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Servant Voices And Tales In The British Gothic Novel, 1764-1847

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SERVANT VOICES AND TALES IN THE BRITISH GOTHIC NOVEL, 1764-1847

by

REEMA W. BARLASKAR

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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Advisor

Date

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DEDICATION

For my mother and father.

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INTRODUCTION: SERVANT VOICES IN THE GOTHIC NOVEL

The painter and satirist William Hogarth, in his *Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism*, depicts late-eighteenth century local society in its most religious and superstitious state.¹ The audience who forms the congregation not only consumes the fanatical speech of a Methodist preacher but also indulges in popular superstition. Scattered throughout are representations of marvelous news-events, a woman giving birth to rabbits (Mary Toft), idolatrous figurines of a famous ghost (the Cock Lane Ghost), and satanic visitations to local towns (the Drummer of Tedworth).² Hogarth's painting was one of many artistic works that satirized the public's credulity.³ Perhaps what Hogarth's spectacle displays most emphatically is Enlightenment skepticism towards religious fanaticism, threatening to return society to the dark ages. For instance, the fanaticism of the Methodist preacher in the highest pulpit, who bears an exposed tonsure, functions as a sign of cultural regression. However, as Emma Clery argues in the first chapter of her book, such spectacles occasioned mutual interest across classes, bringing into contact the higher orders of society with the lower (*Supernatural Fiction*). Aristocrats like Horace Walpole enjoyed the ghost spectacle as a form of entertainment, while others, like Samuel Johnson, treated it as a subject of academic inquiry to determine the reality of spirits. On the one hand, prominent intellectuals and aristocrats took part in these public displays, while on the other, the perpetrators of marvelous stories, laborers and commoners, were tried by the highest judiciary courts for exploiting the public that included the most educated sects of society (Clery *Supernatural Fiction*).

In the late eighteenth century, the term "Gothic" might symbolize the irrational religion of the "vulgar" masses, but it could also represent an "authentic" literary tradition. A fluid and dynamic word, "Gothic" signified a patriotic impulse to recover Britain's national and cultural

origins.⁴ The antiquarian's fascination and exemplification of the Medieval Age serves as one example. Not only antiquarians but poets, novelists, and even booksellers contributed to the project of delineating the aesthetic qualities of the genre. As Clery argues in her article, the term is also intimately bound to the "romance." Gothic novels were romances, that is, novelistic prose deviating from the aesthetic of realism as a reflection of everyday life, a model that distinguished the eighteenth-century realist novel from the "older" romance portraying "outdated" themes of supernaturalism, chivalry, and feudalism (Clery, "The Genesis of 'Gothic Fiction'" 31). Gothic fiction emerges from and engages with a complex set of discursive practices. The genre's variability, in turn, has produced a corresponding set of critical approaches to reading Gothic fiction that ranges from psychoanalytic to gender-focused criticism to more recent explorations of print culture, bookselling, and the commercialization of the Gothic novel in circulating libraries.⁵

What remains unexplored is the portrait Hogarth provides of eighteenth-century local society. How can Hogarth's image of the public sphere speak to representations of community and its voice in Gothic fiction, and more specifically, in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century Gothic novel? In Hogarth's painting, supernatural tales circulate and recirculate through both oral and textual practices. They serve multiple purposes, and as Clery demonstrates in her book, reappeared in theatre and periodical literature, transforming from a public spectacle into an aesthetic practice. They further functioned as a subject of academic inquiry to explore and prove the existence of an immaterial world or to support religious endeavors to renew faith and spirituality in a secular society (Clery *Supernatural Fiction*). In Gothic novels, the lower classes represent irrational credulity while the upper embody individual skepticism. Education reflects class positions that are fixed for aristocrats who use empirical evidence to verify the existence of supernatural phenomena while the lower classes readily accept it. More importantly, Gothic novels present supernatural

discourse within the context of domesticity and demarcate class positions through master/servant relations. Servants' credulity spreads fear in the home and threaten rational domesticity but also promotes domestic practice and conduct. Superstitious maids become foils for validating the protagonist's rational education. Elderly housekeepers validate Enlightenment progress in exhibiting systems of beliefs that represent a regressive worldview. Paternal authorities must regulate servant activity and discourse as their "talk" of ghosts infects impressionable youth with false ideas. The Gothic novels in this study will demonstrate servant voices as not only disruptive to rational domesticity but also as subversive. This dissertation will discuss the ways in which servant voices contest anti-Gothic discourse in subverting domestic ideology and the narrative of rational skepticism. Through marginal subtexts, servants validate the supernatural tale within frame narratives, reports, testimony, and gossip, constructing a pedagogy for reading Gothic texts that resists the hegemonic ideology of rational education represented in oppressive patriarchal structures.

This dissertation examines the literary servant figure across six Gothic novels in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Building on Bruce Robbins's work, *The Servant's Hand: English Fiction from Below*, and his exploration of the literary servant figure in Western literature, it constructs a comparative analysis of servants' discourse against the dominant discourse of the narrator/speaker. More specifically, the dissertation gives attention to representations of servant voices in the home. Robbins's book has explored representations of servant identity in the novel; however, what would an analysis of the servant figure in the Gothic novel entail? Some questions this dissertation explores include: how is superstition and community represented in the Gothic novel; in what ways do servant voices intersect with domestic ideology, rational education, and individual experience; how do servant voices manifest in the marginal spaces surrounding the

dominant discourse of the speaker/narrator; and what oppositional messages and subversive roles do servant characters convey? Radcliffe's novels provide poignant representations of rational discourse within the context of Gothic themes. More generally, rational discourse functions as a process of self-reform. The heroine must correct her excessive sensibility in her response to nature or relationships. This narrative of self-reform and regulation reflects bourgeois conservatism in displaying female virtue as a model for social values of restraint, rationality, and conduct. In other works, like Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, the rational narrative regulates illicit conduct and voices by reasserting aristocratic ideology that equates noble birth with worth. Servant voices reject this social logic and narrative. Much of servants' commentary on the dominant narrative serves as meta-commentary that validates and assigns truth-value to superstition, further legitimating "low" taste for supernatural tales. These discursive spaces and marginal subtexts, in turn, provide authors of Gothic novels opportunities to contest anti-Gothic criticism. Servant characters in Gothic novels, who figure as both producers and consumers of superstition, contest, subvert, and even parody rational discourse. They employ the same literary mechanisms to combat hegemonic ideologies, oral tales of ghostly haunting, demonic possession, and illicit desire, that rational discourse rejects as vulgar and gratuitous.

The Literary Servant Figure

One of the most compelling servants in English literature is Pamela Andrews in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*. As Nancy Armstrong argues in *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, because of her feminine virtue, she emblemizes a rising middle class that attempts to distinguish itself from social classes above and below it. She sustains a leveled position between the shallow aristocrat, Lady Davers, and crude servant, Mrs. Jewkes. One of the purposes of the novel is to demonstrate her social status as superior to the class of domestic servants. She is, from

the beginning, destined to advance from a servant to a higher status that she will win through marriage. Pamela is exceptional as a literary figure because she inhabits the position of narrator, and as narrator, Richardson privileges her subjectivity, one that is also characteristically gendered.

Among the servants who inhabit this position of privilege in eighteenth-century British literature is Maria Edgeworth's Thady Quirk in *Castle Rackrent*. Lee Woolf's edition of *Castle Rackrent* shows how, as an Irish peasant, he represents the figure of the colonized subject while Katherine O'Donnell's "Castle Stopgap: Historical Reality, Literary Realism, and Oral Culture" interprets his character as an embodiment of an "authentic" culture unblemished by the effects of colonization. When servants act as narrators, they voice and promote authors' political agendas. For instance, William Godwin's narrator in *Caleb Williams* serves his radical individualistic philosophy. Because it was published a year after Godwin's political treatise, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, critics have interpreted the novel within the context of his political views. In *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background*, Marilyn Butler suggests that Godwin's treatise and novel were written in response to Edmund Burke's *Reflection on the Revolution in France*. Burke wishes to minimize individual power for the purpose of maximizing institutional strength. Godwin's rejection of Burke's politics appears in his novel when paternal authority treats the individual as a childish figure. Unlike Butler, Garrett Sullivan and Kristen Leaver see Godwin as an ambivalent author and intellectual who, through Caleb, expresses concern about lower-class literacy, the servant's access to print, and the impact of print culture on the individual. In instances when servants do not provide authors an opportunity to promote a social ideal, they help them rewrite the past. Charles Dickens, for instance, idealizes the relationship between servant and employer, a portrait that emphasizes feudal bonds over labor

contracts. Dickens's valets are the most faithful servants while elderly, female servants are maternal characters who sustain harmony between master/servant relations.⁶

Scholarship and criticism of servant identity in Western literature is extensive. Robbins provides a comprehensive study of representations of community and servant identity in literary texts. The "pressure of the working hand" (123), as he puts it, causes "momentary sensitivity" in the protagonist. These moments of sensitivity, discomfort, and "randomness," (Auerbach qtd. in Robbins), he argues, "compose a repetitive history of exclusion" (26). While Robbins investigates the literary servant's "secret pressure" on privileged discourse, Kristina Straub's *Domestic Affairs: Intimacy, Eroticism, and Violence between Servants and Masters in Eighteenth Century Britain* analyzes the servant figure in the eighteenth century. "Labor relations," she argues, "overlap" "the gendered and sexual relations that we, from our modern perspective, associate with privacy and the family" (2). Servants are not "subalterns" (3) in the family structure but represent "a synergy rather than opposition between broad categories – of labor and love, public and private, and political and personal" (2). Both Robbins's and Straub's views provide illuminating perspectives of the literary servant figure even though Robbins examines servants within the context of their marginality while Straub investigates representation as negotiation across private and public boundaries. Because these works are comprehensive in their focus on class relations, literary representation, and sometimes, popular representation of servants, they devote less time to relationships between genre and servant identity. However, Robbins does note that certain texts adopt a generic model of servant identity, displaying "subordination [as] the same everywhere" (34). Generically, they "oscillate" between two "character types": "that of the "buffoon" or "trickster (38).

This study portrays servant identity in the Gothic novel as dynamic and confrontational. Servants not only reiterate and reflect hegemonic ideologies but resist and destabilize them. They contest the ideology of the rational/skeptical voice against the superstitious/credulous voice, displaying the hermeneutic potential of the Gothic tale in allowing the protagonist to “read” and deconstruct fiction for political ends. Janet Todd’s “Posture and Imposture: The Gothic Manservant in Ann Radcliffe’s *The Italian*” seems to be one of the few works that examines servant identity in the Gothic novel. The servant problem, resulting from a demand for servants and their subsequent mobility, provoked an “escapist image” for the “fantastic and feudal” servant. Thus, she argues that in response, Gothic novels provide “a touching image of servitude as devotion rather than employment” (25). It constitutes a “wish fulfillment” in which “clarity is fixed, noble birth and worth are inextricably one...masters and servants are partners but never peers” (25). An alternative interpretation, such as that of Ellis, illustrates the Gothic novel as subversive in its demonstration of the “failure of the middle-class idealization of the house” (xi). The construction of the home as a protective, safe environment from the dangers of the outside world conceals internal, domestic violence (Ellis). As fantasy fulfillment, the Gothic novel appeases middle-class anxiety about changing social orders, but as a vehicle for social change, it challenges normative constructions of gender and class identity. This dissertation examines the literary servant figure using Robbins’s approach. Servants reject the dominant discourse of the narrator/speaker (123). Intimacy and contact with servants’ voices, contrary to rational discourse, is not counter-productive but serves to empower the heroine in her effort to combat hegemonic patriarchy.

The Gothic novelists in this study validate servant voices and their tales, inscribing a subtext for reading Gothic texts that assigns pedagogical value to the supernatural tale. Even when

these writers do not legitimate servant voices, they present servant discourse as oppositional to the ideologies reflected in the dominant narrative. Furthermore, these Gothic novels engage conversations about the late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century concept of “the home” and women’s role in the home. The home as a haunted space evokes reactions that reflect classed, gendered, and racial positions. The home in these Gothic novels is also communal space in which servants and susceptible youth gather to hear the ghost story orated by superstitious maids. Finally, it operates according to a gender, class, and racial hierarchy that promotes domestic productivity. Thus, domestic activity and servants’ voices require regulation. Paternal figures monitor and surveil servants’ “talk” of ghosts for servants spread, circulate, and recirculate reports and tales, ultimately disobeying patriarchal authority that requires obedience to domestic codes.

In Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (*Otranto*), domestic ideology collides with aristocratic values. As the superstitious nurse-maid’s voice represents domestic values, it requires further examination. Thus, a chapter is devoted to the ways the nurse-maid’s voice contests the dominant discourse of the narrator. Though she spreads irrational fear, her gendered language, of love erasing class differences, threatens the structural progression of narrative events. In presenting the figure of the nurse-maid, Bianca, Walpole inscribes a subtext relating the discursive competition between domestic and Gothic modes of writing. Bianca’s language of love and desire domesticates the novel while the narrator of *Otranto* politicizes the novel. Walpole performs an aesthetic position in the narrative by silencing Bianca’s language of desire, establishing the aesthetic qualities of the Gothic novel as a genre reflecting political rather than private subjects and male rather than female discourse.

Moving forward chronologically, it examines servant identity in Ann Radcliffe’s novels. Her novels reflect hierarchal relations in both domestic and gothic contexts as they delineate

categories of the Gothic critic/writer/reader in gendered and classed terms. Radcliffe's servants are both producers and consumers of superstitious rhetoric and present a threat to rational discourse in inducing fear in an already susceptible heroine. However, servants' tales of ghostly haunting provide the heroine opportunities to reread the Gothic environment in which she is imprisoned. This reading of the Gothic tale subverts rational discourse, displaying an inversion of power relations in which irrational fear spreads from a top-down hierarchy of class relations rather than a bottom-up structure. In showing the pedagogical value of the servant's tale of ghostly haunting, Radcliffe legitimates lower-class voices, and in turn, contests the critical discourse assigning the Gothic to the category of the "vulgar" and "irrational."

Chapter three diverges from a focus on English authors to Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and Scott's *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* to further demonstrate servant identity within the context of domestic and Gothic themes. In both Scottish novels, lower characters seem to stabilize an otherwise incomprehensible text. Moreover, servants emblemize the autonomy and authority of a national identity that resists hegemonic colonization. In Hogg's work, the country laborer and shepherd represent the author's social opinions while the servant's tale serves as the only source of truth in a text that resists interpretation. In Scott's novel, the country woman/heroine, Jeanie Deans, combats supernatural evil as a force that invades the moral purity of a nation. Her voice is also the only source of stable truth as "sophistry" and moral relativity, the narrator's discourse, are associated with satanic language.

The narrative of rational domesticity and servant identity is also prominent in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. Of the servant tales that have received the most attention, Nelly Dean's voice is one granted the most authority. She does not inhabit the marginal text of the story but is its center. Rather, it is her narrative counterpart, Lockwood, who appears briefly in both the

beginning and end of the story. One can make the argument that the story is his as he is “recording” or retelling it. However, Nelly is too involved in both the narrative and its ending for her to function as Lockwood’s mere fictional creation. Denied a sexual identity, she resists her female employers to claim authority in the home. As such, she uses superstition and the cautionary tale of illicit love to acquire cultural authority, a story validating racial discourse to cast Heathcliff as the ultimate villain and raced “other,” one which recycles conservative ideologies equating noble birth with worth.

Servant Voices in Anti-Gothic Criticism

In addition to analyzing servant identity in the context of Gothic themes, this dissertation will examine hierarchical representations of critic-writer-audience dynamic in the Gothic novel. If these Gothic novels display meta-commentary about the Gothic novel’s cultural position in critical discourse, then one must provide an account of how servants are portrayed in anti-Gothic criticism in the late eighteenth century. A number of critics analyze the gender-specific language of Gothic criticism. Such language appears in criticism about eighteenth-century novels, a tradition that emerges from the “lower” status of the romance as a genre written by and for women.⁷ Where does the servant appear within this anti-Gothic rhetoric? Is the servant simply a literary foil or does she figure as a legitimate problem to female education in the critical discourse surrounding and shaping literary texts? In Gothic novels, she is a superstitious nurse-maid whose intimacy functions as a perpetual threat to the protagonist’s rational, enlightened education. Anti-Gothic criticism presents a similar representation of the superstitious nurse-maid. More importantly, critical discourse provides a domestic rubric for regulating and suppressing superstitious voices as much as it accounts the Gothic’s harmful effects on impressionable minds. The critic, then, inhabits the regulatory role of the father who “checks” servants’ discourse and ensures the prevention of its

spread to susceptible members of the household. As the next section shows, servants constitute a threat to rational education for at young and impressionable stages, the nurse-maid inculcates false ideas on the mind. Her stories of ghosts have lasting impressions into adulthood.

Joseph Addison, one of the most influential Gothic critics, repositions the critic as authoritative figure in *The Spectator*. Essays “No. 12” and “No. 110” delineate the harmful effects of Gothic voices, inflecting both the consumer and producer of Gothic texts with a class and gender identity. Simply put, old maids spread ghost stories while young women consume them.⁸ The effect of consuming Gothic stories is described in bodily terms: one “contracts” fears from contact with lower-class voices. Gothic stories that originate in the female servant’s voice become a communicable disease contaminating household members. Addison’s rhetoric delineates “mutual contact” with lower-class voices as infectious, producing irreversible effects on the mind that prevent adults from “shak[ing] off” the fears they contract “when they are young” (15).

Mr. Spectator, the everyday gentleman who observes the common people of London, encourages paternalistic monitoring of children’s activities. He displays an attitude toward the spiritual world tempered by thought and examination. When his butler reports that a footman saw a ghost, “a Black horse without a Head,” and that a “Maid” “heard a Rustling among the Bushes” (16), he enters the haunted “abbey” to negate servants’ testimony. Identifying the “Black horse without a Head” as merely a “Cow,” he tells himself: “I dare say the poor Footman lost his Wits upon some trivial Occasion” (17). Such ridicule is distinctly paternalistic, similar to the way a father checks for monsters under a child’s bed to prove that his or her fear is unwarranted. In the eighteenth century, servants were treated as children, chastised for their naiveté and misconduct. Fathers were expected to regulate the conduct of menial servants as they would their own children (Hecht 75-6). Mr. Spectator’s gentleman friend, Sir Roger, is another paternal figure who ridicules

the superstitious tendencies of his servants. Sir Roger reacts with “mirth” when his servants refuse to enter the haunted rooms of his estate, which he “could not get a Servant to enter...after eight a Clock at Night” (17). These examples demonstrate the ways in which paternalistic ridicule functions as a method for regulating the spread of irrational fear.

