superstition are
> everything. … A year ago which of us would have received such possibility [of a
> vampire's existence], in the midst of our scientific, skeptical, matter-of-fact nineteenth
> century? (240)

Where the others in the group would likely seek the creature through modern positivism,

Helsing's openmindedness permits him to recreate investigatory "science," contemporarily

understood, as premodern. This re-creation refashions the conception of "playing detective," in

fact, detection itself. Even more, for him the urgency of the situation highlights the inadequacy of modern science; only acceptance of superstition can fill the gap and provide the correct reading of the crisis. As heuristic thinker, Helsing reimagines the nature of answer to question. Where the modern empiricist confines gap closure of nature's transcendent mysteries to the material and tangible, Helsing sees the immaterial and improbable as filling the gaps of modern science. The impact on his approach to detection changes. Investigation cannot—must not—proceed on rigidly concrete positivist lines. Rather, it must adapt itself to the unbelievable, the metaphysical. In fact, heuristically, Helsing betrays a belief that where the modern fails, the premodern is a viable alternative. Moreover, if the modern falls short, he considers it easily and rapidly disposable.

This paradigm impacts the work's plot development. Helsing's easy adaptability in intellect and detective work places him in an epistemologically superior position narratively. Stoker's representation of detective work in *Dracula* privileges an image of premodern heuristic thinking processes over modern sequential logic; moreover, Stoker ensures that the former operates more speedily. Harker, Seward, Holmwood, Morris, Mina—all fail to grasp what is happening to Lucy. Not one understands the nature of her continual pallor. Not one remotely entertains the possibility of the existence of an unbelievable cause for her condition. Conversely, Van Helsing very quickly—in fact, very early in the work—comprehends the nature and the actual cause. Essentially, as with the likes of Holmes and Poirot, he is many steps ahead of the others in comprehending facts. Like those counterparts, he does not reveal his cogitations—not all, at least—to anyone, even Stoker's reader. For Stoker, reading and filling gaps must come with adaptable intellect, one amenable to the need to reorient, even reinvent, one's reasoning processes and logic.

CONCLUSION: HISTORICAL INFLUENCES

AND MATERIAL CONDITIONS

This project has developed the argument that nineteenth-century literary Gothic reading

experience transcended mere affective event to become cerebral, empirical phenomenon. In

doing so, contemporary Gothic tapped into a confluence of currents that characterized

Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment culture: rationalism, positivism, and the empowered

individual intellect. The ethos of Enlightenment exaltation of human reason merged with the

Industrial Revolution's privilege of the concrete empirical over the abstract and metaphysical.

Nineteenth-century thinker Thomas Carlyle asserted of the era that "[f]rom many causes, the

arena of free Activity has long been narrowing, that of skeptical Inquiry becoming more and

more universal, more and more perplexing" ("Characteristics" 27). In 1829, Carlyle wrote of his

time's thought processes that the contemporary mind operated as mechanically as the apparatus

of the factory. This linear thinking led reasoning to a positivism that focused its inquiry not on

the abstract, but on concrete sense input from its environment:

> This condition of the two great departments of knowledge,--the outward, cultivated
> exclusively on mechanical principles; the inward, finally abandoned, because, cultivated
> on such principles, it is found to yield no result, --sufficiently indicates the intellectual
> bias of our time, its all-pervading disposition towards that line of inquiry. In fact, an
> inward persuasion has long been diffusing itself … . That, except for the external, there
> are no true sciences; that to the inward world … our only conceivable road is through the
> outward; that, in short, what cannot be investigated and understood mechanically, cannot
> be investigated and understood at all. ("Signs of the Times" 66)

My project develops the argument that Gothic reading experience is an exercise in determining

the mysterious, hidden cause of an effect that the author has displayed in her narrative.