In essay “No. 12,” Mr. Spectator expresses paternal concern for the child who hears and is terrified by ghost stories: “Were I a Father, I should take a particular Care to preserve my Children from these little Horrors of Imagination, which they are apt to contract when they are young, and are not able to shake off when they are in Years” (15). “Young girls of the Neighbourhood” share “Stories of Spirits and Apparitions,” and as the contagion of fear spreads “at the End of every story,” “the whole Company closed their Ranks and crouded about the Fire” (15). “Wondering at this unaccountable Weakness in reasonable Creatures,” he urges his readers to “arm” themselves “by the dictates of Reason and Religion, *to pull the old Woman out of our hearts* [original emphasis] and extinguish those impertinent Notions which we imbibed at a Time when we were not able to judge their Absurdity” (15). The old woman invades the “heart,” a faculty susceptible to outside stimuli as it comes into contact with fear-inducing environments or voices.

Addison’s antidote is “reason,” which fights the contaminant contracted from the lower orders of society. In essay “No. 110,” he quotes Locke:

Mr. Locke, in his chapter of the Association of Ideas, has very curious Remarks to shew how by the Prejudice of Education one Idea often introduces into the Mind a whole Set that bear no Resemblance to one another in the Nature of things. Among several Examples of this Kind he produces the following Instance. *The ideas of Goblins and Sprights have really no more to do with Darkness than Light; yet let but a foolish Maid inculcate these often on the Mind of a Child, and raise them there together, possibly he shall never be able to separate them again so long as he lives, but Darkness shall ever afterwards bring with it those frightful Ideas, and they shall be so joined, that he can no more bear the one than the other* [original emphasis] (17)

Addison reiterates Locke’s pedagogical views, which regulate contact with servants. As Locke

states, maintaining distance from “the meaner servants” is especially important for “the contagion of...ill precedents, both in Civility and Vertue [sic]...infects Children, as often as they come within reach of it. Thus, “Children [should be] kept as much as may be *in the company of parents* [original emphasis]” to “prevent” “any infection” from the “clownish or vitious [sic] Servant” (Adamson 48). Because the “contagion of rudeness and vice” is found “every where in fashion,” Locke encourages parents to home school their children, but the problem of exposure remains as servants carry the “vice” of the outside world into the home. Thus, Locke’s remedy involves,

Preserv[ing] his tender Mind from all Impressions and Notions of Spirits and Goblins, or any fearful Apprehensions in the dark. This he will be in danger of from the indiscretion of Servants, whose unusual Method is to awe Children, and keep them in subjection, by telling them of Raw-Head and Bloody Bones. (Adamson 242-43)

He advises parents to reestablish claim over their children’s education for servants fill their heads with false ideas.⁹ Servant/master discourses repeated the practices of seventeenth century patriarchy, a theory that marked children’s obedience as fundamental to sustaining the social contract underpinning political order (Straub 20). “In conjunction with what might be called the paternalization of the master, servants were also represented as “objects of instruction” (Straub 23). Servants inhabit both the role of the parent and child, but as parents, their form of discipline is at odds with Enlightenment values. They implement an “unusual Method” to “keep” children “in subjection” by exploiting their credulity and instilling irrational fear of “Raw-Head and Bloody Bones.” Progressive programs cannot focus on the end (education) without considering the means (reason). Pedagogy must be informed by the philosophy of natural rights and liberties. However, servants’ pedagogy recalls ancient practices of tyranny in controlling subjects through superstition.

Servant Voices in Methodist Discourse

In some eighteenth-century texts, superstition functions as evidence of a spiritual reality. Methodists are often the authors of these texts and write/collect ghost stories in an attempt to renew

a religiosity they felt was absent in the Anglican church (Clery *Supernatural Fiction*). The authors of *Accredited Ghost Stories* and *News from the Invisible World or, Interesting Anecdotes of the Dead* appeal to the “general testimony of mankind” in arguing for the reality of supernatural existence. The editor of *News from the Invisible World* further claims that all ages, “barbarous” and civilized believe in “the souls immortality” (i). Denying the “reality” of ghosts entails denying the “authority of the scriptures,” (vii) that confirm the existence of “apparitions of angels, daemons and departed souls” (vii). Within both compilations one finds John Wesley’s, the leader of Methodist movement, narrative of ghostly haunting.

In “Narrative Drawn Up by Mr John Wesley,” Wesley provides an account of supernatural occurrence that supports a religious and political purpose. As opposed to Addison’s anti-Gothic rhetoric, the text suggests that denying the existence of ghosts weakens one’s spirituality. Yet, Wesley structures servants’ discourse within a hierarchy similar to Addison’s as fear spreads from the lower orders of society to the higher. Servants are the first to see ghosts and spread fear to daughters/wives who then present their testimony to the father. Like the common pattern of authority found in the normative home, all these voices and experiences are rejected by a paternal figure (29). However, if denying the reality of spirits means denying a higher order, then the father in the narrative must be spiritually flawed. This is not the case in Wesley’s narrative. The story focuses less on paternity and more on the spiritual health of wives, daughters, and servants. Those who reject ghosts suffer the fear and terror of experiencing its violent signs while the spiritually sound are immune to both terror and fear. The father has built such immunity. After Wesley’s mother hears a “violent rocking of a cradle,” she “earnestly prayed it might not disturb her in her own chambers...and it never did” (29). In this example, prayer functions as a method for building immunity. Immunity further grants individuals an authorial voice, permitting recirculation of

testimony. The servant who responds, “I defy any thing to fright me...ran away for life” when she hears the ghost “knocking” (28). The sister, Sukey, who claims, “I would fain see what would fright me” cowers in fear, “never ventur[ing] to look up” from her “bed clothes” until the “next morning.” The sister, Molly, who responds in composure: ““it signifies nothing to run away: for whatever it is, it can run faster than me”” can then pass her testimony to her sister, Sukey, whose rejection leads to fearful confinement.

When the news reaches Wesley’s father, he responds to his wife: “these boys and girls fright one another: but you are a woman of sense” (29). Added to this response is “a key to this circumstance” that disrupts marital relations. Wesley’s mother refused to “say Amen” after the “prayer for the King,” and as a result, “his father vowed he would never cohabit with her till she did” (30). After “a twelvemonth,” Wesley’s father returns to “live with her as before,” but “his vow was not forgotten before God” (30). Ultimately, the source of spiritual and domestic illness originates in the mother’s political views. Until she accepts the “Prince of Orange” as king, ghosts continue to haunt her and those who reside beneath her. Spiritual and political belief must operate in cooperation, and immunity is only possible when individuals accept the reality of ghosts in addition to the legitimacy of established political structures.

In the “Apparition seen by Lady Pennyman and Mrs. Atkins,” women assume the role of paternal figures. Lady Pennyman rents a house in France designated the “Haunted House” but denies superstitious reports that are “raised by the imagination of the ignorant respecting every dwelling which is long untenanted, or remarkable for its antiquity” (Jarvis 116). So persuaded are the servants of ghostly haunting that they are “persevered in their resolution of returning to their native country [England]” (117). Nonetheless, Lady Pennyman occupies the house and sleeps in the room believed to be haunted in order “to quiet alarm” (118). On confronting an “iron cage”

left by the “late proprietor” (118), she witnesses a ghostly visitation. The “legend which the servants had collected respecting it” recounts the imprisonment of a “young man of enormous property” at the hands of his usurping uncle. The cage’s initial purpose was to terrorize the child into obedience but was eventually used to instigate his “premature death.” After the “wealth is won,” the child-ghost haunts the tyrannous uncle into experiencing unbearable guilt that leads to the house’s abandonment.

When Lady Pennyman sleeps in the “Cage Room,” she hears the sound of a “measured step...pacing the chamber” but assumes the “alternative” of “strangers...entering the house” (122). To alleviate the alarm that spreads from servants’ voices, she has her friend, Mrs. Atkins, “a woman devoid of every kind of superstitious fear...silence the stories” (129). Mrs. Atkins is proved wrong, sees an apparition, and follows it until it fades into the “earth.” She refuses to sleep in the “ill omened chamber...a second time” (128). Following her servants, Lady Pennyman and Mrs. Atkins desert the haunted house (128). This narrative inverts Addison’s anti-Gothic rhetoric. Paternal verification of servants’ testimony does not lead to rationality and denial but demonstrates upper class’s initial skepticism as flawed. The text also associates bodily confinement with psychological abuse. Lady Pennyman and Mrs. Atkins practice a sort of self-inflicted confinement that conjures forth a ghost from the past who suffers patriarchal abuse. These themes anticipate the female Gothic genre as it is represented in Radcliffe’s novels. Though apparitions are explained away, imprisonment, psychological abuse, and greedy surrogate-fathers figure as central themes.

For employers, servants’ superstitious beliefs are problematic for practical reasons. Such discourse can disrupt domestic productivity as the emotional thrill and fear produced by ghost stories either prevents servants from working or prompts their desertion. The “impression” of permanent scares on the mind further prevents individuals from exercising reason past childhood.

Additionally, superstitious voices circulate and spread at a pace that cannot be controlled or regulated. Yet, as critics note, the upper classes find popular superstition alluring and entertaining. Gothic novels continue to engage these conflicting viewpoints and conversations about the supernatural. The next chapter investigates the female servant's voice and gender as it constitutes a threat to rational discourse. Binaries of high/low class positions in Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* heightens corresponding tensions between public/private and male/female discourse.

CHAPTER 1: THE FEMALE SERVANT FIGURE IN HORACE WALPOLE'S *THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO*

Not only late-eighteenth century writers but also contemporaneous critics categorize Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (*Otranto*) as the first Gothic novel.¹ More recent critics show how *Otranto* emerges as a part of a larger conversation about genre in late-eighteenth century discourse, one in which many writers took part to experiment with the novel in both "theory and practice" (Clery, "Genesis of 'Gothic' Fiction" 22). Still, *Otranto* has gained status as the first novel written in the Gothic mode (Clery, "Genesis of 'Gothic' Fiction" 21). Even its author, Walpole, played a critical role in promoting it as something "new" in the prefaces of the novel. In the "Preface to First Edition," Walpole presents his work as an antiquarian discovery of an authentic medieval romance, only to later, in the "Preface to Second Edition," to admit the deception/hoax of presenting a work of fiction as history. *Otranto* becomes a fabrication, a narrative "attempt to blend two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern" to create a "new species of romance" (Walpole 58). What is interesting about *Otranto* is the way it draws attention to itself, using the prefaces to engage a conversation about commercialism and authorship and the narrative to reflect late eighteenth-century debates about genre. Thus, the novel becomes less about plot and characterization and more about criticism. Not only do the prefaces serve as a space to promote the novel but a character who inhabits the margins of the plotline functions as a mouthpiece for critical discourse. The female servant's voice supports a narrative model of love and desire that challenges the dominant narrative and its promotion of aristocratic ideology. Although *Otranto* is a political narrative about a power-hungry monarch's usurpation, the servant's discourse of love and desire resists this narrative end. Furthermore, superstition does not promote the agenda of the lower classes but is an outlet for expressing divine will. That is, the ominous interruptions of ghostly signs uphold the restoration of legitimate aristocracy. Walpole shows the

narrator as playing god in promoting aristocratic ideology as Gothic order and the female servant as the narrator's ultimate transgressor championing domestic values.

In order to explicate the purpose of the narrative, it is important to treat Walpole's first and second prefaces as a part of its construction. As I have stated, the prefaces provide a space in which Walpole can perform the role of critic. I will provide a detailed analysis of the prefaces, but to summarize, the first preface treats the author as medieval priest, an Enlightenment trope that functions as a sign of cultural regression (I will elaborate this trope in the next section). The second preface rejects this historical perspective for the priest is later revealed as a modern author who exploits print technology for self-serving ends. Thus, the Catholic priest who manipulates his audience through rhetoric in the first preface is revealed as a modern author who exploits readers for profit. The author inhabits and exploits various identities from historian to critic to novelist. Such disguises negate notions of "authentic" authorship, demonstrating the ways authors manipulate texts through the process of textual reproduction and how such reproduction recirculates conversations about both the author and his products.

How is the female servant figure, Bianca, relevant to the conversation about authorship as it is presented in the prefaces? If Walpole demonstrates "modern" authorship as a profit-driven, self-serving endeavor, then the narrative reflects this aesthetic by showing the author as autonomous from morally prescriptive writing, a moral discourse that the servant figure vocalizes. Bianca chants the novelistic ideal of "middle-class" love, one which Samuel Richardson champions in *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*. Her dictum of "love leveling ranks" (56) reiterates the theme of companionate marriage as it is represented in the domestic novel. Nancy Armstrong examines Pamela's moral status in *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, a character who functions as a suitable match for the male aristocrat. Marriage between Pamela and deprived aristocrat, Mr. B.,

alleviates the moral corruption of the aristocracy but maintains social equity that is more than monetary. The male aristocrat profits from the cultural and moral capital from the marriage rather than from patrilineal inheritance. Armstrong continues that the middle-class heroine's penchant for reading male desire gives her a competitive advantage over her aristocratic counterpart, who cannot assess interiority beyond surface presentations. The heroine's effort to deconstruct and dissect male desire underlies one of the political dimensions of the domestic novels. She is more refined in her understanding, and thus, wins the gentleman's heart. Walpole contests this "Richardsonian" model of authorship in *Otranto*: "the chief enemy of fancy in his [Walpole's] view was Samuel Richardson, whose narrative practices had been raised to the level of absolute moral prescription by Samuel Johnson" (Clery, "Genesis of 'Gothic' Fiction" 23). Thus, Bianca's gender and class position, a woman servant claiming the right of love to "level ranks," represents an ideology in competition with the dominant narrative of political restoration. As the plotline unfolds to reveal the crime of usurpation, Bianca's discourse shifts the narrative focus on themes of love and marriage. The supernatural as divine intervention, in reaction, suppresses her voice, reinstating a conservative ideology that ensures the continuation of aristocratic bloodlines rather than the triumph of metaphysical love that transcends class boundaries.

If the novel is about love as morally transcendent above class differences, then *Otranto* negates this ideology to reassert definitions of marriage as sustaining class distinctions. It is worth noting that the female servant's voice, one disadvantaged by class and gender, serves as a mouthpiece for domestic ideology. Though marginal, the servant's voice subverts hierarchical relations using gendered discourse. Just as *Pamela* champions the sexual rights of the working-class woman, so Bianca's creed of "love leveling ranks" threatens aristocratic rule in promoting marriage between a chamberlain's daughter and the true heir to the throne of Otranto. Her voice

expresses narratives that are not about ghosts and superstitions but about the triumph of love over class difference. The pernicious dialogue of the nurse-maid is transgressive not because it is superstitious but because it is gendered.

Establishing Aesthetic and Authorial Autonomy

In his book, James Watt describes Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* as the "first self-described "Gothic romance" and "modern attempt to found a tale of amusing fiction upon the basis of the ancient romances of chivalry" (13). Though modeling "ancient romances of chivalry," David Richter in *The Progress of Romance: Literary Historiography and the Gothic Novel* also explains how *Otranto* follows the "pioneering work of Samuel Richardson's" novels, reiterating the domestic plotline as it sustains an aesthetic that is distinctly Gothic (85). For Emma Clery, the text is not focused on the romantic and domestic but on the economic, disrupting the "harmonious identity of owner and property" that Adam Smith's "invisible hand" regulates in the market system (*Rise of Supernatural Fiction* 74). *Otranto*'s status as a "new species of romance" or a reiteration of a "pioneering work" generated criticism in its own time as well, frustrating attempts to categorize it alongside the eighteenth-century novel (Walpole 58). *The Monthly Review* rejected its identity as a modern performance in posing as a medieval romance.² The "indulgence...afforded to the foibles of a supposed antiquity" is simply just that, an "indulgence" rather than a legitimate aesthetic performance (292). *The Critical Review* finds a "picture com[ing] out of its panel...utter[ing] deep sighs, and heav[ing] its breasts" as not only preposterous but also as an indication that story is a "modern fabrik [sic]" (290).

Though a "fabrik," *Otranto* retains its identity as a "modern" work of fiction. What Walpole's contemporaries contest is his disguise of history as fiction. Generic boundaries not only sustained separations between history and fiction but also between fiction and the capitalist

market. Walpole ostentatiously transgresses these boundaries by employing self-marketing strategies to sell and resell *Otranto* in the prefaces in addition to promoting his private collection of medieval art in the narrative. The Augustan ideal for authorship requires authors to relinquish a certain amount of autonomy over their product in serving social good, but Walpole writes *Otranto* against these moral boundaries, particularly when he reveals himself as the artful priest.³ In doing so, he engages contemporary debates about the nature of creative production, assimilating and parodying the controversy sparked by James Macpherson's publication of the first *Ossian* poems in 1761.⁴ Macpherson made a claim over the Scottish oral tradition in purporting to find original manuscripts of Gaelic poems. This discovery provoked criticism from figures like Samuel Johnson who accused Macpherson of fabricating his discovery. The claim to historicity in finding an "original" document from the past is also a literary trope. The trope of the found manuscript is based in a romance tradition, a tradition marked by its own critical history that contested the romance's claim to historical veracity.⁵ The history of this trope shows that it moves away from functioning as a claim to historical truth to functioning as "parody," satirizing the naive antiquarian's faith and infatuation for objects of antiquity regardless of their real value (McKeon 57). *Otranto* continues this tradition in satirizing Macpherson's claim to authenticity, reiterating discursive attempts to present fiction as history. Walpole employs the supernatural in a similar vein in emphasizing its artificiality. Supernatural agency merely performs a literary function by resolving the predetermined sequence of narrative events to their finality. Thus, *Otranto* reads more like a Greek tragedy than a novel in minimalizing character development and subjectivity.

The influence of stage performance and writing on Walpole's aesthetic remains uncontested, but the extent to which we can judge his claims to an aesthetic as serious is a subject

of debate. Some critics have accounted for Walpole's peculiar display of supernatural objects, severed armory, giant helmets, and walking portraits, as portraying an aristocratic persona of disinterest. Watt argues that *Otranto* resists generic identification as a "tragi-comedy" as scenes of bathos overcome scenes of pathos. David Punter also claims that the supernatural "is intended less to terrify than to interest and amuse by its self-conscious quaintness" (46). Like Punter and Watt, Cynthia Wall reads *Otranto* as a cultural satire that reverses "social and textual expectations" (119) found in the romance, particularly in presenting Theodore as an impotent and "undersized hero" (122). Ruth Mack and Crystal Lake, on the other hand, argue that the supernatural displays Walpole's brand of antiquarianism, which presents the power of historical objects as exhibiting a supernatural agency of their own. Most notably, Clery shows how the supernatural is commodified and "caught up in the machine of economy," as it is "available to be processed, reproduced, packaged, marketed and distributed by the engines of cultural production" (*Rise of Supernatural Fiction* 17). This characterization seems to coincide with Walpole's own literary critique. In his second preface, Walpole states that supernatural agency functions as the "machinery of invention" and terror the "author's principle engine" (60). It fulfils a banal prophecy: "the sins of the fathers are visited on their children to the third and fourth generation" (58). As such, it serves a perfunctory rather than moral purpose.