According to Carlyle, the Enlightenment/Industrial-Revolution mind exchanged the premodern

abstract of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion for modern scientific process thinking and

empirical curiosity:

> Consider … the general fashion of Intellect in this era. Intellect, the power man has of knowing and believing, is now nearly synonymous with Logic, or the mere power of arranging and communicating. Its implement is not Meditation, but Argument. 'Cause and effect' is almost the only category under which we look at, and work with, all Nature. Our first question with regard to any object is not, What is it? but, How is it? We are no longer instinctively driven to apprehend, and lay to heart, what is Good and Lovely , but rather, as onlookers, how it is produced, whence it comes, whither it goes. ("Signs of the Times" 74)

In fact, George Levine notes that the nineteenth century novel not only reflects the preference for positivism and rationalism in inquiry, but that the modern mind had to exercise more of its powers in determining reality than it did with premodern religion:

> The transformation [during the Victorian era] was destabilizing even on questions about how one gets to the truth and where one should look for ethical and spiritual authority. On the one hand, science was claiming absolute authority in the area of natural knowledge, but on the other, in displacing the authority of religion also made truth a much more elusive quality. (Levine 17)

Increasing epistemic incertitude demanded more of the intellect to seek out and discover truth and reality.

Like Carlyle, Diane Hoeveler sees the marriage of two historical developments that endowed literary Gothic with its epicurean audience. The Industrial Revolution's creation of a bourgeois middle class with disposable income simultaneously spawned a readership that privileged the individualistic intellect. According to Hoeveler, this social stratum valued, among other things, individuality, education, and freedom of choice (*Gothic Riffs* 8). This last she stresses as bourgeois belief in agency (15). This class "embrace[d] a brave new world of reason" and rejected superstition for "natural supernaturalism" (10). Contemporary Gothic not only accepted individualism and rationalism, but afforded it a prominent position in its narrative. Hoeveler asserts that "[t]he rationality and self-control that was so highly prized by Protestant individualism and Enlightenment ideology moves to center stage in the gothic" (27). The

combined emphases on self-reliance and empowered reason operated synergistically to create the private employment of intellect that Gothic represented.

If the Enlightenment exalted the individual intellect and the Industrial Revolution valorized positivism and a scientific approach to the world, the growth in literacy brought individual empowerment and the isolative detachment of private reading. According to Maggie Kilgour, the cultural phenomenon of literacy birthed anxiety over the individualistic character the private literacy invested in the reader:

> From the seventeenth century on, with the rise of literacy and the increase of the press, reading became a focal point in debates over authority and self-determination; indeed it became identified with self-determination. Originating in the Protestant ideal that every man had the right to read the scripture for himself, … the idea that to read for oneself was the property of the self-governing individual permeated discussions of both literature and politics. (Kilgour 6)

What concerned critics more deeply was the purportedly immoral character of the very personal reader-narrative connection that grew out of such private behavior. This project asserts that nineteenth-century literary Gothic reading experience encouraged the reader to participate closely and personally in closing narrative gaps; the author granted to her reader the opportunity to coauthor text through speculation about missing information. This arrangement created a special bond between reader and print. Because of the mode's nature as a romance, Kilgour observes that "[t]he Gothic was seen as encouraging a particularly intimate and insidious relationship between text and reader, by making the reader identify with what he or she read" (6). Concurrent historical developments of self-determination, faith in the concrete and visible, and extolment of education and intellect laid the foundation for the nineteenth-century autonomous reader. Following this trend, Gothic became an emblem of individualistic literacy.

Current scholarly treatment of late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Gothic literature tends to cast the mode as Anti-Enlightenment. Its use of supernaturalism, the fantastical, and

emotional or even hyperemotional arousal seems to situate it in direct opposition to the

rationalistic and positivist attitudes of the Enlightenment. Katherine Ding says of this academic

treatment that it approaches Gothic and the Enlightenment as mutually hostile; recent scholarship

limits any connection to emotional dimensions (543). While Ding addresses only late-eighteenth-

century Gothic in her work, Deidre Lynch observes this narrow approach of current scholarship

toward much of nineteenth-century literary Gothic as well:

> Gothic fictions of the Romantic period [1798-ca. 1850] are constructed as curious
> compounds of the unknown and the too well-known. On the one hand, these narratives
> traded in obscurity and mystery. This trade … had gotten underway, vexingly enough,
> at precisely the historical moment when it looked as if an educated populace, weaned
> from superstition, schooled in the empiricist protocols of the Scientific Revolution,
> would at last be ready and able to see the world in its true colors. (47)

Both Ding and Lynch argue the opposite: Gothic not only appealed to intellect and reasoning, but

exercised them actively and in synchronicity with Enlightenment and Romantic ideals.