Characters who attempt to resist the fatality of prophecy are punished: Manfred through the death of his son, Theodore through the death of Matilda, and Bianca through terror and dread. As the usurper of the throne of Otranto, Manfred experiences punishment from supernatural forces that first come in the form of a giant helmet that crushes his son, Conrad. *Otranto* begins by displaying the power and dominance of the supernatural will. That Conrad dies on his wedding day further displays the power of divine will as it terminates the potential for illegitimate rule to

continue through the establishment of progeny. The story proceeds with Manfred's incestuous pursuit of Isabella, Conrad's fiancée. Isabella is also the daughter of Frederic, who is the nearest relative to the original ruler of Otranto, Alphonso the Good. When Frederic returns from the crusades to reclaim the throne, Manfred offers his daughter, Matilda, in exchange for Isabella. Aside from the patriarchal bartering and exchange of women, a plot detail concerning Theodore and Matilda's desire creates a complication in fulfilling the prophecy. Theodore and Matilda fall in love but cannot marry as their marriage taints legitimate royal bloodlines. Manfred is not a legitimate king. Moreover, his lineage is not "noble." His grandfather, a chamberlain, usurped the throne of Otranto. While Bianca encourages their desire, supernatural agency, in response, silences her voice. The narrative moves closer to the finality of prophecy when Manfred accidentally murders his last heir, Matilda. Theodore's nobility is then revealed when the ghost of Alfonso the Good announces him as the rightful heir. Because he is the nearest heir to the throne, Theodore's desire for Matilda is aborted in favor of marriage between Isabella and Theodore, a union that ensures the continuation of pure bloodlines supported by divine will.

Self-promoting Strategies and Assessing Risk in the Print Market

The first preface functions as a space in which Walpole demonstrates a Protestant translation of history, a perspective that associates superstition with Catholic orality. Perhaps, Locke's skepticism toward Catholicism best reflects the Protestant view of religious progress, which considers mediation through a representative of institutionalized religion, a priest, as not only unnecessary but as weakening the individuality needed to reach salvation. In *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*, Locke analogizes priestly voice with superstition and irrationality. "Priestcraft," as he continues, is a deceptive art of persuasion that "keeps men to their superstitions" (245). Rational dissenters in the eighteenth century also

express anti-Catholic sentiment. While Methodists were critical of Catholic practices and beliefs, Anglicans rejected Methodism for its Catholic tendencies.⁶ In his first preface, Walpole displays a Protestant reading of *Otranto*. He disguises his identity as a historian, William Marshall, who comes across a manuscript authored by an unnamed Catholic priest. Measuring the “date of composition” against the date of “impression,” the editor/translator endeavors to identify the cultural and political landscape in which the text emerges by determining the influence of “letters” on the populace. He concludes that the author writes during a time in which “letters” had just begun to “dispel the empire of superstition” (58) and identifies the author of the medieval manuscript as an “artful priest” who “confirm[s] the populace in their ancient errors and superstitions” (58). In the second edition, readers discover that the “artful priest” and personage of William Marshall are Walpole’s fabrications. When he reveals the hoax, the superstitious language of papal traditions becomes the language of fictional forgery and authorial deception becomes a product of textual forging.

The prefaces further problematize late eighteenth-century views of modern authorship. Though Marshall claims that identifying an author’s “motives” results in “mere conjecture,” Walpole writes with the purpose of relating his motives for playing an imposture: “the favorable manner in which [his novel] had been received by the public...call[ed] upon the author to explain the grounds on which he composed it” (59). Not only does he propose to do what his translator said was impossible, reveal an author’s motive, but he displays authorial identity as a product of public response. “Unless better judges should pronounce that he might own it [*Otranto*] without a blush,” he had no intention of revealing his disguise. Walpole exploits the readers’ credulity by faking identities and intentions just as the “artful priest...avail[s] himself of his abilities as an author to confirm the populace in their ancient errors and superstition” (59). Marshall sees the

priest's manuscript as "enslave[ing] a hundred vulgar minds beyond half the books of controversy that have been written from the days of Luther to the present hour," but in this statement, Walpole is gesturing at the potential of his own writing to deceive readers. Such deceit is not just playful but purposeful in its display of counter-enlightenment rhetoric. The optimistic portrait of literacy and learning as progress collapses. Walpole demonstrates the artificiality of authenticity in a post-Catholic age that continues rather than "dispel[s] the empire of superstition." As Walpole shows, speech and rhetoric, tools of a scribal/oral culture, spread ideology through indoctrination, but modern authorial practices are just as pernicious in exploiting the illusion of authenticity.

Once the author finds that the market responds positively to his product, the second preface demonstrates his safe display of identity. The second preface has many functions: it shows readers how to read the novel, it is an apology for presenting fiction as a historical find, but more importantly, it functions as a space for displaying authorial identity as a product of the market. The author apologizes for his deceit and admits that what made him "blush" to reveal his identity is the attempt at doing something new by incorporating something old, of blending the "probable" with "improbable" in fiction: "it is fit that he should ask pardon of his readers for having offered his work to them under the borrowed personage of a translator. As diffidence of his own abilities and the novelty of the attempt, were the sole inducements to assume the disguise." As he apologizes, he reveals that his choices as a writer respond to public reception rather than personal aesthetic for a disguise allows him to manage the risk of presenting a "novel" product. Such imposture functions as a strategy for assessing the risks of artistic production, of publishing an innovative product in a market accustomed to the status quo. Blending the old romance with the new novel while asserting a new aesthetic are risky choices in a market that favors realism in the novel, or representations of the "probable" and everyday in fiction. However, a "favorable" reception of *Otranto* encourages

the author to reveal the hoax when fear of public censure no longer threatens his reputation: “he resigned the performance to the impartial judgement [sic] of the public; determined to let it perish in obscurity, if disproved; nor meaning to avow such a rife, unless better judges should pronounce that he might own it without blush” (60). Imposture becomes a technique for managing the risks of publishing an untested product, safeguarding the author’s true intentions. Ultimately, public response and market behavior determine authorial claim and ownership of a product.

Walpole also relates the ways authors exploit print technology by reproducing genres and their reading experiences. History turns into criticism as the editor/translator of the first preface becomes the critic/author in the second. A historical find, the medieval manuscript, postures as a new genre prefaced by an aesthetic method for reading the novel. Walpole later skillfully remarketed *Otranto* when adapting it for the stage in *The Mysterious Mother*. Furthermore, *Otranto* constructed a virtual experience for visitors of Strawberry Hill. Strawberry Hill reiterates the reading experience of *Otranto* as a virtual experience. It returns readers to *Otranto*, for readers experience the narrative in their exhibition of the museum just as they experience the museum in the narrative. Such textual reproductions continue to promote Walpole’s authorial persona and cultural productions.

The Nurse-maid’s Tales

The narrative engages aesthetic tensions between banality/morality, public/private, and male/female discourse. The best example is found in silencing Bianca’s language of desire and love, particularly when it transgresses class boundaries. Her agenda threatens the dominant narrative that solidifies noble blood through aristocratic marriage, which is necessary for the restoration of legitimate monarchical rule. In his preface to the second edition, Walpole resists the moral and aesthetic dictum of the novel that privileges the “common” and “everyday” (Walpole

“Preface to First Edition). Because this criticism references the precedent Richardson’s novels create in valuing female discourse, sexuality, and marriage as primary subjects of the novel, the conflict between Bianca’s language and supernatural/prophetic agency can be examined as a subtext for relating the discursive competition between the Gothic and domestic modes of writing.

Bianca states that “If love levels ranks, it raises them too” (56). She initiates desire between a peasant and aristocrat in order to materialize an ideal of social parity through marriage. Love not only “levels” class differences but enables social mobility. As a nursemaid and maternal figure, Bianca’s influence over Matilda’s sexuality is problematic. Matilda resists her language in labeling it “idling babbling humour” (52) but Bianca’s “womanish...naiveté” (59) constitutes a serious threat to established social structures. Her dialogue shifts narrative focus from public to private matters. Even Matilda urges her to end talk of matrimony: “Think of all that has happened today, and tell me, if there are no misfortunes but what love causes” (56). The subject of the domestic novel, of desire, sexuality, and love are made insular within the global context of the narrative’s more valid public concern of political usurpation.

Armstrong continues that the middle-class heroine’s penchant for reading male desire gives her a competitive advantage over her aristocratic counterpart, who cannot read desire beyond surface representations.⁷ The heroine’s effort to deconstruct and dissect male desire underlies one of the political dimensions of the domestic novel. She is more refined in her reading than her competitor, and thus, wins the gentleman’s heart. Bianca exhibits this female attribute in analyzing Theodore’s desire for Matilda’s consideration, but her reading of male desire is written as an intrusion and exploitation of privacy. It turns private matters of the heart into public objects of consumption. When first confronting Theodore, Bianca is anxious to examine the state of his heart. She reads his melancholy as resulting from a lost love, a subject she further explores to indulge

her curiosity. Matilda resists her intrusion, expressing a critique contemporary readers would have been familiar with: “What right have we to pry into the secrets of this young man’s heart?” He seems virtuous and frank, and tells us he is unhappy. Are those circumstances that authorise us to make a property of him? How are we entitled to his confidence?” (55). As the moral and rational counterpart, Matilda criticizes her for violating individual privacy in addition to objectifying desire. Female discourse becomes transgressive, an exploitation of human relations and sexuality that is consumed for entertainment and pleasure.

Bianca also instigates sexual rivalry between her mistresses. She persuades Matilda that Isabella and Theodore conspire to ensure Isabella’s escape from the castle because they are in love. She continues to read other characters’ desire to persuade Matilda, suggesting that Isabella withholds information about Theodore because she is invested in his status as a “Prince in disguise.” Theodore’s disguise as a prince is cultural and monetary capital Bianca believes Matilda should appropriate before Isabella. In this instance, Bianca makes sexual rivalry a competition over status. If Matilda marries a prince, then love does not need to “level ranks” and can enrich a marriage without degrading social positions. However, the peasant, Theodore, who courts the heiress is the true heir courting a servant’s daughter. Although Bianca is portrayed as ignorant of Theodore’s origins, it is the mystery surrounding his identity that most interests her. Her intimacy with her mistresses, Isabella and Matilda, and the appearance of a “Prince” provide opportunities to instigate sexual conflict and discourse.

Supernatural forces often terminate Bianca’s effort to shift the narrative focus on Matilda’s sexuality. When she presses Matilda to marry, a terrible “noise” (49) interrupts her speech, leading her to ask for forgiveness from St. Nicholas for “talk[ing] of matrimony” (49). Matilda further dismisses Bianca’s fear and appeals to her reason but it only makes Bianca reassert expressive

authority as she responds, “it is no sin to talk of matrimony” (49). Ultimately, both Matilda and Bianca are silenced for engaging domestic subjects as their conversation about Theodore make them forget the public chaos that follows Conrad’s death. When Matilda characterizes Bianca’s interpretation of Isabella’s desire for Theodore as “idle babbling humour” (52) that Isabella “perhaps has now and then encouraged ...to divert melancholy, and enliven the solitude in which [her] father keeps [them]” –Matilda is cut off by another “voice” (52). The point at which Matilda is cut off by the supernatural is strategically positioned to reassert the authority of divine agency. Anxiety about women’s use of free time made novel-reading problematic but was also a subject that the novel engaged and attempted to alleviate (Armstrong). Matilda views Bianca’s “talk of matrimony” as only engaging Isabella’s attention when she felt oppressed by solitude. Bianca’s “talk” wastes time and transgresses female productivity. In some ways, she represents the pernicious novel-writer who diverts women’s attention from political/public issues to “enliven” their private fantasies of love and marriage.

Because Bianca’s voice asserts domestic values, domesticity becomes a vulgar language ingrained in the thought-patterns of inferior classes. As a servant and woman prone to “babbling,” her ideals about love function as humorous expressions that are neither serious nor relevant to the political structure of the narrative. While Bianca is ascribed to the category of the vulgar through her gender and class position, Theodore is characterized as inherently noble through his exercise of chivalric behavior. Bianca mouths creeds of love and desire that will never materialize in marriage. Theodore asserts no political ambition but practices chivalry when protecting innocent victims like Isabella from tyranny. Under the Gothic configuration, Theodore is noble and Manfred, the current ruler, is tyrannous because the former is the legitimate heir to the throne while the latter is its usurper. Theodore’s inherent nobility promotes aristocratic ideology and its rights

over government rule. As a character, he represents the triumph of principles found in a Gothic narrative, the right of divine will in terminating illegitimacy. His virtue and purpose does not position him as an attractive suitor to Matilda as courting is a subject the novel denies. Instead, it justifies his identity as a legitimate ruler. Bianca's language contradicts and truncates the order of divine prophecy, but Theodore's body and voice serve it. When he cries out in a crowd the similarity between the helmet that crushes Conrad and the helmet adorning the statue of Alfonso the Good, his voice does so in narrative harmony with an event that secures him as Alfonso the Good's successor.⁸ His observation is also the only rational voice in a mob bent on "bewildered reasoning" (10). However, his empiricism, like his chivalrous desire, also restricts his agency. Like Matilda, his skeptical response to the supernatural functions as sign of his noble status.

Bianca seeks to divulge the secret desires of his heart, displaying his interiority for public consumption, but Walpole ensures that his desire for Matilda remains subordinate to divine will. Under the domestic rubric of the novel, Theodore's nobility is a good match for Matilda's moral intelligence. However, Walpole shows that the purpose of the novel is to restore aristocratic rule through supernatural intervention. By the end, the novel punishes the usurpation of noble birth and terminates the potential of domestic ideology to impede the restoration of rightful rule. Matilda's death puts an end to Bianca's language of desire. Such a configuration allows Walpole to identify the domestic novel as an object/relic of the past that is both lost and lamented in the death of a plotline that gives expression to middle-class love.

Female desire seems to be transgressive to the point of transforming the thematic and generic dimensions of the novel. That it is expressed through the servant's voice is telling for it engages domestic discourse. Readers discover by the novel's conclusion that Matilda is a chamberlain's daughter, and Matilda dies before she learns of her origins. The only person who

encourages Matilda's desire is Bianca, a nurse-maid who believes that love erases class differences. Her voice resists aristocratic ideology on multiple levels in first encouraging love between a princess and peasant and then between a servant's daughter and prince. In the prefaces, Walpole shows how modern authors perpetuate the falsehoods originally associated with medieval Catholicism, but in the narrative, the language of desire as false belief is represented in the servant's voice. By privileging supernatural authority, Walpole terminates the domestic plotline and all possibility of social leveling and equity through marriage. In doing so, he asserts a level of aesthetic autonomy that resists Richardsonian constructions of the novel as a demonstration of social parity rather than as the preservation of status and lineage.

CHAPTER 2: THE “CONTAGION” OF “RIDICULOUS SUPERSTITION”: SERVANT VOICES IN ANN RADCLIFE’S *THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO* AND *ROMANCE OF THE FOREST*

It is to great purpose, indeed, that we have forbidden our servants from telling children stories of ghosts and hobgoblins, if we cannot put a novel into their hands which is not filled with monsters of the imagination, more frightful than are to be found in Glanvil, the famous bug-a-boo of our forefathers.

-Anonymous author, “Terrorist Novel Writing”¹

Appearing in the late eighteenth-century’s *Spirit of the Public Journals*, “Terrorist Novel Writing” reiterates critical agitation toward what it views as the increasing quantity and depreciating quality of Gothic novels. Like many reviews of the time, the essay ridicules the Gothic novel’s appeal to the weaker faculty of emotion. It offers further satirical relief in providing female readers a “recipe” for writing a formulaic tale stretched into three gratuitous volumes (183). In the home, servant voices are as pernicious as the Gothic stories children consume from texts like Joseph Glanvill’s (“Glanvil”) *Sadducismus Triumphatus*, a seventeenth-century collection of folklore compiled to support belief in supernatural existence (Clery *Rise of Supernatural Fiction*, 19). In order to alleviate the harmful effects of reading and hearing Gothic stories, the author writes a prescription similar to the one imposed on contemporary women readers.² However, what is distinct about this remedy is its emphasis on the concomitant regulation of servant voices and children’s reading. Preventing servants from “telling children stories of ghosts and hobgoblins” becomes as necessary as limiting children’s access to Gothic material. The juxtaposition of these two instructive codes gestures at the anxiety the bourgeoisie display toward lower-class voices. It is important to note that the author’s use of the pronoun “their” in the phrase “if we cannot put a novel into their hands which is not filled with monsters of the imagination” is ambiguous. “Their” could refer to children’s or servants’ “hands.” However, my argument focuses on critics’ anxiety

toward contact between social classes in the home – the need for regulating gothic stories that spread through both oral and textual practices.

Extensive discussion has been devoted to examining representations of the nuclear family and the domestic household in Gothic texts, but a gap remains in focusing on anxieties the middle-class exhibit toward lower-class voices. For instance, Ellis discusses the Gothic as subverting rational domesticity, investigating the “middle-class idealization of the home” as safe-haven for escaping the “fallen world of work” (ix). Mary Poovey examines the ideology of sensibility in “Ideology and the *Mysteries of Udolpho*” as a product of bourgeois individualism that fails in its paradoxical restriction and release of power to women, a problematic substitute for the declining hegemony of paternalistic society (310). In *Mothers of the Nation: Women’s Political Writing in England, 1780-1830*, Ann Mellor elaborates the domestication of the sublime as an aesthetic experience moving from nature to the home while in *Reading in Britain, 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation*, Jacqueline Pearson discusses women’s private and subversive reading practices.

Among the sublime emotions that Gothic stories evoke, anti-Gothic critics interpret fear as particularly problematic in its ability to spread across classes. As discussed in the introduction, Addison provides a remedy for regulating the circulation and production of Gothic voices, a prescription that requires paternal regulation of not only children’s exposure to Gothic texts but also servants’ production. This chapter shows how Ann Radcliffe subverts Addison’s prescription for regulating Gothic voices. In her two most popular novels, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Romance of the Forest*, she demonstrates the ways in which irrational fear spreads from a top-down hierarchy of power relations rather than a bottom-up structure. “Vulgar” voices as superstitious voices do not spread fear to susceptible heroines but illustrate, through the metaphor of ghostly haunting in the Gothic tale, the ways in which fear is a construct of patriarchal discourse.

In Radcliffe's novels, servants' narratives, reports, and testimonies function as a site for both investigating and discrediting the existence of the supernatural. Watt claims that Radcliffe's "heroes and heroines are not immune from superstition [when she] project[s] credulity onto domestics and servants" (115). The supernatural "draw[s] attention to the parallel between credulity or superstition and revolutionary idealism...equating rationalizing explanation with a recovery of the rule of law" (116). While explaining the supernatural away appeases contemporary, conservative views and antirevolutionary sentiment, Radcliffe, as I later show, legitimates superstition. Critics endeavor to position her writing on the spectrum of conservative/radical politics, accounting the ways in which she wavers from critiquing marriage and domesticity to complacently accepting it.³ However, it is difficult to assess Radcliffe's political identity in her novels. For instance, privileging servant voices can position her closer toward the radical end of the political spectrum. On the other hand, servant voices inhabit the marginal positions of the text. Their identities might simply serve a generic purpose in providing comic relief or reflecting irrationality. Yet, these voices resist the dominant narrative of patriarchal ridicule and ideology of feminine susceptibility. They encourage an alternative reading of the supernatural that helps the heroine deconstruct her surroundings to identify the hegemonic structures that suppress her identity. In order to resist patriarchal discourse, enforced as the law of self-regulation, the heroine must validate servants' voices. Such a reading positions Radcliffe's novels as subversive and reactionary.