Acknowledging that late-eighteenth-century Gothic certainly addresses emotions, Ding also

contends that contemporary texts "interact more directly with the questions of … knowledge at

the heart of Enlightenment philosophy" (544). During the ensuing Romantic era, Lynch asserts,

the mode, as "knowingness," created an epistemological culture all its own because its literature

elicited the reader's speculative impulses: "Gothic fictions somehow produced a nation of

knowing readers. Gothic readers could look up from their books and issue arch predictions about

what they all too clearly saw coming" (47; emphasis the author's). Gothic raised questions about

knowing and imagination, and displayed interest in its readers' minds (49). Arguing for Gothic

as investigation into deep ontological issues, Lynch asserts that Romantic-era Europe "found in

this mode of fiction-writing one of its chief vehicles for political, philosophical, and aesthetic

inquiry, despite the mode's reputation among critics and canonical Romantic authors for silliness

and social irresponsibility" (49). Similarly, Marshall Brown argues that a productive treatment of Gothic must include understanding it as an epistemological and metaphysical aesthetic (49).

Scholars acknowledge that this mode of fiction continued the Enlightenment ethos well after the era faded. Peter Garrett implies that nineteenth-century Gothic preserved and nurtured that ethos with an appeal to the reader's cerebral persona; as post-Enlightenment aesthetic, the mode both presented and explained mysteries as part of a performative act of knowledge to arouse and captivate readers (6-7). This phenomenon persisted past the Romantic period into the Victorian Age. Noting that the latter half of the nineteenth century acted as heir to the Enlightenment's emphasis on intellect, Alan Rauch asserts that knowledge held a position of high regard in that era. The esteem of knowledge, Rauch maintains, forced readers to compare the "real" or gaps in knowledge-structure with actual reality as part of separating fact from fiction (17). The European Enlightenment may have vanished with the dawn of the nineteenth century, but pre-Victorian and Victorian literary Gothic kept its ideals of intellect, independent thought, reason, inquiry, and positivist investigation alive through the century.

Various forces in nineteenth-century Britain converged to favor a private intellectual reading experience for the Gothic. Social, economic, scientific, and intellectual transformations supported this phenomenon, altering the nature of textual encounter.

By 1900, book publishing had moved steadily from slow, plodding production of expensive copies to less costly. More rapid printing technology ensured cheaper and wider dissemination of literature, although to some limited extent. Regardless of this limitation, however, decreased expense and rapid, wide distribution of books into the marketplace radically altered the complexion of the reading public. Up through the eighteenth century, considerable expense of production limited a significant proportion of literary authorship chiefly to the private

patronage of nobility and royalty. Consequently, authors wrote narrowly for upper-class tastes. Often these palates were epicurean in nature. In the late eighteenth century and over the course of the nineteenth, technological, economic, and social shifts permitted literature to reach below the upper crust into the masses. The Industrial Revolution had created a new bourgeois middle class, and Britain's cities experienced massive influxes of lower classes from the rural areas to work the factories. Rise of the capitalist middle class marked the weakening or disintegration of traditional power and socioeconomic structures that determined, even imposed, rules of literary and aesthetic taste. This alteration of the socioeconomic landscape created new, wider markets for literature, ones with tastes that did not necessarily follow those of the upper classes or the refined judgments of respected arbiters of aesthetics, or what Richard Altick calls the "canons of good taste" (*Writers* 171). The era saw not only political power shift to the middle class, but elites' aesthetic governance over discrimination diminish.

Two new market segments exerted their influence. Capitalism and industry fueled a new middle class with money that sought comforts and leisure. Meanwhile, laboring classes sought cheap works that appealed to what some called vulgar tastes. Expanding into a huge mass market meant the necessity of appealing not only to broader public appetites, but even possibly lowbrow palates. It also signified the reality of serving diverse, multiple desires. Ana-Isabel Aliaga-Buchenau notes of this new readership that "[t]he gentle reader was a definable and predictable entity known to the author and the booksellers as well as other people involved in the production and distribution of books. However, this clearly defined group of readers became submerged in the new mass readership of the nineteenth century" (6). This new multiplicity absorbed readers who might exercise independent agency in their reactions toward literature, "the radical uncertainty all novelists share about how the reading public will interpret or misinterpret, use or

abuse, the products of their imagination" (Brantlinger 3; see also Flint 16). What results is "the ultimate unknowability of the common reader" (Brantlinger 17). Cheaper and more abundant availability democratized literature in that writers now had to play to popular desires. Altick characterizes this historical shift as "conducive to leveling, to vulgarization, to spreading mediocrity" (*Writers* 171). Authorial loyalty shifted away from epicurean noble patronage to serving commercial, mass tastes sometimes explicit and shocking. The nineteenth century saw the rise of crime and sensation novels, including the famously lurid Newgate Novel, and detective fiction.

Dissolution of the author-patron relationship and focus on commercial interests distanced the previously familiar tone and intimacy between a writer and her reader. The former moved away from knowing, anticipating, and catering to known consumers and tastes to an extensive throng of heterogeneous intellectual appetites. Through the eighteenth and into the mid-nineteenth centuries, authors typically established personal, intimate relationships with their readers. In fact, common authorial practice—and obligation—dictated that writers perform something similar to the theatrical "breaking the fourth wall." The reader was not merely a recipient of purchased text; she became part of the narrative family. Many, including Charlotte Brontë, addressed them in affectionate terms such as "Dear Reader"; *Jane Eyre* ends with a similar such recognition when the heroine announces her marriage. Usual diffident practice necessitated self-effacing apologies and humble justifications at book's opening to forestall possible offense to the reader. Authors and publishers consistently incorporated friendly synopses, sometimes detailed, of each chapter to assist their readers' comprehension of the narrative. Synopses would alert the reader to a complex process and its result; some even described the emotive aspects to the events. Such summaries would help the reader understand

not only the particular chapter's events, but perhaps how that chapter fit into the overall scheme of the work. This form of authorial behavior cast the writer into an additional performative role vis-à-vis the reader. On one side, the author was storyteller. On another, the author acted as social creature, fulfilling certain societal expectations of modesty, courtesy, considerate conduct, personable confidant, and empathetic helper of the reader. Patrick Brantlinger terms this relationship "respectable comfortableness" (13). Preindustrial reading was more than textual consumption, also incorporating the reader into a close social circle with her author. By the late Victorian period, this familiarity dissipated in the wash of an anonymous sea of massive public readership. Apologies might not appear. Synopses vanished. Personal appeals to the reader dissolved away. This dissociation threw the reader onto her own intellectual resources for interpretation and decoding activity. Where the author previously acted the role of companionable assistant, now the reader had to navigate the intricacies of text on her own. Consequently, demand on reader intellect had to increase.

Gradual movement of populations to the cities, as well as the diminution of communal feeling, isolated people and subjected them to rapid change that they had to negotiate alone. Paralleling this shift was urbanization's swelling of populations that led to atomism, isolative disconnection from others; expanding literacy greatly enlarged readership. Readers in the cities were inclined to seek out privacy at cafes with their periodicals or retreat into their homes to read novels. This diminution of identity in the anonymous multitudes, combined with rapid change, impelled readers to seek out coherence in a confusing world: "[T]he Victorian novel often becomes a kind of education in connectedness …. The Victorians inherited from their romantic predecessors … an imagination of the organic connection among all things" (Levine 15). Literature was more than entertainment; it was social-relational with the world itself. In fact, it

functioned as a textual way to restore lost social linkages: "The writers of the period grappled throughout the century … with attempts to analyze and describer the larger nature of this changed mode of existence and social relations, to give shape and meaning to a completely unprecedented way of life" (Loughlin-Clow 71). Levine and Loughlin-Clow imply a markedly counteractive role for Victorian literature. If expanding readership, individualistic reading practices and swelling urban populations weakened social and communal ties between people, literature acted to resist this movement and perhaps recover some of them.

Other historical currents reinforced this growing trend of the individualistic reader. Romanticism contributed two significant strands to this development. Its exaltation of both the individual and the loner, e.g., the Byronic figure, underscored appreciation of human singularity. Raymond Chapman observes of the century's first half the insistence on the virtues of the self-made man (41). Moreover, the movement celebrated intuition as at minimum equal, if not superior, to reason. One might reject and hold as worthless external societal—or at least recognized critics'—authority, tastes, and criteria for propriety and follow one's own internal standards. Implicit in this philosophy is reliance on private experience as ultimate, or at least primary, authoritative validity for truth. As an ideal, the Romantic individual constituted an independent entity intellectually and intuitively. Even more, from this period originates the ideal of the self-educated reader, which Richard Altick observes was part of the national mythology (*The English Common Reader* 240, 242). The private reader became an heir to the Romantic elevation of the individual as thinker and seeker of truth.