Patriarchy as Superstition in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

Radcliffe's villains are generally known for abusing their wives and daughters but Montoni, *Udolpho*'s patriarch, is both a villain and a critic. He reiterates the critique of the impressionable and emotional woman reader, berating Emily for "yielding to fancies, and to a

sensibility...[that] is only a weakness” (219). Montoni is not the only paternal figure who comments on the “dangers of sensibility.” Moral exemplars like Emily’s father, St. Aubert, and the aristocrat Count de Villefort also attempt to regulate Emily’s emotions. Emily remains silent on the topic of ghosts for “fear of giving pain to the Count, and the dread of his ridicule, restrained her” (550). She also fears the count’s disapproval of her melancholic response to failed love and dread[s] his “ridicule” in “determin[ing]” to remain “silen[t]” (550). Before this episode, St. Aubert urges Emily on his deathbed to take control of her feelings as he will no longer be able to guide her.

Self-restraint is executed as adherence to paternal law that monitors displays of excessive sensibility. As Mary Poovey claims, sensibility “operates in an environment regulated by a moral authority” (319). The imagination, as she correctly puts it, “is not inherently moral...[but] merely susceptible” (320), requiring paternal regulation to prevent transgression. Radcliffe states that “Though she [Emily] knew that neither Morano’s [her suitor’s] solicitation, nor Montoni’s commands had lawful power to enforce her obedience, she regarded both with a superstitious dread, that they would finally prevail” (200). As neither male figures possess “lawful power,” to “enforce her obedience,” there is no reason why Emily should fear male power. Yet, she continues for most of the novel to “regard” it with “superstitious dread,” fearing “figures” of authority that do not exist. “Superstition dread” of patriarchy is the operating illusion in the narrative, one grounded in irrational fear rather than a sound reality. Radcliffe inverts discursive categories of credulity/irrationality, skepticism/rationality for it is the heroine’s acceptance of patriarchal authority, rather than superstition, that inhibits her understanding. Hierarchical relations between father-daughter-servant are also inverted as the source of truth is found in servant’s discourse rather than paternal law. Yet, Emily is trapped. Because patriarchal rhetoric equates rationality with the

skeptical rejection of superstition, she cannot give credence to servants' tales and maintain respectability at the same time.

In her third volume of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Radcliffe displays patriarchal ridicule of servants' belief in ghostly haunting. Displeased by servants' talk of ghosts and the chateau "being haunted," Count de Villefort, the paternal figure in the last volume, "forbade any person to repeat it, on pain of punishment" (538). That patriarchal "punishment" remains vague is telling for it induces the same environment of fear of the unknown as the Gothic and superstitious. Furthermore, Emily has internalized patriarchal ridicule, which characterizes her femininity as "romantic illusions of sentiment," to the point of perpetual self-doubt (187). She realizes that "Montoni's conduct had not been the consequence of mistake, but of design," but continues to fear him. Late in the narrative, she "for the first time...despised the authority, which, till, now she had only feared" (382), yet her first act of resistance is also a final act of desperation that attempts to save her aunt's life. Patriarchal law as "rational conduct" amounts to censorship in the form of suppressing not only the heroine's voice but also voices disadvantaged by class (219). Annette, Emily's servant, must repress her emotions, which constitute a desire to share ghost stories. "Conceal[ing] it, was a severe punishment" but revealing it unleashed a greater punishment "she [Annette] feared to incur" (223). When Emily perceives that Annette "has infected her with her own terrors" (227), she self-regulates her desire to hear Gothic tales. Annette brings "reports" of ghosts and the mysterious black veil, igniting Emily's curiosity while simultaneously alerting her to the "contagion" of "ridiculous superstition" (227). Reiterating her own fear of Montoni's ridicule, Emily urges Annette to maintain silence as she would "not suffer Signor Montoni to hear of these weak fears" (220). As fear of patriarchal authority spreads from the higher orders to the lower, it is less contact with servants that makes Emily susceptible to irrationality and more her

conflation of Montoni's authority. However, Montoni is successful in regulating Emily's conduct for Emily perpetually fears transgressing paternal law. Not only that but she censors Annette's voice in reinforcing the consequences of paternal disobedience. The restraint which Emily inflicts on herself and then enforces on others sustains patriarchal control in the household. Its distributive result constitutes a mechanism of control that maintains the traditional familial hierarchy in regulating those disadvantaged by not only gender but also by class.

The Maid's and Housekeeper's Tales

When Emily and Annette engage in conversation, it is a transgressive performance conducted in "great secrec[y]" (238). We learn from Annette that Montoni occupies a precarious position as the nearest male relative to the previous owner and mistress of Udolpho, Signora Laurentini. The law declares him the master of Udolpho when Signora Laurentini mysteriously disappears. On possession of Udolpho, Montoni makes it a safe haven for criminals as the captain of a notorious group of banditti, the Condottieri (227). Emily and her aunt, who is also Montoni's wife, are ignorant of Montoni's criminal identity, and thus, blindly obey his authority. Radcliffe further demonstrates the ways in which fear originates in patriarchal authority as a desperate attempt to maintain power on a precarious foundation of illegitimacy. Emily's internal conflict involves identifying Montoni's legitimacy as owner of Udolpho, a mystery that can be resolved if Emily gives credence to Annette's voice. Annette's "love [of] the marvelous" (223) stimulates a desire to reveal the secrets underlying the mysteries of the castle, secrets she is not authorized to disclose but that she continues to narrate as "wonderful stor[ies]" (224). When Emily asks Annette, "What wonderful story have you now to tell?" (236), readers discover the past through her voice. She relates the tale of Signora Laurentini's disappearance and ghostly reappearance by validating servants' testimonial reports. We later learn that Signora Laurentini is not dead but remains

unidentified in a covenant. Yet, Annette's Gothic tale embeds hidden meanings that implicates Montoni in the crime of usurpation. She states that "the Signor...swore that the first man, who repeated such nonsense [of ghosts], should be thrown into the dungeon under the east turret. This was a hard punishment too, for only talking nonsense, as he called it, but I dare say he had other reasons for calling it so, than you have, ma'am" (392). In this example, she identifies a distinction between Montoni and Emily's response to the supernatural: Montoni rejects the ghost of Signora Laurentini for self-serving ends, while Emily does so to exercise rationality. She again hints, "some people say that he [Montoni] has lost his riches, as well as his gratitude" (279). Annette attacks Montoni's character, but Emily can only perceive her as loquacious. Even though Annette tells Emily that Montoni "has other reasons" for rejecting ghosts that recall the memory of Signora Laurentini but Emily fails to grasp her hidden meaning as she is "too much absorbed in thought to hear what [Annette] said" (279).

It is telling that the principle of self-regulation as patriarchal law is effective; yet, Emily's "injunctions to Annette," to maintain silence on the topic of the supernatural "were ineffectual" Annette's loquaciousness identifies her as "distinguished figure" who "related stories of ghosts," a voice that further represents the author's persona (538). Sandro Jung, one of the few scholars to address servant identity in Gothic novels, analyzes Annette. He argues that "loquacious belief in superstition" functions as comedic language "resist[ing] disenchantment and rationalist questioning" (Jung 1). Annette's character "represents a negative model" of rationality and in her "unreflective belief in sensationalism and the supernatural," she supplies Emily with a practical education by confronting her with the dangers of excess directly" (Jung 3). Although Annette can function as a "negative role model" that Radcliffe employs to critique excessive sensibility, she can also function as a model of feminine subversiveness. As demonstrated, Annette's

loquaciousness is not irrational but essential to unraveling the mystery on which the Gothic tale depends.

Servants such as Annette and Dorothee orate tales of ghostly haunting as a metaphor for female victimization, often reiterating Emily's suffering at the hands of patriarchal abuse. According to Emily, Annette's weakness involves believing in anything she hears. However, Annette accuses Emily of being "as bad as the Signor himself" for "believ[ing] in nothing" (392). As Annette rejects both Montoni and Emily's rational skepticism, we see that the source of danger in the text lies in "believ[ing] in nothing" rather than believing in everything. Through Annette, we determine both Montoni's beliefs and the motivations underlying them. Annette tells Emily that the "strange story" of Signora Laurentini "is all that makes me care about this old castle, though it makes me thrill all over, as it were, whenever I think of it" (278). Emily repeats the voice of the dismissive critic: "Yes, Annette, you love the wonderful; but do you know, that, unless you guard against this inclination, it will lead you to into all the misery of superstition" (277). Annette responds, "Dear, ma'amselle, there is nothing surprising in that; we had all a little more *curiousness* [original italics] than you had" (279). Annette is weary of Emily's moral constancy and defies the law of rational conduct as repressive silence. When curiosity leads to discourse, she indulges both performances. Emily's self-regulation, on the other hand, results in a loss of identity in reiterating and practicing codes of conduct.

When she leaves Udolpho, Emily confronts another woman servant, Dorothee, who brings closure to the mystery surrounding Annette's tale of Signora Laurentini's disappearance. Both stories embody Emily's victimization at the hands of paternal abuse. Dorothee's voice functions as the missing piece of evidence connecting Emily's father to her aunt, the Marchioness de Villeroi. Signora Laurentini confines herself to a convent because she has engaged in illicit

desire for the Marchioness's husband, who conspires with Laurentini to murder the Marchioness. Dorothee is the "old housekeeper" of the late count and countess. Like Annette, she believes her late mistress haunts the chateau when her "spirit" pours forth lamentations in the form of music, music that Emily hears when her father dies and that is explained away when Radcliffe reveals its source as Signora Laurentini. Signora Laurentini is lamenting her sins in a covenant, reverberating the story of patriarchal abuse. As all the characters' histories resound in the narrative structure through the ghost story, Radcliffe validates the ghost as a remnant of an untold testament to female victimization. Dorothee is wrong in believing in spirits but correct in suspecting that Emily's aunt was murdered by her husband. Annette's story of Signora Laurentini's ghost is inaccurate but true in revealing Montoni's usurpation of an aristocratic women's property.

In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, servants' voices implicate their master's crimes through reports of unsettled ghosts. In *Romance of the Forest*, multiple fabrications of the story underlying the origins of a haunted abbey conceal patriarchal crimes. As the novel contains fictions of a mystery underlying Adeline's birth, readers are left to uncover the layers surrounding each fiction, until they reach the center on which the novel's crime is based. During this process, Adeline, the heroine, refines her reading of the Gothic tale. Unlike Emily, she resists two aristocratic patriarchs, both her surrogate father, La Motte, and her uncle, the Marquis. She questions their hegemonic claim over country people's report, which hints at the occurrence of Adeline's father's unfair imprisonment and murder. Through Adeline's reading experience, we identify readings of the supernatural motivated by patriarchal agendas that suggest occurrence of fratricide. Adeline must do so in the most hostile circumstances and under the persistent ridicule from her surrogate father, La Motte, who, like Montoni, critiques Adeline as a method of control.

Patriarchal Hegemony over the Country People's Report, or Gothic Tale

Adeline's aristocratic counterparts dismiss lower-class voices while she reads the content of supernatural reports beyond their surface implications. The Marquis and overarching patriarch of the story initiates the first lie concealing his crime of fratricide. He murders his brother, Henry de Montalt, or Adeline's father. The Marquis spares the life of Montalt's servant so the servant can spread a false account of his master's death. Montalt's servant assumes that his master was murdered by banditti. The farmer who finds Montalt's servant wounded and bound by the Marquis's men recirculates the servant's account. Because the abbey is known to attract lawlessness, both the farmer and servant's accounts are given credence. Afterward La Motte, the patriarch under the Marquis's authority, will further bury the truth by circulating lies, producing variations of the same story that readers must deconstruct to identify the mystery of Adeline's birth origins.

The intimate association between the servant and country people's empirical knowledge in decoding and delivering information is suggestive of a social hierarchy determining the novel's narrative structure. The source of information begins with country people's reports and is then transferred to servants in order to convey information to their masters. As in *Udolpho*, Radcliffe subverts normative hierarchal structures by binding servants and country people's knowledge with the heroine's. The story progresses only when Adeline gives credence to country people's beliefs in the supernatural. Until then, the initial account of death through lawlessness as established by the Marquis is accepted as the truth.

As a reader of the report, Adeline must navigate the intricate web of lies the patriarchs perpetuate to mask their crimes. The first volume begins the process of information exchange and interpretation from the lower classes to higher. Peter, who is La Motte's servant, goes to town,

seeks information, and reports it to La Motte. From this point forward, Adeline must decode the metaphorical framework of the Gothic mystery from the first source of knowledge that comes from lower classes. Adeline's fear originates in the country people's belief that an evil entity surrounds and inhabits the Abbey. The reports are legitimate as we later encounter textual proof of fratricide to corroborate testimonial proof. Adeline finds her father's diary in the abbey, which sketches his imprisonment and death.

Though the Marquis endeavors to mask his crime by concealing his brother's body, "the common people" (31) continue to question the truth-value of this story. Of the account he brings back, Peter explains,

It was reported, that some person was, soon after it came to the present possessor, brought secretly to the abbey and confined in these apartments; who, or what he was, had never been conjectured, and what became of him nobody knew...and though this report had been ridiculed by sensible persons as the idle superstition of ignorance, it had fastened so strongly upon the minds of the common people, that for the last seventeen years none of the peasantry had ventured to approach the spot" (31).

As it turns out, the peasants' belief in the abbey's haunted history contains truth-value whereas the individuals who ridicule it "as idle superstition" (31) are inaccurate in their assessment of the past. As the abbey harbors a hideous crime, hegemony over its interpretation results in a power struggle over the meaning underlying its mysterious history. La Motte and the Marquis suppress reports that hint at the occurrence of confinement, representing them as irrational for their vulgar/Gothic content. When Adeline enters the abbey, she undergoes a series of trials in which she must not only validate lower-class belief in the evil underlying the abbey's haunted past but must also combat La Motte's ridicule of her response to Gothic/supernatural.

Exposing the Patriarch's Hidden Agenda

La Motte functions as the patriarch in second command for he is under the control of the Marquis' will, consenting to the Marquis' command to abduct Adeline in exchange for seeking

refuge in his abbey. He dismisses Peter's report because it fails to "persuade his family to reside" in the abbey, a safe haven from the law and his creditors. However, La Motte's encounter with the "conditions of the chambers that opened from the tower above stairs. The remains of furniture, of which the other apartments were void – the solitary bed – the number and connection of the rooms, [are] circumstances that united to confirm his opinion" that country people's report is partially accurate (31). The interpretations the report stimulates are both classed and gendered. Denying its legitimacy involves dismissing the common people as "vulgar" and uneducated while rejecting Adeline's interpretation entails belittling her feminine credulity. This conflict is represented in conversations that forward patriarchal discourse and resistance to its rhetoric. As skeptical critics, La Motte and Louis, his son, privilege sense-experience over circulated reports that constitute the "country people[']s" communal fear. He continues,

‘They [country people] further said...that the spectre of the deceased had ever since watched nightly among the ruins: and to make the story more wonderful, for the marvelous is the delight of the vulgar, they added, that there was a certain part of the ruin, from whence no person that had dared to explore it, had ever returned. Thus people, who had few objects of real interest to engage their thoughts, conjure up for themselves imaginary ones’ (70).

Radcliffe constructs a space for subverting critical discourse that labels Gothic consumers as vulgar and irrational. Though the report lacks empirical evidence through eyewitness testimony, the reader learns of its validity through Adeline's contact with material/textual evidence, evidence that possesses more legal weight than testimonial expression. Her father's manuscript is presented as evidence of the torture instigated by human cruelty while communal awareness of such a reality preserves the story evidenced by the material text. Such juxtaposition of textual evidence and its interpretation intends to reinforce cultural value for Gothic texts.

Adeline's commentary interjects La Motte and Louis's conversation in an attempt to validate lower-class voices. La Motte asks Louis,

‘And what were the reasons,’ said he, at length awaking from his reverie, ‘they pretend to assign, for believing the person confined here was murdered?’

‘They did not use a term so positive as that,’ replied Louis

‘True...they only said he came unfairly to his end.’

‘That is a nice distinction’ (69).

The conflict La Motte is often confronted with involves one of self-preservation and concealment from the law. Adeline’s interjection highlighting the “distinction” of her father “unfairly” coming “to his end” and La Motte’s interpretation of this detail as “murder” points to the state of events as they truly occur. Her father was confined until he died rather than murdered through an act of violence. Louis tells La Motte that the country people do not use a “positive term” such as murder, and Adeline gives credence to their description. She identifies fact from fiction in the report, underscoring the “distinction” the report makes between murder and imprisonment. Death resulting from unfair imprisonment is a form of murder that the report alludes to and one that Adeline highlights as a crucial element to evaluating truth in the tale of ghostly haunting.

Adeline not only reads the report but also the interior state motivating human action. She observes inconsistencies in La Motte’s behavior after he meets the Marquis. The Marquis leaves La Motte feeling “melancholy” as he threatens to turn him in to the law unless La Motte deceives Adeline and allows the Marquis to abduct and rape her. Unaware of their plans, Adeline still apprehends danger and questions both of their intentions. She wonders why La Motte “praises” the Marquis even though he is oppressed by his company. Adeline’s reading of La Motte’s internal conflict allows her to draw further connections between the “injurious” reports concerning the Marquis and the Marquis’s power over La Motte. As La Motte suppresses the narrative of the report, Adeline combats his attempt at sustaining interpretive authority:

Adeline, however, ventured to inquire, whether it was the present Marquis of whom those injurious reports had been raised. La Motte answered her with a smile of ridicule; ‘Stories of ghosts and goblins have always been admired and cherished by the vulgar,’ said he. ‘I am inclined to rely upon my own experience, at least as much as

upon the accounts of these peasants. If you have any thing to corroborate these accounts, pray inform me of it, that I may establish my faith' (98).

In resisting La Motte's interpretation, Adeline's risks defying his authority, and as a result, losing his protection. She must negotiate her position as orphan and young woman by offering another form of evidence in support of her claim. She again points to the unfair death and alleged reason for the abbey's abandonment as arising from the Marquis's order to confine and imprison someone.