Paralleling this movement in the field of psychology was the theory and method of introspection. Eminent researchers such as Wilhelm Wundt; E. T. Titchener; and Franz Bertano used this patient-centered approach as a way to understand currents of inner experience.[1]

Introspection, entailed a patient's looking inward and examining and recording his own thought

processes. Such scientific treatment foregrounded several aspects of interpretive "reading" for

treatment. Its methodology privileged individualism. In fact, its self-reading diminished the

importance of a second, objective trained analyst. Furthermore, introspection favored focus on

internality and stream of consciousness. As such, this approach emphasized the significance of

process as part of decoding the internal thought world. Debra Gettelman suggests that this

psychoanalytical model interfaced with study of reader response as a way to study the internal

movements of the intellect; there was "a perception that grew throughout the Victorian period

that reading novels involves attending at an unconscious level, and, moreover, can provide

valuable scientific insight into the unconscious mind" (204). Gettelman points to the era's belief

that study of novel reading could unearth understanding of the mind's hidden activities (205). As

a theory, introspection informed comprehension of reading experience as well as psychiatric

treatment. Writing at mid-century, Scotsman William Hamilton, professor of logic and

metaphysics at Edinburgh University, suggested that the mind is readable. Addressing

unconscious impulses that he called "latencies," Hamilton implied that one might be able to

decode these dark recesses:

> [One degree] of latency exists when the mind contains certain systems of knowledge, or
> certain habits of action, which it is wholly unconscious of possessing in its ordinary state,
> but which are revealed to consciousness in certain extraordinary exaltations of its powers.
> The evidence on this point shows that the mind frequently contains whole systems of

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[1] Wundt (1832-1920, active years of writing 1879-1921), "The Father of Experimental
Psychology, favored empiricism in the study of psychology. He studied consciousness as the
relationship between processes of cognition, perception, and volition.
    Edward Titchener (1867-1972, active years of writing 1890-1927) was a structuralist
psychologist, studying the mind as components that fit together to form complex experiences.
Introspection was one of the methods for doing so.
    Franz Bertano (1838-1917, active years of writing 1862-1911), introduced the method of
introspection and influenced Freud.

knowledge, which, though in their normal state they have faded into absolute oblivion, may, … flash out into luminous consciousness, and even throw into the shade of unconsciousness these other systems by which they had, for a long period, been eclipsed and even extinguished.

…

How can we know that of which we are unconscious, seeing that consciousness is the condition of knowledge?—it is enough to allege, that there are many things which we neither know nor can know in themselves,--that is, in their direct and immediate relation to our faculties in knowledge, but which manifest their existence indirectly through the medium of their effects. (81, 82)

Hamilton's commentary suggests a byproduct of introspection in the area of causation. According to his assertions, the user of this method may observe effects, but not understand their causes. Psychological reading through introspection, he suggests, becomes an investigative process. It permits inquiry into and identification of hidden rationales for observed outward behaviors.

Meanwhile, in the Victorian domestic sphere, reading practices shifted from communal to private. Scholars such as Aliaga-Buchenau characterize this change from "intensive," or public-experience literacy practice, to "extensive," or reading privately and widely (6-7; see also St. Clair 11). This change wrought metaphysical consequences. Through about mid-century, literacy activity favored reading aloud and in group settings. Typically, families sat together in evenings and listened as a family member read to them. Workplaces sometimes contained common work areas where employees labored while a coworker read to them. Scholarship tends to situate this phenomenon with the middle-class domestic sphere. Amy Cruse draws a vivid, detailed portrait of an upper middle-class family of four in a drawing room, three listening as a young man reads aloud to the rest (16). Martyn Lyons observes that reading aloud in the nineteenth century, which he terms *oralization*, "still survived … in middle-class circles" (343).[2] Silent reading, Lyons

[2] The term *middle class*, we should note, was an elastic, even slippery, classification during the era. Richard Altick observes that Victorians understood this term

notes, threatened the emotional being of bourgeois women; he omits any mention of the working class in describing this anxiety (319). Meanwhile, any historical image of radical alteration to the lower-class household through reading deserves significant qualification: "Working-class women … *did* read, as oral historians have also discovered[,] … but they persisted in discrediting their own literary culture. Those interviewed frequently described their own fiction-reading as 'trash' or 'nonsense-reading.' Reading was condemned as a waste of time, which offended against a rather demanding work ethic" (Lyons 321). Any concerns about literacy practice distracting from domestic labor concentrated in the lower-class home. Kate Flint foregrounds these concerns with the bourgeois family, arguing that the issue rested ambivalently in desires both to share and regulate emotional response within the home and, conversely, to craft reading into a "stimulating" private experience (20). Reading's shift from communal to private event becomes more a middle-class issue than a lower-class one. Even contemporary literature implies this class-based perspective. As a child, Jane Eyre withdrew from the cold, abusive environment of the wealthy Reed family to read privately on a window seat. Catherine Morland consumes novels silently; although she and Isabella read novels together as a bonding activity, Isabella acknowledges Catherine's tendency toward private reading through periodic questioning of whether Catherine has found out about the veil yet. The *Frankenstein* cottagers, however, read aloud; Felix reads a history to Safie.[3]

Fears of consequences to isolative, detached female reading in the home during this period accentuated the era's conception of individuated, silent reading as novel, even reflected fears of hidden, unpoliceable feelings (Flint 20). William St. Clair articulates these

"broadly flexibly" (*Writers, Readers* 118). This class incorporated, he says, the spectrum from university graduates to small tradesmen (118).   [3] *Frankenstein*'s Creature, too, reads privately, suggesting that this literacy practice existed as early as 1818. However, I omit it here because his situation was compelled due to the absence of any person that might read to him.

concerns respecting private literacy as potential social subversion: "Reading was … feared unorthodox. This phenomenon resulted in a dual communal/private activity dialectic which because it took the imagination of women and young people away from the social control of families. No book … should be read in private which could not, with propriety, be read aloud among the whole family" (282). However, as Janet Badia and Jennifer Phegley note, this concept reflected some ambivalence; they point to contemporary product advertisement that emphasized self-discovery, individuality, and intellectual independence for the woman reader (4, 5, 6). Yet, Victorian reading practice transformed from public experience to personal, private indulgence. Such isolation shaped reading into something almost antisocial: "[T]he pursuit of books inevitably engendered a retreat from many traditional forms of communal recreation. Various factors combined to cause the reader to distance himself for the pastimes of his friends and neighbours" (Vincent 217). For the woman, though, it might be the pleasure of "intellectual retreat" (Badia and Phegley 6). The feared withdrawal of women from social life to unmentored private reading emblematizes vividly a movement for the general Victorian reading as segregative.

Private literacy practice supported growth and improvement of intellect for the female reader. Phegley notes that some critics supported female reading as a means of exercising critical thinking skills (106; see also Shaw 199-200). These abilities constituted only a portion of the possibilities for women's cerebral activities. Debra Gettelman's study of Victorian reader psychology establishes multiple avenues for intellectual development during reading. Observing that previous scholarship has characterized the era's readers as passive, Gettelman describes a change in the critical landscape. Reading historians have been altering their perspective of the period's reader from one of passivity to "unpredictab[ility}, independen[ce] of authorial

direction, and as a prompt for their own associations and speculations" (200-201). Thoughts became self-reflexive, "a deeply introspective activity, one that afforded unique forms of self-knowledge, … a more conscious awareness of its own thought processes" (199, 204). Victorian reading incarnated an increased emphasis on reader internality.

Gettelman's commentary implies a multi-layered intellectual experience for the Victorian reader. By their very nature, unpredictability and independent associational mental activity intimate creativity, possibly even originality. Since association requires a nexus of linked thoughts, this creativity potentially multiplies itself with each new associative thought. Gettelman adds speculations, which require logical activity. Moreover, self-knowledge and introspection necessitate exercising thought independent of the printed narrative currently before one's eyes. Gettelman's work asserts that Victorian reading served as a starting point for autonomous intellectual activity that operated parallel with the moment's textual experience. Contemporary authors sought alternate options to reading just for plot (203). Meanwhile, readers exerted independence in use of narrative; their literary choices became tools for decoding more than just text: "[W]e are seeing how Victorians theorized that the thoughts novels prompted were often not accessible to the reader *without* a book to bring them to the surface" (204; emphasis the author's). What Gettelman argues is for a doubled literacy experience. The reader reads the text in front of her, an event that transforms into decoding activity elsewhere: oneself, the world, and others. Flint says of Victorina novel reading that "it provided a space for exploring the self, and trying out new thoughts, new possibilities, in private. Reading fiction, an activity which combined flexing the imagination with anticipating and reacting to the dynamics of a range of narratives, was a … means of[,] … potentially … changing one's own [life]" (31). For women,

novel reading was more than light diversion. Rather, it acted as a springboard to extratextual reading of one's internal space and the outer world.