She responds,

'You mistake me, Sir...it was not concerning supernatural agency that I would inquire: I alluded to a different part of the report, which hinted, that some person had been confined here, by the order of the Marquis, who was said to have died unfairly. This was alledged [sic] as a reason for the Marquis's having abandoned the abbey. (99)

Adeline finds herself in a compromising position. La Motte shames her for giving credence to the report, claiming that her intellect is equivalent to a "simpleton" who indulges in the excitement and wonder of supernatural tales. When Adeline resists La Motte's commands to marry the Marquis, La Motte ridicules and characterizes her resistance as "heroism of romance" (136). His criticism attacks Adeline's gender as a susceptible reader of not only the Gothic but also the romantic. As proof of her apprehensions regarding the Marquis, Adeline presents her father's diary. He states that the diary "appears to exhibit a strange romantic story" that "suffers its terrors to press your imagination" (144). The metaphor of the diary as a Gothic romance emphasizes the gender politics of genre. Critics disparage the Gothic novel for its continuation of a romance tradition believed to indulge the emotions and imagination. Samuel Johnson, in particular, emphasizes the novel as a "modern" genre in its promotion of moral didacticism, a model that alleviates the cultural effects of romance-reading.⁴ In her novel, Radcliffe resists these critiques by legitimating the heroine's reading of the Gothic manuscript. Emotions of terror and suspense do not cloud the heroine's judgment but lead to productive reading practices allowing her to

combat patriarchal villainy. The final act of resistance to patriarchal readings of Gothic texts involves legitimating lower classes. Neither Adeline nor Emily “catch” the contagion of irrationality from contact with servants and country people. Lower-class voices and the Gothic tales they circulate are emblematic of the Gothic’s value as an aesthetic, the telling of the ghost story as a means of uncovering abuse of power that suppresses voices disadvantaged by class and gender.

Radcliffe displays an aesthetic that is not simply dominated by emotions but is informed by an interpretative process. Eighteenth-century critics disapprove mixing genres in fiction, that is history and romance, but Radcliffe constructs a subtext for relating the benefits of reading fiction as a metaphor for truth. Both of her novels subvert patriarchal interpretations of Gothic voices as vulgar and superstitious. Servants conceal truth in fear of patriarchal punishment but provide a narrative that encloses their master’s exploitative agendas through the story of an unsettled spirit. In *Udolpho*, Annette represents the figure of the subversive Gothic producer who persistently narrates the fiction of the Gothic tale for the heroine’s deconstruction. The social pressure of maintaining rational authority prevents Emily from performing a reading that will allow her to overcome her fear of patriarchal ridicule. Though Emily does not overcome her irrational/superstitious fear of Montoni’s power, Adeline serves as an exemplary model of femininity as her reading of the Gothic tale breaks the barriers that confine her mind and body.

CHAPTER 3: LOWER-CLASS VOICES IN JAMES HOGG'S *THE PRIVATE MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS OF A JUSTIFIED SINNER* AND WALTER SCOTT'S *THE HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN*

James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (*Confessions*) and Walter Scott's *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* (*Mid-Lothian*) are Scottish narratives that validate both the servant and country person's claim for an "authentic" and stable national identity. Scott's protagonist, Jeanie Deans, represents the moral purity of a nation uncorrupted by the politics of a foreign city that is London. Hogg's lower characters and their speech stabilize an otherwise incomprehensible text. In both novels, the self's demonic other is inflected by a class and gender identity that stands in contrast to idealized images of a pure national identity. In *Confessions*, inhabiting other voices and identities can be socially productive or mentally crippling. Higher characters become victims of supernatural/demonic others but lower characters employ the figurative language of the supernatural fable to negotiate their class positions. As in Hogg's work, lower characters evade supernatural evil in *Mid-Lothian* and reassign moral coherence to a story that invites conflicting interpretations. Jeanie Deans' integrity combats supernatural evil that acts as an unknown, moral contaminant. These texts continue to engage the class politics arising from the novel's interrogation of aristocratic authority. As Gothic novels, the theme of usurpation becomes central to resolving the plot. Aristocratic blood is tainted by illegitimate desire, leading such illegitimacy to perpetuate supernatural evil that disrupts society on micro and macrocosmic levels. Lower characters reestablish order in revealing the source of usurpation or in combating supernatural forces by asserting their moral constancy, a trait that higher characters often lack. Moreover, it is their voice, speech, and interpretative authority that restore social order to the family and nation.

The “Ettrick Shepherd”

Hogg’s career as a professional writer struggling to enter and maintain respect in the gentleman circles of Edinburgh society sheds light on his depictions of lower characters in *Confessions*. Critics have examined the backdrop of his literary career and contentious relationship with *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* to make sense of what he was endeavoring to accomplish in his novel. After obtaining the authorial role of the “Ettrick Shepherd” in *Blackwood’s*, as a rural poet-genius of Scottish ballads, songs, and tales, his identity became inextricably tied to the persona *Blackwood’s* marketed. However, the persona of the “Ettrick Shepherd” became a liability for Hogg when it was stolen from him and used by *Blackwood’s* editors, John Wilson and John Lockhart. Under their representation, Hogg became a “‘boozing buffoon,’” a “‘carnavalesque exaggeration of rural genius” (Duncan, “Introduction” to *Confessions* xiv).

Some critics have interpreted the reappearance of the shepherd in *Confessions* as an attempt by Hogg to reclaim and invent the identity of the Ettrick Shepherd. Margaret Russet ends her work on romantic authorship and forgery with *Confessions*, giving Hogg “the last word” and making him “hero of this study...for his strong resistance to the cultural project that forged...the fiction of authenticity” (191). Her book focuses on the ways Romantic writers formulated, defended, and marketed the notion of authentic authorship, arguing that *Confessions* parodies this fiction in response to both Scott and *Blackwood’s* exploitation of forgery. However, she does not provide an account of Hogg’s complex and messy relationship with *Blackwood’s* that, in turn, shaped his response in *Confessions*. Other critics have focused exclusively on this topic, outlining the ways Hogg challenges *Blackwood’s* simplified and reduced portrait of the shepherd.¹ Few works, however, have discussed the significance of lower-class voices in a text privileging its authority and textual reliability. Samuel W. Harnish Jr. discusses this topic, arguing that “in *Confessions* it

is the vernacular-speaking characters who are clever and moral, while it is the characters writing and speaking in polished language who appear morally and intellectually unfit to participate in the culture” (37). The editor and Robert’s voice are primary but their narrations enfold a set of voices disadvantaged by class, and sometimes, gender. Hogg not only narrates the voice of the “Ettrick Shepherd” but also a weaver, servant, prostitute, and an entire village, but Harnish limits his analysis to Robert Wringhim’s servant, John Barnet, and more briefly to two female characters. Duncan also provides a brief but telling explanation of Hogg’s use of lower characters, both as a method for lodging criticism against English colonization and to highlight “Scots as the language of ‘organic’ popular life” (xxii). This chapter continues this conversation by illustrating the ways in which Hogg presents lower-class voices as not only the only morally superior voice of the novel but also as the most reliable and “authentic” voice.

Unreliable Narrators and Their Texts

Hogg’s *Confessions* is divided into three narratives. It begins with the editor’s narrative as it relates the circumstances leading to George Colwan’s murder, the son of a Scottish nobleman in “the lands of Dalcastle” (5). The editor appends his narrative with Robert Wringhim’s memoir, the brother of George Colwan and suspected offspring of an adulterous affair between Lady Dalcastle and her spiritual counselor, Reverend Wringhim. The concluding narrative begins the story whereby the editor pieces together a series of textual and oral fragments to unearth Robert’s memoir, a text that the editor appends for readers’ interpretation. Deluded by the belief that he is immune to moral law as one of god’s predestined select, Robert’s memoir advocates an extreme brand of Calvinism that leads him to making a pact with the devil to rid humanity of unbelievers. To complicate narrative perspective, the editor’s second narrative begins with an introduction to a letter published by *Blackwood’s* and signed by the author, James Hogg. The letter provides the

location for Robert's grave, enclosing fragments of his clothes that are "still fresh as that day they were laid" (182).

Hogg's text leaves the reader with textual and material evidence and two unreliable narrators to resolve the novel's mysteries, which include identifying whether Robert's state of mind is a product of psychological instability or an instance of supernatural occurrence. Gil-Martin may be the devil or a figment of Robert's imagination. Robert may or may not have murdered his brother and mother. The letter from *Blackwood's* could be a hoax, and if it is, so is the editor's narrative and the memoir that follows it. Furthermore, the transferal of a character from the nonfictional world, the "Ettrick Shepherd" of periodical literature, to the fictional realm of the novel complicates an already intricate story. However, as I later show, this textual addition adds a nuanced layer supporting the novel's validation of lower-class voices.

The credibility of *Blackwood's* letter is already questionable: it mistakes (either intentionally or unintentionally) the location of Robert's grave and presents a relic, Robert's bonnet, whose fabric is unidentifiable. Apart from the contents of the letter, the source of the letter is questionable for generating "ingenious fancies" while its author, Hogg, is famous for "'impos[ing] ingenious lies on the public ere now'" (183). When we come across James Hogg as the real shepherd, he refuses to participate in the excavation, claiming "I hae mair ado than I can manage the day, foreby ganging to houk up hundred-year-auld banes'" (183)² Belittling the importance of the editor's quest, he attends to his business of buying and selling his "stock." Hogg maintains the rustic persona as his readers understand him in *Blackwood's* but detaches himself from *Blackwood's*. Once the shepherd disassociates himself from the letter and its claims, it stands as an isolated piece of evidence that no longer implicates the shepherd, James Hogg, in the resurrection and recovery of the text. What is left is an ethnographic enterprise lead by a gentleman

antiquarian in a foreign land and cultural environment. As an outsider, the editor collects fragments of a story he fails to “understand” (188), reassembling it in an incomprehensible and contradictory format. The insiders are then locals who bring moral coherence to a story that has been assembled and reassembled by the studious endeavors of a mislead and confused editor. The editor is not only an outsider to the physical location but also to the cultural. His reproduction fails while the oral accounts of lower-class characters, accounts that are figurative and literal, correct the editor’s translation of the discovered manuscript/ Robert’s memoir.

The “Clachan’s” Voice

Robert’s memoir justifies his sins but does so under the devil’s control. Unaware of his spiritual deterioration, his incrimination of mankind demonstrates the falsehood of his religious beliefs. Abandoning society, he secludes himself to the company of his domestic servant, Samuel. Samuel is Robert’s outlet to the outside world and, in a sense, to the truth when he tells Robert what the “clachan,” or community thinks of him (145). Robert “record[s]” “the details which he [Samuel] gave me concerning myself, and the ideas of the country people concerning me,” in order to “show how the best and greatest actions are misconstrued among sinful and ignorant men.” As a frame narrative, Samuel’s voice provides a perspective outside of Robert’s delusional and corrupted state of mind. Furthermore, as the first-person perspective is tainted by false belief, we are asked to read against the text. Thus, Robert’s rejection of the “clachan’s” voice functions as a sign of its truth-value. “Popular belief” and “vulgar conceptions” of supernatural occurrence validate the subtext narrating the truth of Robert’s fallen state. As narrators are introduced to readers through frame narratives, Robert’s through the editor’s, Samuel’s through Robert’s, it becomes more difficult to assign authenticity to the claims of each embedded voice. However, the privileged narrators’ unreliability increases reliability of the narrators who are less privileged

textually. The editor's final remark on not being able to "understand" Robert's memoir contradicts his attempt at reconstructing the text as a stable piece of writing. Like Robert's narrative, the editor's narrative is compromised by ideology in associating Covenanter extremism with antinomianism.³ Robert, as narrator, is unreliable for he is either possessed or delusional. Lower-class voices, though embedded and framed, seem to function as the only stabilizing narrative force.

These voices reveal to Robert his delusional state of mind through figurative language. Amongst the doubles that the text entertains, readers confront another split personality in Samuel, who acts as "a kind o' sleepin partner" to Robert's immoral condition. Unlike Robert's condition, Samuel's split personality is not a product of mental instability or demonic possession but suggests his complicity in concealing Robert's fellowship with Gil-Martin, the name assigned to the devil. Samuel and Robert's conversations are telling, for they embed a class politics that Hogg confronted as a professional writer. Samuel is owed money/wages for his service, but Robert denies him because he undergoes a state of amnesia under Gil-Martin's control, failing to remember when and for how long he hired Samuel. The claims of a powerless servant are pitted against the claims of a delusional aristocrat, suggesting the difficulty of resisting established social hierarchies. Samuel insists on receiving his wages as a matter of good breeding for "a Cameronian is a gayan weel-bred man" (145). Careful to compromise his position as Robert's servant, he offers a fable to express claims that he is unable to assert directly. A Cameronian "'o Penpunt," Samuel's hometown, "pits his principles aff at the side" when a "Galloway drover" lies about a buying his cow, becoming his "sleepin partner" in accepting the money instead of making him "baith a feele an liar at the same time, afore a' his associates" (146). Instead of proving that Robert is "leasing-making," Samuel requests his wages without providing the "day and date [he] was hired," to show "good breeding." Samuel becomes a "sleepin partner" like the Cameronian "'o Penpunt," as he

does not make Robert look like a “feelee an liar at the same time.” Ultimately, Samuel must negotiate his precarious position and relationship with an employer who has lost touch with reality. He decides to follow the “first commandment,” *Man mind yoursel*,” [original italics] without insisting on his wages (146).

It is important to note that Hogg also struggled to obtain wages from an employer equipped with significant political power, particularly when it profited from his authorial identity. Like Hogg, Samuel must surrender his rights, and like Samuel, Hogg takes the higher road and responds with “good manners,” exposing *Blackwood’s* “leasing-making” through figurative language in his novel. Samuel and Hogg then are both servants placed in the trying position of obtaining much-needed wages but who practice “Cameronian’s principles” that “never came atween him a’ his purse” (146). In this example, Hogg subverts bourgeois constructions of “gentleman.” If “principles” do not stop the Cameronian from acting in self-interest, then “good manners” sustain his integrity.

Samuel also speaks through the voice of the “clachan,” or small village, to inform Robert of the truth. Careful to stay on good terms with Robert, he takes the position of a skeptic who denies its credibility, telling Robert, “folk shouldna heed what’s said by auld kimmers...they say the deil’s often seen gaun sidie for sidie w’ye, whiles in ae shape, an’ whiles in another. An’ they say that he whiles takes your ain shape, or else enter into you, and then you turn a deil yourself” (146). This is the first time Robert confronts the truth, stating that it was so like “what [he] felt myself (147).” Samuel continues to label it nonsense or “balderdash” of “the havers o’ auld wives for gospel” (147). However, fables and gossip allows Samuel to inhabit a voice he does not own but can adopt to express beliefs his employer contests. Duality as a supernatural force is spiritually debilitating as we see Robert’s body and mind suffer under Gil-Martin’s control. Used for political

purposes, it becomes an instrument for asserting social power. Hogg impersonates the voice of the shepherd and Samuel to critique *Blackwood's* while Samuel employs the voice of the "clachan" to express views he might feel but does not have to claim in order to salvage his employment.

Robert continues to encounter working-class characters when he seeks refuge in the house of the weaver, Johnny Dods. Johnny Dods is "confirmed in his opinion that [Robert] was the devil" (157). When the weaver finds Robert entangled in a "warpings of a web" which lodge him upside-down, Johnny Dods beats him with a "loomspoke" (161). Submitting to his wife's pleadings, Dods finally releases him, telling himself, "Wha wad hae thought that John Dods should hae escapit a' the snares an' dangers that circumfauldit him, an' at last should hae weaved a net to catch the deil" (162). His surprised victory demonstrates the novel's subversion of class structures in which lower classes not only possess knowledge of supernatural evil but also exert physical power over it (162). Dod's victory represents the "clachan's" immunity to the supernatural evil that terrorize both Robert and the house of Dalcastle.

Though Samuel takes care to maintain his position as Robert's servant, Reverend Wringhim's servant, John Barnet, cares little for pleasing his master. Old Barnet freely expresses his opinion of Robert's surrogate father's, Reverend Wringhim, religious extremism. He describes Robert's preaching as "sickann sublime and ridiculous sophistry." (78). Like Johnny Dods, Barnet is immune to the captivation of "that serious and religious style" of speaking, speech that the devil employs to disguise himself as a preacher in Samuel's parable of Robin Ruthven (157). When Barnet tells Robert that he is a product of adultery between his mother and Reverend Wringhim, the reverend responds "he durst not for his soul's salvation, and for his daily bread, which he values much more, say such a word" (79). Reverend Wringhim engages Barnet in an interrogation to determine his guilt, but Barnet does not defy his master. Through irony and figurative speech, he

praises him. Such resistance leads the reverend to demand Barnet's silence, which he assumes can be easily obtained as Barnet values his "daily bread" more than "his soul's salvation" (82). In an act of defiance, Barnet throws "the keys o' kirk" at Reverend Wringhim, declaring that "they hae aye been like a burn a hole i' my pouch" and that "Auld John may dee a beggar in a hay barn, or at the back of a dike, but he sall aye be master o' his ain thoughts, an' gie them vent or no, as he likes" (82). In the example of Samuel, class positions prevent the expression of voice. With Barnet, lower-class voices are uncensored, expressed without regard to the consequences enforced by the abuse of power. "Auld John" sacrifices his job and "daily bread" to be a master of his own thoughts and voice, no longer wishing to filter his language through ironic speech or withhold his beliefs for the sake of filling his "purse" (146).

Mrs. Logan and Bell Calvert's successful attempt at exposing Robert serves as another example of the ways Hogg empowers lower-class voices. As mistress and housekeeper, Mrs. Logan's agenda involves exposing Robert as the murderer of George. Upon hearing Bell Calvert's testimony, another frame story embedded in the text, they formulate a partnership to uncover the truth. Bell Calvert's identity as English privileges her voice as she does not speak the Scottish dialect associated with vulgar speech. Thomas Drummond, framed for George's murder, enters her room to later reject her solicitation as he is confounded by the inconsistency in her speech and status: "I am utterly at a loss to account for this adventure, madam....I can hardly believe my senses. An English lady, I judge, and one, who from her manner and address should belong to the first class of society, in such a place as this, is indeed a matter of wonder to me" (56). Hogg inverts social identities of the lower-class Scot found in England to the lower-class English woman found in Edinburgh. Bell Calvert speaks the dialect of privilege but is a prostitute on the streets of Edinburgh. This example reveals identity, as associated with speech, as a social construction,

making the dialect of Scots no more vulgar than the condition of poverty that compels Bell Calvert to prostitution.

In her testimonial account, we find that Bell Calvert is also haunted by a double, suffering the legal consequences of crimes committed by her “wretched” “companion,” Ridsley (61). During Robert and George’s brawl, she permits Ridsley to stay in her room upon receiving a “bribe,” declaring, “had I kept my frail resolution of dismissing him at that moment, what a world of shame and misery had been evited! But that, though uppermost still in my mind, has nothing ado here” (58). Her inability to extricate herself from her double has everything to do with a story that stages duality as a perpetual conflict. Drummond leaves her room as Ridsley enters, “exchanging looks” with him. Bell Calvert then witnesses the real Drummond leaving the scene of murder when Robert, who Gil-Martin disguises as Drummond, and Gil-Martin arrive. She sees both Drummonds at the same time and in “look[ing] upon some spirit, or demon, in his likeness” she seeks corroboration from Ridsley who misses the real Drummond leave the scene of crime. Ridsley concludes that “they are both living men, and one of them is he I passed at the corner” (58). Both Ridsley and Bell Calvert witness Robert, as Drummond, murder his brother, but what they witness are two different occurrences: one in which there has been supernatural intervention and one without. Narrating two realities demonstrate issues of gender and class politics. Her testimony is branded weaker and “extraordinary” while her companion and evil double’s is found credible, as he “never mistook one man for another in his life” (62). Though Bell Calvert believes that her companion’s evidence “would have overborne” her own, she stands as a testimonial proof of Robert’s crime but her class position weakens her credibility. The false narrative of Drummond as George’s murderer continues until she and Mrs. Logan pursue their own criminal investigation and successfully identify Robert as a suspect.

Walter Scott's *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* also validates lower-class voices as the voice of the Scottish laborer against English colonialism and as the voice of an innocent country girl against an Englishman of questionable birth. Like *Confessions*, the inconsistencies in narrative perspective frustrate attempts at interpretation. Both characters and their narratives confront doubles relocated in contrasting cultural and national spaces. The history of Edinburgh's Porteous riots is juxtaposed against the intimate and personal narrative of a "simple" but wise country girl, Jeanie Deans. Narrative space is a site of contest as the controversial events leading to the riots and its aftermath overshadow the personal struggle Jeanie undergoes to gain royal pardon on behalf of her sister, Euphemia (Effie) Deans. The story centers on Effie's crime when she is sentenced to death for committing infanticide. Like many of Scott's novels, individual history is bound to national and results in conflicting interpretations. David Deans, Jeanie and Effie's father, represents the "bull-headed obstinacy" of religious and national ideology represented in the Scotland's Presbyterian, Cameronian sect, but Scott also uses it to display Scottish patriotism and independence. Andrew Wilson and his partner in crime, George Staunton disguised as Robertson, could be low-life smugglers and instigators of public violence or rebels attempting to preserve "ancient liberties" (28). In their repossession of money taxed by English law, they threaten Scotland's peaceful assimilation to English rule. Even the mob, as an entity striving to carry out a singular purpose, exhibits a duality that invites contradictory interpretations, that is, the mob could represent disorder and chaos but also successful rebellion.

Scott sets his novels at pivotal points in history that undergo violent and tumultuous changes, changes that find a site of expression through the romantic imagination.⁴ Supernatural agency functions as a metaphorical outlet for expressing the social and political struggles of national identity. Yet, his use of the supernatural is as multi-varied as his narrative composition.

Coleman Parsons summarizes contemporary frustrations with Scott's use of the supernatural, particularly in its synthesis of historical scholarship and folk tradition. Critics who approve of Scott's use of the supernatural believe he is correcting past beliefs that conflate the real with the imaginary by separating the two worlds in fiction. Jeanie and Butler, even though the latter is a product of Scottish Enlightenment, believe in the supernatural because it was "believed in by almost all ranks" of society "at this period" (152). Scott's narrator positions himself outside of the historical contingencies of supernatural belief, providing documentary proof of folk tales and tradition in the form of footnotes. His opponents claim that in approaching the supernatural as a theoretical matter, he questions the same theory he employs to support the moral themes of the novel, that is, belief in the spiritual world.⁵ Parsons more properly defends Scott in claiming that he is "cautious" and "compromising" in his treatment of the "uncanny." The supernatural is a creative force of imagination in Scott's novel rather than a mere historical footnote. Scott borrows Covenanter legends to shape his evil characters, ballads that demonize Episcopalian Royalists, for their persecution of Scottish Presbyterians. These ballads dramatize the ways in which cavaliers conspire with the devil to enact the most cruel and unthinkable acts of torture inflicted on "chosen ones of God" (Parsons 190). Evil characters such as George Staunton conspire with the devil. Staunton cross borders for transgressive purposes, releasing chaos on a nation that already stands on a fragile foundation.

Transgressing Borders

Scott's demonic character, Robertson, possesses two identities that reflect social and political divisions between England and Scotland. His birth name is George Staunton in England but he employs a fake name in Scotland. Staunton experiences an identity crisis when crossing borders. In England, he tells Jeanie, "I am not the very devil himself," pleading to her to trust him

and offer his life for Effie's but in Scotland he proclaims, "I am the devil!" as he terrorizes Butler into obeying his commands. Staunton/Robertson is a satanic force that spreads disorder on both macro and microcosmic levels, destroying a country girl's purity and severing Scotland's ties to England by leading the Porteous riots to fulfill a personal agenda. However, in England, Staunton is stripped of his demonic identity and becomes the wounded outcast and creole of English society. Madge Wildfire and Margaret Murdockson, Robertson's servants in England but witches in Scotland, also transport their residual chaos into Scotland's pure and innocent countryside.

Critics have investigated the theme of migration, displacement, and relocation in the novel but have not analyzed ideological implications of Staunton's transgressive entry into postcolonial territory.⁶ The migration of corruption from England to Scotland subverts imperialistic ideology as evil in the form of extra-marital relations and crime in one location transforms into supernatural occurrence in another. However, Scott does not aim to depict Scotland as more superstitious and backwards than England as the most native characters, like Jeanie, are also the most heroic and moral. Instead, the supernatural as a demonic double acts like a parasite that attaches itself to the body and mind of the victim who spreads it across national boundaries, just as the Whistler's (Staunton's son) unnatural tendencies finds a location across the Atlantic ocean in America.

The Porteous Mob

National sentiment and identity are expressed through dialogue amongst the working-class. The novel centers on the public's response to the execution of Wilson, a tradesmen who smuggles goods in order to avoid paying taxes or "imposts" that "the people," in general, saw "as an unjust aggression upon their ancient liberties" (28). On repeated offences, the "king's officers" seize his property. Wilson attempts to repossess his property with an accomplice, Robertson who is Staunton, and breaks into the house of the "Collector of the Customs" to "reimburse himself of his

losses” (28). Both Wilson and Robertson are sentenced to death for what the public perceives as an act of desperation under the guidance of “erroneous opinions” (28). Undergoing hardships many tradesmen experience at the expense of English law, the public sympathizes with Wilson’s position, particularly when abused by the ruthless Captain Porteous.

When Wilson helps Robertson escape, he becomes a hero and victim. Porteous’s harsh treatment of Wilson during his execution, in torturing him by clasp iron cuffs that are too small for his hands, further incites public hostility targeted against Porteous. On watching Wilson suffer, Scott’s narrator claims,

The multitude, in general, looked on with deeper interest than at ordinary executions; and there might be seen, on the countenances of many, a stern and indignant expression like that with which the ancient Cameronians might be supposed to witness the execution of their brethren, who glorified the covenant on occasions something similar, and at the same spot. (37)

Local spaces evoke local legends of Cameronians suffering at the hands of Royalists who are in fellowship with the devil. Both Porteous and Staunton possess demonic doubles who inflict cruelty on individuals disadvantaged by class or gender. The scene of Wilson’s execution adds an element of the supernatural to account for Porteous’s unnatural cruelty. His “mien,” though often favorable, becomes demonic:

his step was irregular, his voice hallow and broken, his countenance pale, his eyes staring and wild, his speech imperfect and confused, and his whole appearance so disordered, that many remarked he seemed to be *fey* [original emphasis], a Scottish expression, meaning the state of those who are driven on to their impending fate by the strong impulse of some irresistible necessity. (36)

A combination of immoral feelings of character, incited by circumstances, lead to demonic possession, allowing Scott’s narrator to employ the supernatural as a means of explaining acts of evil that are not only cruel but that also suggest an imbalance in power.⁷ Wilson is tradesman fighting for “ancient liberties” while Porteous is a captain entrusted with legal authority to punish

violators of English law (36). Additionally, a force beyond the supernatural evil dictates events as Porteous's actions lead him to his "impending fate." Supernatural occurrence is a part of a larger system that leads to retribution ending in Porteous's death in "seem[ing] to be fey" toward "irresistible necessity" (36).

After Wilson's execution, the mob retaliates, unbinding him in an effort to resuscitate him and give him a respectful burial if they find him dead. Porteous then orders his soldiers to shoot civilians, and as a result, is sentenced to death in the High Court of Justiciary. As a government official, the Queen of Caroline delays his appointed execution. At this point, he becomes a public enemy not only to the common man but also to the gentry, who perceives Queen Caroline's mercy as taking precedence over the Scottish judiciary system, which sentences him to death (43). Conversation among working-class characters shows favor for "auld Scots law" as "But naobody's nails can reach the length o' Lunnon" (44). The working class, who include shopkeepers and laborers, believe the 1706 Act of Union "oppress[es] our trade" (44). Wilson's act of rebellion against taxes represents the cause and interest of the working class against "Lunnon" and the Scottish "gentles [who] hardly allow that a Scots needle can sew ruffles on a sark, or lace on an overlay" (44). Mrs. Saddletree, the wife of a saddler, identifies Effie as a victim of social oppression that the working class experience not only at the hands of English law but also from the upper classes. Wilson and Effie's persecution is also emblematic of the ways the common man struggles to assert "ancient liberties." In claiming "murder by trust is the way gentry murder us merchants...but that has naething to do wi' Effe's misfortune" (55), Mrs. Saddletree emphasizes the point. As Effie does not "communicate her situation" or claim whether "the barin was still-born, or if it be alive," she is presumed guilty, committing "murder by trust." Her husband responds, "the crime is rather a favorite of the law, this species of murder being on of its ain

creation” to which Mrs. Saddletree responds, “if the law makes murders...the law should be hanged for them” (55). Through satire, the legitimacy of government and legal authority is brought into question, particularly as it targets social groups disadvantaged by class and gender. However, Scott’s narrator is careful to depict all sides without validating the position of a single viewpoint. The mob behaves both rationally and irrationally. They harm no officers or civilians when seeking out Porteous but defy sexual boundaries by cross-dressing as Robertson disguises himself as Madge Wildfire. The mob is criticized in both England and Scotland for their audacious defiance of royal and religious authority in performing an act of retribution that only the law or the church has the authority to carry out (72). Yet, the gentry and working class view such retribution as a struggle for justice.

Except for the foreign chaos that Robertson relocates to Scotland, there seems to be no right or wrong. As George Staunton, Robertson’s personal history explains his demonic actions. Staunton spends much of his life being an outcast in English society as a creole. His demonic thirst for vengeance, justified or unjustified, is also a good match for Effie’s “indulgent” “character” (99). They suffer less from their “racial” origins and more from poor parenting as Reverend Staunton, George’s father, is as strict and inflexible as the “bull-headed” David Deans. Still, Staunton causes more distress and chaos than Effie. He leads a mob, murders a public official, and makes decisions that incriminate and ruin not only Effie but also Madge Wildfire, the daughter of Meg Murdockson. Meg Murdockson, in turn, is the wife of Reverend Staunton’s servant. Staunton’s abandonment of Madge Wildfire induces further evil as her mother becomes an outcast claimed to be a witch who sleeps with the devil. The power of evil as a reverberating and contaminating force becomes a supernatural entity that spreads to Scotland. More importantly, supernatural phenomena, Staunton as the devil and Murdockson as a witch, is inflected by class

politics. Staunton is a member of the gentry whose recklessness damages the households of working-class families. Supernatural evil possesses the power to disturb on both micro and macrocosmic levels as transgressions against the state begin as transgressions against the home.

Jeanie's Voice of Moral Purity

Jeanie and Butler's encounter with Staunton at "Nicole Mushcat's Carin," a location harboring unexplainable acts of evil in folk history, awakens communal awareness of supernatural phenomena, "believed in by almost all ranks" (152). Butler cannot deny that Staunton's "visage" was "absolutely demoniacal." As one of the most learned characters, he refrains from refuting the existence of the supernatural as this "was held undeniable proof of atheism" (114). Jeanie is also convinced that she is speaking to "an apostate spirit incarnate" when Staunton threatens her to follow his will and abandon what is "Christian" to save her sister. The narrative now depends on this moral test, which Jeanie has already passed when her father tells her to lie as a witness. Although Jeanie proves to be the more principled Cameronian between herself and her fanatical father, we must determine if her principles can withstand the threat of supernatural power that originates in abuse of power. Once again, underlying the supernatural are class politics that permit Staunton, who has inherited money from his creole mother, to assert power on the powerless. "Irregularities of nature" (105) are conveyed in supernatural terms for the wealth that empowers Staunton comes from an immoral source, that is the slave trade conducted in the colonies. Foreign evil tainting Staunton's blood further taints his status for it is no longer legitimately "noble" but corrupted by bad money.

Identifying the source of evil and rationalizing it is an endeavor readers are asked to settle. An example includes rationalizing Staunton's "propensities to vices" (338), which he attributes to the tainted blood received from the witch, Meg Murdockson, when she was his wet-nurse. A few

pages later the narrator accounts further history identifying the source of Staunton's failure as developing from an indulgent childhood. The text presents nature/nurture as an unresolvable conflict. Staunton believes "nature" causes perversion in character when he tells Jeanie he is "wretched" (338) while the narrator explains Staunton's upbringing as the cause "of all seeds of those evil weeds which afterwards grew apace" (357). Bodily contamination, from a wet-nurse and creole mother, is an argument that possesses ideological connotations. Meg Murdockson contaminates the gentry as a servant who possesses an unnatural "propensity for vice." Lower characters in Scotland are rarely presented as a source of contamination, particularly as the heroine Jeanie Dean brings moral pureness to England. Supernatural phenomena contaminate individuals and nations because it is foreign and unfamiliar but not because it is lower class.

There are two national heroes in the story, that is, Wilson and Jeanie. While Wilson's role is not as extensive as Jeanie's, he is branded in communal memory and will become a part of the history narrated through legends. Local tales and ballads set up as the cultural framework for country-life in Scotland and help lower characters perform grand narratives. Jeanie tells Butler, her bookish but destitute suitor, that a letter requesting royal pardon cannot have the same effect as spoken words (374). She must conduct an arduous journey, some on foot and carriage, to "Lunnon" (44) in order to demonstrate her filial love.⁸ Moreover, the words that accompany the simple and unassuming look of a Scottish maid will have more effect on an audience than the most powerful rhetoric expressed in a letter. When Jeanie delivers her message to Queen Caroline, she is successful because her "tones [are] so affecting, that like the notes of some of her native songs, provincial vulgarity was lost in pathos" (384). Scottish dialect, from the perspective of the privileged foreigner/tourist, is no longer "vulgar" but rustic and picturesque. Staunton brings supernatural evil to Scotland but Jeanie brings purity to England. The Duke of Argyle, the foremost

representative of Scotland in the British parliament, insists that Jeanie improvise her speech to the queen rather than give the impression that she has rehearsed it from a script. He tells her, ““that would be like reading a sermon, you know, which we good Presbyterians think has less unction than when spoken without book”” (384). Not only can she be more expressive through speech but she can also profit from the preconceptions of an imperial mindset that view the culture of peripheries as a product consumed for aesthetic pleasure.

The novel resists attempts at rationalizing the laws of the spiritual world. It can be a moral mistake, performed by the Edinburgh mob in murdering Porteous or by Jeanie as she struggles to save a life in providing false testimony. “Sophistry” (160) is the language of the devil and Jeanie is careful to resist Staunton’s effort to persuade her to seek her own “providential retribution” (356).” Like Hogg’s *Confessions*, lower characters evade supernatural evil as they possess the ability to interpret its moral significance. Textual reproductions of supernatural tales fail to convey its message while fables constructed by working-class narrators/characters reassign moral coherency to the text. Jeanie Deans’ moral constancy stabilizes a text that resists attempts at identifying villainy for Effie, Staunton, and Porteous seem to be products of their circumstances and fate. Even supernatural evil as a contaminant force invading Scotland does not reproduce further evil because the mob is represented as both a heroic and chaotic force. In their novels, Hogg and Scott attempt to both idealize and stabilize Scottish identity but do so through a process that involves negotiation. Lower characters negotiate their employment with higher characters in *Confessions* and the text in Scott’s novel negotiates interpretations that privilege a patriotic stance against English rule.

CHAPTER FOUR: NELLY'S CAUTIONARY TALE: PRESERVING NOBLE BLOODLINES IN EMILY BRONTE'S *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* presents the English estate that preserves the normative household as a dilapidated portrait of domestic tranquility. The ideal home maintains the roles of each family member, allowing fathers to protect, mothers to nurture, and children to obey. In nuanced ways, Gothic novels subvert the normative roles and protective ideals of the home. Ellis discusses the ways Gothic novels portray the failure of the "middle-class idealization of the house" that functions as a safe-haven for women, meant to protect them from the violence and uncertainty of the outside world (xi). It creates "a segment of culture directed toward women, a resistance to an ideology that imprisons them even as it posits a sphere of safety for them" (x). While critics have investigated women's roles in the home and representations of the home's failure in Gothic novels, a gap remains in determining how servants play a part in domestic ideology as it posits the simultaneous imprisonment and safety of identity. Servants transgress normative roles in the home as much as disempowered daughters. Thus, one of the most "consummate villains in English literature," (Hafley) the housekeeper, Ellen Dean or Nelly, inhabits the author(ial) position of narrator, representing and misrepresenting the story of her masters and mistresses. As my first chapter on Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* highlights, a servant usurps the throne of Otranto, forges documents to solidify his lineage in the hereditary monarchy, and claims absolute authority. *Wuthering Heights* displays a similar power dynamic between servants and their masters. Servants defy their domestic role and create conflict in the home, engaging in what the ostensible villain of the novel, Heathcliff, calls a "double-dealing." This "double-dealing," I argue, masks servants' desire for power. Thus, the two most prominent servants of the novel, Nelly and Joseph, become the guardians of civilization by asserting moral and cultural authority in the home, regulating illicit desire to maintain and restore genteel bloodlines.

Before returning to the text, we must be reminded that Nelly's narrative is embedded within Lockwood's, turning her story into his fictive creation. However, it is also important to note that Bronte introduces Lockwood as an outsider who cannot make sense of his surroundings without Nelly's help. More importantly, Nelly's voice functions as a gateway into the secret history of two prominent households, *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange*. Bronte presents it as the only medium through which Lockwood (and the reader) can come to learn the present state of events. Nelly provides the beginning of the narrative which introduces Heathcliff, a character who destabilizes the "natural" continuation of an English family's generational maturity. When Heathcliff, a dark-featured orphan found "in the streets of Liverpool," becomes the "pett[ed]" (38), adopted son of the country gentleman, Mr. Earnshaw, conflict begins. She shows how Heathcliff's presence "bred bad feeling in the house" (38) and is the first to treat him as an outcaste in letting "it" (38) sleep next to the stairs without a bed or bath. That she has identified the origins of domestic disorder as "breeding" from Heathcliff's introduction is telling for it classifies him as a raced, and therefore, a foreign contaminant. In my previous chapters, I discussed middle-class anxiety toward the servant class, an anxiety assigning servants' voices to the category of superstitious and irrational. Contact with servants' superstitious beliefs and voices is registered in terms of contagious and infectious disease. The metaphor of disease as invading the family organism reoccurs in Nelly's narrative. Her tale is a cautionary one in which illicit desire, namely Heathcliff and Catherine's desire, contains the potential to taint family bloodlines, and though desire threatens lineage, her story further warns of the consequences of unnatural paternity. Those who fall in love with the "goblin," namely Mr. Earnshaw and his daughter, do so to their detriment and "bane" (319). Not only Nelly but the dogmatic servant, Joseph, guards the "ancient stock" (37) of the Earnshaw household. Thus, this chapter investigates the ways in which servants reiterate the

hegemonic discourse of racial ideology, one that marks Heathcliff as unknown other whose entry into the home contaminates the family body. It further highlights the ways Nelly and Joseph assert moral and cultural authority, which is based in ideology of racial purity, to mask their usurpation the titles of master and mistress.