With this change came an intellectual and philosophical metamorphosis, namely, privileging the authoritative source and validity of truth. Communal reading, that is, in the domestic circle, permitted discussion of text, leading to the inclusion of diverse ideas and perspectives and communal search for wisdom. What resulted was group exploration of truth that led to establishment of the community as arbiter of fact and reality. "Intensive" reading "insured the acceptance of the "correct" interpretation" (Aliaga-Buchenau 6). The communal group could share interpretations and refine understanding through interactive dialogue (Aliaga-Buchenau 4); it permitted establishment of shared values (Janssen 307). Conversely, individuated reading cast the reader onto his or her own faculties, and none else's, to determine fact. Any dialogue that transpired transferred from external settings to secluded thought. The era's conception of the reader's identity and purpose rested in withdrawal, with the "abstracted intellectual" (Vincent 218). Transformation of literacy to private event privileged individual meaning making and isolated interpretive processes from the possibility of validation or adjustment that other voices might provide. Any determination of truth and values moved from the absolute, that is, communal or group decision, to relativistic, depending on the individual for resolution.

Individualism asserted itself through reading not just as a person's independent choice of leisure activity, but in the intellect as individuated entity separate from the crowd. This singularity possessed ideological dimensions. Reading as isolative event created the autonomous reader. In fact, the period's reader asserted that autonomy intellectually (Gettelman 200-01). Private reading granted the mind several levels of intellectual independence, such as creativity. Shu-Chuan Yan asserts that consumption of literature sparked continuing use of imagination that

created new dimensions of experience (319). Narrative allowed the reader an opportunity to create, even "narrate," a second, separate storyline internally. Gettelman observes the Victorian reader's invitation to pursue narrative paths independent of print during the reading encounter:

> [There is a] recognition that, for Victorians, reading a novel involved attending in many ways and to many things other than the words on the page. … [R]ecent scholarship that has taken up—and taken apart—the mental processes involved in reading is making us newly aware that the Victorian era was also a post-Romantic era, one in which both authors and readers valued novels not only for their narrative content, but also for the introspective digressions they elicit. (200)

Gettelman's critique foregrounds a third aspect, namely, the activity of looking inward. The Victorians, she notes, regarded novel reading as introspective activity (199). Such private ruminations had ideological ramifications for the nascent readership. With literacy practice, the reader experienced greater political freedom as an empowered reader (Aliaga-Buchenau xii); it permitted self-exploration and experimenting with new thoughts (Flint 31). For the working classes, reading was "mental, reflective activity" (Yan 320). Yan argues that literacy raised the status of the lower classes in society: "Through the act of reading, the working class had a chance to become a recognized thinking class" (319). Reading became not just a leisure activity, but crafted the brain into a political entity capable of exercising rational thought on its own.

Victorian society championed the human reason and its achievements. In fact, writers called it the "March of the Intellect" or "March of the Mind" that would solve societal ills and plagues. This belief permeated all strata of society. Alan Rauch notes a "knowledge industry" that infused all classes of British civilization with the conviction that learning could confer social status (22). In fact, this impulse acted as a democratizing force. Shu-chuan Yan argues that "[t]hrough the act of reading, the working class had a chance to become a recognized thinking class" (319). Intellectual betterment became an article of faith: "The spirit of self-improvement—or mental improvement, as it was commonly called—as well as the promise of

scientific innovation held sway as the dominant ethos of the time" (Rauch 24). Scientific

advancements encouraged the belief in "progress." What the era called "the age of improvement"

represented a "remarkable interval of intellectual liberation" and "untethered imagination"

(Stonyk 137). Various cites hosted world expositions or exhibitions that displayed and exalted

the latest in technology. Intellectual movements turned away from the Bible and Christianity as

the chief determinants of truth and authority. Instead, they vested confidence in empiricism and

positivism as ontological sources of factuality. George Levine notes that epistemology changed

more pervasively during this period than almost any other; this shift affected worldview the

metaphysical:

> The transformation was destabilizing even on questions about how one gets to the truth and where one should look for ethical and spiritual authority. On the one hand, science was claiming absolute authority in the area of natural knowledge, but on the other, in displacing the authority of religion it also made truth a much more elusive quality. The peculiar qualities of the Victorian novel are certainly reflections of these transformations and instabilities, symptoms, and agents of the culture's reimagination of itself. (16-17).