Critics have discussed the importance of distinguishing Nelly, the character, from Nelly, the narrator. For instance, Lisa Sternlieb discusses critics' divergent interpretations of Nelly as the villain or "good angel," arguing that "the difficulty critics have had in assessing or agreeing upon Nelly lies in the doubleness of her role and her story" (40). This chapter focuses on the latter Nelly by examining the ideological undertones of her cautionary tale that further reveal her ambitions as a character. There has been a considerable amount of scholarship written about servants in *Wuthering Heights*, criticism that dates as far back as Brontë's sister, Charlotte's, characterization of Nelly as a "specimen of true benevolence and homely fidelity" (Brontë "Introduction"). That Charlotte Brontë uses the word "specimen" to describe Nelly is telling for it corresponds with Lockwood's identification of Nelly as "taken as a fixture along with the house" (9). Lockwood, as I previously emphasized, is an outsider who responds to Nelly and her narrative as an outsider, unaware of the habits and culture of the Yorkshire countryside. As "specimen" and "fixture," Nelly cannot exercise subjectivity but can only be an embodiment of the story she narrates. Contemporary critics, however, have insisted on her agency and vested interest in the story she tells. James Hafley was the first to give Nelly agency in identifying her as the "consummate villains in English literature," arguing that her assertion of an identity as a family relative motivates her villainy.¹ Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar describe Nelly as a "censorious agent of patriarchy" who performs the will of the genteel master, Edgar, acting as a "stereotypically benevolent man's woman" (292). Carolyn Steedman and Lisa Sternlieb read Nelly's character within the context of

her socio-economic surroundings. Nelly's attempts at self-preservation leads her to harming others in her struggle to "not...get fired" (Sternlieb 46). Steedman further claims that Nelly possesses the "figurative means to make master and mistress, and all the rest of them, the same as her" (204), a woman servant with no status and power. Of these representations, I draw on Hafley's argument about Nelly's desire for social equality in wanting to be treated as a relative rather than servant in the home. This chapter sheds further light on her ambiguous role and desire for equal standing in the Earnshaw home, one that fuels her ambition to usurp the title of mistress from Catherine, and sometimes, of master from Edgar.

Like Nelly, Joseph's character has also provoked conflicting interpretations. He can display "real emotional complexity" (191)² but can also be a dogged, usurper of "spiritual law."³ Not only Nelly and Joseph but most of the servants in the text resist their class positions. Graeme Tytler discusses master/servant power relations, demonstrating the "power servants exercise within the sphere of domination in which they are subject" in bending their masters will and exposing hidden complexes (47). What remains unaddressed are the ideological agendas that Nelly and Joseph exert to sustain authority in the home. In treating property and family lineage as metonymic entities, they perpetuate racial discourse and gain power in recycling the moral and cultural codes on which racial ideology depends.

Nelly's Cautionary Tale of Unnatural Desire

In *Wuthering Heights*, paternal and maternal figures are either absent, misguided, or corrupted. Mr. Earnshaw "bred bad feelings in the home" by adopting Heathcliff. Hindley, as head of the household, tortures and abuses not only Heathcliff but also his son, Hareton. Catherine's and Hindley's mother has a short presence that bears no moral weight. Hindley's wife, like Hindley, is described as selfish and harsh. The absence or incompetence of parental figures allows

Nelly and Joseph to act as bearers and enforcers of moral authority, filling vacant roles that carry privileges beyond servitude. Joseph becomes a spiritual advisor and punisher while Nelly regulates Catherine, and then her daughter's, desire. Both reject Heathcliff as a family relation as means of gaining power. Tytler discusses Nelly and Joseph's "delegated authority" over the household in "the upbringing of the children under their care" (45). Judith Stuchiner also notes that "it is strange that the servants of *Wuthering Heights*, rather than the masters, are in charge of the family members' souls" (193). In acting as surrogate parents, servants usurp a position of privilege that gives them a measure of control over children who become their future masters and mistresses, making it almost impossible for these same children to resist servants' authority as adults.

The tale Nelly orates for Lockwood is her own construction and reconstruction of history. We can better read her narrative as a product of her inner life and desires when we pay attention to the ways she paints her character as the only "sensible soul" (119). Centering and distinguishing her rationality from the domestic chaos that surrounds both households lends credibility to her voice. Thus, centering her character in the story she tells, in the way that she does by praising her sense, demonstrates her author[ity] over the text. If we are guided by her logic, we find that her narrative begins as a cautionary lesson of misdirected, failed paternal love. Nelly's cautionary tale warns of the consequences of breeding unnatural bonds in the home, one that severs blood ties and perpetuates illicit desire. Mr. Earnshaw's favoritism becomes a transgression that breaks the natural bond between father and son as Hindley "regards his father as an oppressor rather than a friend, and Heathcliff as a usurper of his parent's affections and privileges" (38). Nelly describes Mr. Earnshaw's "affection" for Heathcliff (38) as "strange," "petting him up far above Cathy, who was too mischievous and wayward for a favourite" (38). Though we do not learn of the reasons underlying his favoritism, particularly when Nelly tells us that Heathcliff "never...repaid [Mr.

Earnshaw's] indulgence by any sign of gratitude" (39), it becomes easier to assign blame on Mr. Earnshaw's arbitrary display of affection as the origin of conflict and violence in the home. Not only that but he fails to assimilate Heathcliff in the normative family household, and instead, "nourishes" his "pride and black temper" (203). Such perverse favoritism and nourishment function as examples of unnatural paternity as it does not regulate behavior but nurtures transgression, conduct that Nelly describes as a "black temper."

Nelly's narrative of unnatural paternity continues when she describes the ways Mr. Earnshaw objectifies Heathcliff as a "petted" rather than "loved" child. Heathcliff's response to his paternal benevolence, Nelly tells us, is also unnatural and "insensible." We learn that Heathcliff "never...repaid [Mr. Earnshaw's] indulgence by any sign of gratitude" (39). If Mr. Earnshaw has objectified Heathcliff by "petting" him, then Nelly further objectifies him as vacant and "insensible" to human feeling. Whether violence comes in the form of Hindley's "blows" at Heathcliff or Nelly's "pinches," she shows us how paternal benevolence is wasted on a "dark thing" that can neither feel pain (Heathcliff does not respond to physical abuse as a child) nor reciprocate compassion but only leads "a good man to his bane"

Unnatural paternity is not simply a display of affection toward an adopted child but an act of favoritism at the expense of a biological child. What "bred bad feeling in the home" was Mr. Earnshaw's affection for Heathcliff over Hindley, namely preference for someone who is not a blood relation. Favoring an adopted child of unknown heritage causes damage that surpasses sibling rivalry. Rather, it leads to violence that is perpetual. So destructive is Mr. Earnshaw's unnatural paternity that it manifests in his progeny in the form of paternal filicide. When Hindley's wife dies, Hindley is alienated from his son, Hareton, to the point of murder. Heathcliff's desire for Catherine is problematic for it can contaminate family blood, but Nelly identifies the source of

contamination as “breeding” from unnatural forms of paternity that further manifest in generational sin, paternal filicide, and the potential annihilation of a future generation.

Intimacy and Contact with Servants

Through Nelly’s voice, we learn that disease in the home spreads from unnatural paternity. However, as we discover the structural layout of *Wuthering Heights* and examine master/servant relations, a class struggle underlies the racial discourse servants employ to validate their agendas. Bette London argues for reading of “margins,” “between the lines of the authorized text” (37) illustrated in Catherine’s dairy or fragments of Lockwood’s dreams. In the same way that these instances “give priority to the conventional, unviolated text” (37) that stand independent of Lockwood and Nelly’s narrative agendas, the structural landscape of *Wuthering Heights* functions as a marginal text in contradiction with “authorized texts.”⁴ *Wuthering Heights* is a home that permits intimacy with servants and encourages their leisure. Nelly considers herself a member of the household because she is treated as such. They “were all together” “by the fire-side” with the Earnshaws as “servants generally sat in the house then, after their work was done” (43). Before leaving, Mr. Earnshaw promises to bring back gifts, a “fiddle” for Hindly, a “whip” for Cathy, and “he did never forget me [Nelly]; for he promised to bring me a pocketful of apples and pears” (36). Such equal standing allows Nelly to render herself a sibling amongst the Earnshaw children. Describing herself as a “blood relation,” she informs Lockwood that she was born in the same year as Mr. Hindley, her “old master and foster-brother” (182). She further tells Lockwood that “Miss Cathy is of us,” that is, her own relation in addition to a descendant of the Earnshaw and Linton family.

In *Wuthering Heights*, we observe an intimacy between servants and masters that defy normative relations. Joseph’s “influence” in “worrying [Mr. Earnshaw] ... about ruling his

children rigidly” inverts master/servants relations that leads to trust and exploitation of trust for “the more feeble the master became, the more influence he [Joseph] gained” (42). Joseph ingrains a “strict[ness]” in Mr. Earnshaw that leads to his disapproval of his children in identifying Hindley as a “reprobate” and Catherine as unruly (42). A servant exerts authority by manipulating his master, influencing Mr. Earnshaw when he is sick and vulnerable and appeasing his favoritism for Heathcliff in “always minding to flatter Mr. Earnshaw’s weakness by heaping the heaviest blame on the last [Catherine]” (135). Prior to this, Nelly tells us that Mr. Earnshaw’s unnatural favoritism for Heathcliff creates friction in the home. However, Mr. Earnshaw’s favoritism is the result of his own perverseness not Joseph’s. Joseph exploits his “strange” partiality for Heathcliff to fulfill his own agenda, that of exercising his disciplinarian methods and rigidity through his master’s will.

Though servants’ proximity to higher characters allow them to exert power, their distance can also result in transgression. When Lockwood enters the scene of *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff tells him: “‘Here we have the whole establishment of domestics, I suppose...No wonder the grass grows up between the flags, and the cattle are the only hedge-cutters’” (4). The “grass” that blurs boundaries functions as a metaphor to describe master/servant relations, a boundary that is perpetually crossed and blurred. The domestic scene collapses, *Wuthering Heights* is disorderly and falling apart, if servants deny their duties, and thus, their position and identity as servants. Flaws in the spatial layout of *Wuthering Heights* indicate further abnormalities for the “kitchen,” an area reserved for servants, “retreats altogether into another quarter” (5). There are “no signs of roasting, boiling, or baking” but only “a chatter of tongues, and a clatter of culinary utensils” (5). The sound of utensils does not result in domestic productivity but serves to conceal the “chatter of tongues” that constitutes transgressive discourse. As Terry Eagleton notes, “For farming families like the Earnshaws, work and human relations are roughly coterminous; work is

socialised, personal relations mediated through a context of labour” (106). He illustrates this harmony by using Heathcliff as an example for when he is thrust out of the family to work as a servant, he is “forced outside of the working environment” (106) and into nature. Yet, when Nelly and Joseph are provided leisure and privacy, cultural values that distinguish the middle from the lower-classes, they usurp these social privileges by neglecting their duties. Thus, “personal relations” and “work” do not seem harmonious in the example of Nelly and Joseph for they persistently resist their servitude.

Joseph as Master

Like Nelly, Joseph instigates conflict in the home, particularly by rekindling “unavenged” “mortal feuds” that began with Heathcliff and the gentleman Edgar Linton’s desire for Catherine and repeats in Hareton and Lockwood’s competitive desire for her daughter, Cathy. When Lockwood observes contradictions in Hareton’s exterior condition, his “embrowned” “hands” and “shabby upper garment” against his “free” and “haughty” “bearing,” he notes the discrepancy between his appearance and demeanor for Hareton does not “show” “a domestic’s assiduity in attending on the lady of the house” (14). As there are no “clear proofs of his condition,” Lockwood is unable to read class as a manifestation of appearance (12). Unknown to him is the fact that Hareton is the legitimate heir of Wuthering Heights as the son of Hindley. When Hareton claims his name as the son of a gentleman, conflict ensues for Lockwood ridicules his demand for respect (14). It is important to emphasize Joseph’s involvement in this episode for he has “instilled into [Hareton] a pride of name, and of his lineage” (193). As with Mr. Earnshaw, Joseph indoctrinates both master and children, instilling within them a “rigidness” that reflects his own character. Thus, fathers and children do not emulate and reflect the behavior of their superiors but their servants. Without Joseph’s interference, Hareton would accept the role of a servant with displaying a

complex, but Joseph assumes the role of paternal guardian in protecting his identity and blood rights.

Further examples of Joseph's attempt to gain power include his degradation of those who assume positions of power, including Catherine's daughter, Cathy, and Lockwood. Joseph regulates Cathy's "idleness," "taking a critical survey of the room" that she has neglected. He reiterates his role as a patriarchal disciplinarian, finding fault in her bad blood as she inherits her mother's "bad ways." In this case, bad blood is not bad because it is foreign but because it is unruly. Such surveillance of domestic productivity is telling as it illuminates his servant complex: Joseph practices the role of a servant while enforcing it on others. All individuals who visit or inhabit Wuthering Heights are relegated to the status of servant. Cathy nurses Heathcliff's son, Linton, until he dies, Hareton is a "common labourer," and even Lockwood "must share a bed with Hareton or Joseph" (15). Experiencing servitude as a perpetual burden, in feeding "the dogs" and "deposit[ing] his burden," Joseph degrades individuals in positions of privilege, treating Lockwood as a thief and Cathy as an "idle" housekeeper (15). It is Joseph rather than Heathcliff who instigates Lockwood's final act of resistance to the "humiliation" of being treated like a servant. He releases the dogs on him when Lockwood attempts to retrieve Joseph's "lantern" (16) to return to Thrushcross Grange in the night, effectively entangling a stranger in a family history stained by perpetual power struggles.

So potent is Joseph's influence that Catherine internalizes his religious reprimands as a child. We read Catherine's diary through Lockwood's perspective and find Joseph as an accomplice to the cruelty inflicted on Heathcliff and Catherine as ostracized others. The scene is meant to be comical but those subject to Joseph's preaching are congregates who are all in a position of disadvantage: "Heathcliff, [Catherine], and the "unhappy ploughboy." Hindley

reinforces Joseph's "three-hour" service as he and his wife engage in "foolish palaver" (21). Upon Catherine's resistance to reading prayer books, Joseph continues to assume the role of paternal disciplinarian, encouraging Hindley to inflict corporeal punishment as his father would have. This test of patriarchal rule, as I later show, is one that Nelly also inflicts on Edgar when she accuses him of being "too soft" (113) on the women of his household. Servants set the terms for effective domestic rule, associating paternity with masculinity. Should Hindley refuse, his authority as Joseph defines it, functions as a sign of weakness.

In Catherine's room, Lockwood reads her diary and dreams her nightmares. Joseph figures as a "guide" to a congregation that leads to Lockwood's of "public" "excommunica[tion]" (23). As Madden argues, the dream represents Joseph's "exile" of "Catherine and Heathcliff from Wuthering Heights" (131). Lockwood experiences Catherine's displacement within the home as moral codes dictate her childhood freedom. Catherine is found to be unruly by her father and is ruled by his servant. Reverend Jabez Branderham recounts the "odd[est] transgressions that I never imagined" (24) and when Lockwood as Catherine resists the reverend, he seeks Joseph's "cudgel" in defense only to find Joseph as his "most ferocious assailant" (25). Joseph becomes Lockwood's literal "assailant" when he releases the dogs on him for "staling t' lantern" (16). The revelation of Joseph as the ultimate "assailant" also foreshadows Nelly as ultimate traitor in severing Catherine's bond with both Heathcliff and Edgar Linton.

Nelly as Master

Though Heathcliff gains access to English society by obtaining the status of gentleman, which Nelly claims to be through questionable means, in the next world, access is impermissible. Nelly not only ostracizes Catherine and Heathcliff but demonizes them as "others" who have no place in a Christian heaven. She tells Catherine she is "not fit to go [to heaven] as all "sinners

would be miserable in heaven” (80). At the end of the narrative when Heathcliff is approaching death, she ostracizes his soul as “unfit...for heaven” (322). When he dies, Nelly claims, “I tried close his eyes...they would not shut: they seemed to sneer at my attempts, and his parted lips and sharp white teeth sneered too!” (324). Only through supernatural forms of existence that are non-Christian, Catherine as a child-ghost and Heathcliff as a “goblin,” can illicit desire find expression. The way in which Nelly reacts to Heathcliff toward the end of the novel continues to ostracize his identity and soul: “Is he a ghoul or a vampire?” (319). She questions his origins with a “sense of horror,” continuing to wonder, “But where did he come from, the little dark thing, harboured by a good man to his bane?” muttered Superstition” (319). Joseph does not defy Heathcliff as he expresses “superstitious dread” of his presence. Though Nelly considers herself as more sensible than the dogmatic Joseph, she accepts his supernatural response to Heathcliff’s unknown origins. She and “Joseph [believed] that conscience had turned his [Heathcliff’s] heart to an earthly hell” (314). Their parental role becomes more relevant as they guard the borders of civilization in this and the next world. Even as children, Joseph and Nelly describe Heathcliff and Catherine in alienating terms. Madden stresses Joseph’s spiritual banishment of Catherine and Heathcliff in the Earnshaw household: “that in sight of ‘heaven’ they are ‘nowts’” (149).