Truth and the validity of truth now came more from secular impulses and the concrete than from

the divine or abstract.

This instability birthed impulses toward inquiry and investigation. Thomas Carlyle

argued of the era, "Our whole relations to the Universe … [has] become an Inquiry, a Doubt;

nothing will go of its own accord, and do its function quietly, but all things must be probed into,

the whole working of man's world be anatomically studied" ("Characteristics" 53). Rauch has

noted the period's affinity for systemization of knowledge, or "knowledge industry," as a

middle-class commodity; further, this organized approach "suggest[ed] patterns and trends that

challenged traditional belief systems" (14). As an alteration in truth paradigm, this thinking

elevated use and validity of the bodily senses as authorities in establishing reality. Belief and

faith, with its focus on the internal, gave way to a coequal or subordinate relationship between

sensual experience in the gathering of data from reading of the outside world and the interiority of cerebral processes. Carlyle noted of the age that "the Metaphysical and Moral Sciences are falling into decay, while the Physical are engrossing" ("Signs" 26). Intellect moved from placing faith in the immaterial more to the material world.

Growing access to print fueled vigorous intellectual culture; Altick asserts of the era a "persistent strain of earnestness" in the proportion of readers who wanted or thought that they wanted information (*Writers* 170). As England moved into the Victorian period, according to Rauch, knowledge "resonated with profound significance and was treated with great reverence" (7). Print culture answered this hunger. Rauch points to the proliferation of what he calls "knowledge texts" such as encyclopedias and manuals (2). Asserting that literature was more important than at no other historical period, Carlyle calls contemporary print and literary works the new Church ("Signs" 34), "but a branch of Religion" ("Characteristics" 56). Fictional works had to adjust and adapt to the growing glorification of science and the questions that it posed. Novels had to "establish elaborate guidelines of knowledge to direct the reader through the system; the narrative thread that emerges from comparisons with the "real" or from gaps in the knowledge-structure relies on the confusion that exists … between fact and fiction" (Rauch 17). As part of the growing base of print knowledge, novels had to reflect the penchant for intellectual inquiry that infused British culture.

Because of the convergence of these historical and intellectual developments, this project contributes a new approach to current reader-response scholarship in nineteenth-century literary Gothic. Previous research has tended toward characterization of the mode's literacy practice as affective rather than cerebral. Fred Botting's terming of Gothic as "negative aesthetics" casts the mode as devoid of any rational character. In his work, Vijay Mishra calls the sublimity in Gothic

a "momentary surrender of the law of reason" (19). Feminist scholars of the Gothic, such as

Hoeveler, Anne Williams, and Gilbert and Gubar concede some intellectual dimension to the

mode; however, their approach focuses rather tightly on female mind and its exercise as

feminocentric coded discourse, psychic realization, and diffident creative expression,

respectively. A feminist angle treats chiefly half of the population; my argument adds

consideration of male readers, which receives attention in the second chapter. Additionally, this

project contributes a new facet to the conversation regarding the nineteenth-century reader of this

mode. Characterizing Gothic as solely emotive limits discussion of its literacy practice to

corporeal affect. My work expands the conversation to the reader's whole person, treating her as

cerebral as well as sensual creature. Assertions that Gothic is merely affective restricts the reader

to body; a whole-person (or whole-brain) approach explores the reader as logician, even

armchair scientist, too. This project also develops the claim that Gothic invited quasi-scientific

empirical inquiry. Unlike previous scholarship, my work claims that nineteenth-century Gothic

reading experience transformed the reader into positivist researcher after cause and effect

whether in mind or material world. Furthermore, the project adds a systematic logical component

to Gothic reader response, namely, considering the mode as formal reasoning processes, as we

find in *Northanger Abbey*. Here my work contributes an element of structure and organization to

the mode. Contrary to previous scholarship that represents Gothic as an untidy mass of strong

aroused feelings, this project develops the argument that the mode operates as orderly, linear

logic capable of reduction to the formal processes of induction, deduction, abduction, and

syllogism.

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