Although Nelly will depict her role as a positive one, a guardian of an ancient family and their lineage, as a character, she is better understood as a rival rather than a surrogate mother. Growing alongside Catherine and Hindley, it is important to emphasize Nelly’s age. She is not significantly older than her “foster-brother” and Catherine and as she is treated by Mr. Earnshaw as one of his children, she identifies herself as more a sibling. More importantly, though Catherine treats Nelly as a trusted “advisor,” (67) Nelly views Catherine as a rival. She confides that Catherine “had a wondrous constancy to old attachments” (65) even though she did not

reciprocate Catherine's feelings, admitting that she "did not like [Catherine], after infancy was past" (65). Her resistance to Catherine increases when she becomes "the queen of the countryside" (65). She "mock[s]" Catherine's conflicted state to "chasten" her "into more humility" (67) for she gains the attention of not one but two suitors when Edgar, the successor of Thrushcross Grange, expresses his desire for her. When Catherine gains Edgar as a suitor, Nelly loses power. Hindley revokes Nelly's authority to keep Catherine docile for she "brings honour to the family by an alliance with the Lintons" (89). Afterward, Nelly equates servitude to slavery as she describes Catherine as "tramp[ing] on us like slaves." In the Thrushcross Grange, Nelly loses further authority when her new master, Mr. Edgar, speaks "sternly" to her about her "pertness" (91). In resistance, Nelly warns Catherine: "those you term weak are very capable of being as obstinate as you" (98). On the surface, this warning references Edgar and Isabella's will to resist Catherine but beneath it implicates Nelly's resistance. Ultimately, Nelly is warning Catherine of her "obstinacy" in keeping Edgar ignorant of Catherine's vulnerable condition in illness. In a fit of madness, Catherine discovers that Nelly "played traitor [who] seek[s] elf-bolts to hurt us" (128). The reference to "us" remains ambiguous as it refers to either Heathcliff or Edgar, but Nelly is complicit in severing both bonds. She is the cause of Heathcliff's abandonment of Catherine, allowing Catherine to divulge her desire for Edgar with Heathcliff as witness. The second betrayal involves her refusal to warn Edgar of Catherine's fragile mental state when she is taken ill.

Taking matters into her own hands when Heathcliff returns, Nelly resolves to "check the spread of [such] bad influence at the Grange" (110) in preserving the fragile relationship between "master, mistress, and servant" (161). Like Joseph's influence on Mr. Earnshaw, she mediates her authority through her master's will. She prevents Edgar from "yield[ing]" to his wife's "exhib[ition] [of] frenzy" (118) in losing Heathcliff and constructs an image of Catherine as

spoiled or “marred” (71). While Edgar courts Catherine, Nelly discourages him from marrying her for the same reason, warning him of her “marred” condition. This image helps to feed the cultural stereotype of femininity as manipulative display of unrestrained emotion. It is especially effective on Edgar for he interprets her self-imprisonment as an act of manipulation.

Nelly takes further secret pleasure in witnessing the altercation she has caused between Edgar and Catherine: “I said nothing when I met the master coming towards the parlour; but I took liberty of turning back to listen whether they would resume their quarrel together” (117). The question of whether Catherine is faking madness is not as important as Nelly asserting the position of patriarch, regulating both Edgar and Catherine into submission. When Nelly defends herself against the accusation of causing Catherine’s illness, she tells Edgar, “I didn’t know that, to humour her, I should wink at Mr. Heathcliff. I have performed the duty of a faithful servant in telling you, and I have got a faithful servant’s wages” (127). The image of Catherine as adulterous wife who “allow[s] herself...wide latitude” is constructed by Nelly. To the morally high-grounded Edgar, Nelly can make appeal for patriarchal regulation. Unable to check both his wife and sister’s desire for Heathcliff, she tests Edgar’s claim on his household and masculinity by questioning his patriarchal fitness. Nelly further justifies her silence by arguing for her sense of loyalty in carrying out Edgar’s will. Yet, reverting to her loyalty is another means of masking her agenda for we’ve noted her penchant for instigating drama between Catherine and her lovers. Nelly maintains that her involvement is limited to her “faithful servant’s wages,” but she has also warned Edgar of the “harm in being too soft” (113), guiding him to enforce disciplinary measures to regulate Catherine desire for Heathcliff.

She emphasizes her role as only the “sensible soul” who can save Edgar and Catherine from the moral contaminant that is Heathcliff’s desire. Catherine asserts authority as mistress of

the household in trying to control Heathcliff, making him “cower” for plotting to use Isabella for her property. However, Nelly undermines her authority by restraining her through Edgar’s will. When Catherine orders Nelly to remain uninvolved: ““To hear you, people might think you were the mistress...You want setting down in your right place” (111), Nelly responds in defiance, escalating domestic disorder in divulging Heathcliff’s plan to marry Isabella to Edgar, admitting to Lockwood: “She [Catherine] did not know my share in contributing to the disturbance, and I was anxious to keep her in ignorance” (116). Although Catherine attempted to act as mistress and maintain domestic tranquility, Nelly assumed her place, especially after Catherine denied her the title of mistress. She is successful for Catherine remains ignorant: “I could have soon diverted [Heathcliff] from Isabella, and the rest meant nothing” (116). Stripped of power, Catherine is unable to assert authority over either Edgar and Heathcliff as both men are under Nelly’s control.

Her tyranny is most evident as Catherine’s daughter’s nurse. When Cathy Linton and Linton Heathcliff, Heathcliff and Isabella’s son, begin exchanging love letters, Nelly acts as an obstacle. So vicious is Nelly’s criticism of Cathy’s desire that she can hardly be characterized as a nurturing, maternal figure. She belittles Cathy’s justification for marrying Linton as “unprincipled” “nonsense” (220). As in her mother’s case, she ridicules Cathy’s assertion of love, analogizing it to the absurdity of her “loving the miller who comes once a year to buy our corn” (221). Nelly believes such a thing is impossible, not because it is out of the realm of reason but because her servitude denies her sexuality (221). When Lockwood returns to Wuthering Heights at the novel’s conclusion, Joseph does not recognize him, scorning Nelly as he exclaims, “it warn’t a crying scandal that she should have followers at her time of life” (299). Even though Steedman’s sees Nelly as limited by her class in reacting subversively to her circumstances as a domestic servant, she admits that “there is something perspicacious in Joseph’s rudeness here, or coquettish in

Nelly's behaviour...as she welcomes him [Lockwood] to Wuthering Heights as if it were for all the world her domain and she its mistress" (205).⁵ Nelly's servitude demands denial of her sexuality and the narrative of "loving the miller who comes once a year to buy our corn" (221). In an act of resistance, it is displaced first on Catherine and then her daughter, who at her father's orders and Nelly's observance of his orders, is caged within the boundaries of Thrushcross Grange. As Nelly self-regulates her desire, she enforces the law of self-regulation on both Catherine and Cathy, not as an effort to correct their immaturity but in competition for a title that Nelly can never acquire through marriage. She thus confiscates Isabella's letters, takes "them with [her] to examine at leisure," possibly in vicarious pleasure, and critiques them as "foolish," inexperienced, and plagiarized, "borrowed from a more experienced source" (220). Never courted and married, Nelly cannot gain the title of mistress unless she usurps it. In the end, she degrades Cathy's love letters as "worthless trash," a product of "girlish vanity," (222) and harasses her into burning them before she reveals her secret to her father. Such regulation of desire amounts to patriarchal cruelty involving the classic Gothic conditions of confinement, degradation, and intimidation. In denying her mistresses their desire, she regulates their conduct, maintaining her status as disciplinarian while validating the soundness and rationality of her character.

As faithful servant, Nelly restores noble bloodlines, but as usurper, she replaces master and mistress with Cathy and Hareton, the more controllable counterparts to Heathcliff and Catherine. Though she instigates Cathy's marriage with Linton, in permitting her into Heathcliff's home, Linton's frail body hinders the establishment of progeny. His death leaves Cathy with the only male suitor, Hareton, an ideal candidate for marriage as it ensures the continuation of a pure lineage. Nelly approves this union as she "conceal[s] [her] joy under an angry countenance" (189) when Cathy and Hareton meet. She regards "in a measure" Hareton and Cathy as "[her] children,"

and continues her role as surrogate guardian, except that she rules “[her] children” with an authoritative grip.

These episodes with her sexual rivals reveal Nelly in her most tyrannical state as it becomes evident that her interest does not lie in protecting her “children” but in usurping their title. She is successful for when Lockwood returns to the Wuthering Heights and requests to see the “master” about “business,” Nelly tells him that he must “settle” his business with her as she “acts” for Cathy and “there’s nobody else” (298). The educated Cathy is more than ready to “manage [her] affairs” but Nelly acquires domestic as well as legal authority. Before this final meeting, Nelly admits to Lockwood that “it struck [her that] all the misfortunes of [her] employers sprang [from] many derelictions of [her] duty” (267). She perceives this to be the case the night she is imprisoned in Wuthering Heights with Cathy. Regarding that night, she tells Edgar that “Heathcliff forced [her] to go in” but admits to Lockwood that it “was not quite true” (272) as she goes inside to Wuthering Heights voluntarily and with little resistance (260). Both the reader and Lockwood find Nelly admitting to a lie, one of the many liminal details provided to assess her credibility. If Nelly has presented herself as untrustworthy, her narrative of the triumph of noble blood over illicit desire cannot hold as true either. Rather, it is simply that, a narrative constructed to mask her agenda, one that manifests from a desire to be treated as an equal and act as a mistress/master of the home.

CONCLUSION

In examining six Gothic novels from the late eighteenth century to the nineteenth century, this conclusion highlights relationships between themes, characters, and ideological positions across these texts. Besides sharing commonalities that construct their role in the Gothic novel as functional, such as their credulous acceptance and fear of the supernatural, what qualities do servants share that seem to challenge normative definitions of servant identity? Superstitious nurse-maids, for instance, are distinct from other servants in their role as maternal figures and intimacy with their employers and their children. Thus, servants' presence is configured as a force that requires regulation for their excessive "talk" and fear of the supernatural can harm impressionable, young women and their rational educations. Walpole's Bianca, Radcliffe's Annette and Dorothee, and Brontë's Nelly are problematic figures for this reason. Their reaction to the supernatural can be contagious in their intimate proximity and impression on vulnerable youth. Yet, these women servants display ideological positions that, when compared, oppose the dominant narrative in their approach to validating or understanding supernatural phenomena.

Chapter one shows Bianca as championing middle-class values in opposition to aristocratic ideology further framed as a discursive competition between two narrative modes of novel-writing, the domestic and Gothic. She insists that "love" transcends class differences. Nelly, on the other hand, is hardly romantic in her attitude toward love. Rather, her opinions can be characterized as practical if not socially conservative. Although she encourages Heathcliff to construct his own narrative about his unknown birth and lineage, she vehemently discourages Catherine's daughter from pursuing her desire for Linton Heathcliff. In Nelly's case, desire usually remains subordinate to patriarchal authority, which outlines appropriate codes of feminine conduct. Bianca encourages Matilda to indulge her romantic fantasies but Nelly ensures that young Catherine remains obedient to her father and goes as far as burning her love letters.

Annette and Bianca display affective responses to the supernatural that readers and the heroine can indirectly indulge. Their terror and excessive reactions serve to release and express emotions both the reader and protagonist must restrain. Yet, they exhibit roles that are more than aesthetically functional, particularly when they adopt the role of “author” in the texts. Annette threatens domestic productivity when she narrates the tales of Udolpho in Count de Villefort’s chateau. Bianca narrates a tale of desire that creates sexual rivalry and competition for a prince in disguise. She creates drama when none exists by fabricating a story in which Isabella is made Matilda’s rival. In both texts, adopting authorial roles creates discord within the dominant narrative, threatening to reframe or change the course of narrative events.

Servant voices also embody a history that remains preserved in their experience and memory. Dorothee and Nelly share this quality as “old housekeepers” who retain their employers’ secrets. Lockwood further objectifies Nelly as a “fixture” within the household with no will or desires of her own. Though Radcliffe’s Dorothee does not display a transformative role in her novel, Brontë’s Nelly defies the identity of the “common” housekeeper and old maid by inhabiting the role of subject in which she displays an agenda for power and control. Other than Joseph, she is one of the few characters to provide a narrative history of both households. Like Lockwood, readers must rely on her subjective reconstruction of events. Dorothee reconstructs a repeated narrative of patriarchal abuse that serves to help the heroine combat evil. Her tale enables Emily, and the readers of the novel, to reveal the cruelties that stain Emily’s family history. However, Nelly provides a narrative that does not seem to serve a moral good but helps sustain her self-interested desire. Thus, unlike Dorothee, Nelly assumes a level of authority equal to a protagonist in whom she exhibits a subjectivity that shapes and determines the course of narrative events.

The nurse-maid's ideological position is also in contention with the narrator's agenda. As discussed, Walpole's narrator persistently silences the loquacious Bianca while Nelly and Lockwood engage in a competition over narrative authority. Such discursive tensions grant authority to these marginal figures, one that is on the same level as author. Thus, Bianca and Nelly construct oppositional narratives that defy the logic and purpose of the dominant narratives, forcing the reader to question the stability and consistency of textual meaning. Though chronologically distant, servant discourse in both novels provides Gothic writers opportunities to construct alternative approaches to interpreting supernatural phenomena that reject rational discourse. Bianca, for instance, exists in order to be silenced but continues to uphold views in opposition to the dominant narrative. Nelly inhabits the role of both character and narrator in Brontë's novel, further destabilizing meaning in the text. Lockwood's rational worldview conflicts with Nelly's superstitious and working-class perspective of the spiritual world. Unlike Bianca, the controlling narrative as Lockwood's narrative is not successful in overcoming Nelly's voice. Nelly's voice controls the text as far as the conclusion in which she constructs the supernatural as "other" or "raced." With unknown origins, she associates Heathcliff with the demonic and preternatural. Walpole's Bianca and Radcliffe's Annette and Dorothee remain marginal figures but Brontë's Nelly serves as the culminating servant figure who achieves complete narrative authority in Gothic narratives.

Servants' discourse also destabilizes narrative authority in Hogg's novel. The dominant perspective, that of the delusional Robert, is blatantly unreliable. Moreover, the editor who claims to patch the narrative and assign meaning to Robert's memoir proves insular in his understanding as well. As ethnographer and scholar, he remains an outsider to local history and national identity. Only locals seem to convey credibility. Additionally, the local dialect in which

a consistent narrative is expressed displays an authenticity that Robert and the editor lack. Such authenticity is not conveyed through Bronte's servants. Rather, Joseph's voice is presented as doctrinal and close-minded if not crude. Moreover, he displays little loyalty to his employers and often acts out of self-interest. While servant voices are associated with authenticity and moral consistency in Hogg's work, Bronte's servants seem to be morally lacking throughout the text. However, both Bronte's Joseph and Hogg's servants express frustration and resistance to their class position as servants. Hogg's Samuel is unable to obtain "fair wages" from his delusional employer who insists that he has already paid him. Hareton and Young Catherine destroy Joseph's bushes, his only claim to property. For these male servants, claims to property and wages function as a claim to manhood in a culture that associates masculinity with wealth. Conflicts involving gender and class identity, as amongst women servants, are inextricably bound and embodied in the servant figure.

The Gothic novels in this study demonstrate the ways in which servants empower their voices through their marginality, inscribing subversive agendas within rational discourse to aid those disadvantaged by gender and class. In this configuration, superstitious voices and supernatural tales do not serve as irrational counterparts to empirical discourse but provide a legitimate communal ethics. Supporting this analysis is a study of servant voices in anti-Gothic discourse as it highlights hierarchical patterns of empirical experience and knowledge that is further reiterated in the Gothic novel. Anti-Gothic criticism displays the persuasive danger of servant voices, voices that circulate at a pace that circumvents regulation. Servant voices and their tales also produce a pedagogy of reading Gothic texts that resists hegemonic structures as constructive reading entails validating communal voice and experience of supernatural agency.

How are servants able to exert a rhetoric of resistance? The novel, particularly as a late

eighteenth-century text, illuminates individual experience as a microcosmic representation of society. Should authors inscribe the voice of the people within this internal and subjective reality, they will do so by maintaining the novel's structural integrity. Thus, novelists embed, frame, and interweave communal voices. However, what makes representations of communal voice in the Gothic novel compelling is not its pressure on privileged voices but its ability to overturn the logic and pedagogy of rational discourse. Bianca, with her language of love trumping class, threatens the restoration of legitimate monarchical rule. Annette, Dorothee, and the country people in Radcliffe's novels possess knowledge of birth-rights and loss that is resolved four hundred pages into the narrative. More importantly, they push the heroine out of an internal and comforting world in order to empower her, showing her that the product of irrational fear does not originate her in femininity but in male power and the abuse of such power. In Hogg's novel, individual experience and spirituality are incoherent subjects that defy interpretation until servants and country laborers convey an ethics of religious reform. Scott does not privilege any one perspective but the voice of the people is central, as either a blood-thirsty mob or through an innocent country-woman. Nelly might constitute one of the most compelling and powerful servant characters in Western literature. Her discourse is presented through Lockwood's perspective but maintains undeniable autonomy. She is the center and Lockwood inhabits the marginal. She not only orates the story but witnesses it, and arguably, instigates the outcome of certain events to her own benefit.

Servant discourse legitimates the Gothic aesthetic, or the art of telling the ghost or supernatural story. Although authors conform to social expectations by caricaturing the credulity of superstitious servants, they also resist norms and expected patterns of behavior in legitimating lower-class voices. The novel induces and produces an experience of reading that it also comments

on. The Gothic novel, in turn, continues conversations about reading, learning, and self-reform by assigning truth-value to servants' voices and their Gothic tales.

Notes

Introduction

¹ To reference Hogarth's painting, see Derek Jarrett's *England in the Age of Hogarth. Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism* began as *Enthusiasm Delineated*. Hogarth edited his first painting to satirize the latest accounts of local stories about supernatural events circulating in print media (214-222).

² See Jarrett's work to review a detailed description of the changes Hogarth made to his second painting and for an overview of these popular stories as they are depicted in Hogarth's works (214).

³ See Chapter one, "The Case of the Cock Lane Ghost," in Emma Clery's *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction: 1762-1800* for a discussion of the circulation of local stories about supernatural events in print media, such as the appearance of the Cock Lane Ghost in London's newspaper, *Public Ledger*, and satirical adaptations of the local events and stories in plays like Joseph Addison's *The Drummer: or, The Haunted House*.

⁴ For scholarship on Gothic fiction, antiquarianism, and preromantic poetry, see Katie Trumpener's *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire*. Trumpener discusses discourses of the fake and original, of ideology and origin, by accounting poets and historians' collection and interpretation of ballad and bardic poetry. Welsh, Scottish, and Irish authors read bardic poetry as a representation of an "authentic" culture unblemished by English colonization. Maureen McLane's *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, and the Making of British Romantic Poetry* further argues that interest in ballads stimulates debates about the right of nations to a history and culture of their own. Rosemary Sweet's *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* continues this conversation in which "the Danish skalds [became] the ancestors of the minstrels of the medieval period, from whom in turn the literary tradition of Chaucer and English vernacular poetry derived" (224).

⁵ For discussions on Gothic fiction and the romance, see James Watt's *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict, 1764-1832*, Ian Duncan's *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens*, David Richter's *The Progress of Romance: Literary Historiography and the Gothic Novel*, and Michael Gamer's *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation*. Scholarship on booksellers, the circulation of Gothic novels, and William Lane's Minerva Press include William St. Clair's *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, Watt's *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict, 1764-1832*, and Deidre Lynch's *The Economy of Character: Novels Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning*.

⁶ For further exposition on Charles Dickens' servants, see chapter 2 and 5 of Jonathan Taylor's *Mastery and Slavery in Victorian Writing*.

⁷ For criticism on the Gothic novel, gender, and reading practices, see Anne Mellor's *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writing in England 1780-1830*, Nancy Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*, Alan Richardson's *Literature, Education, and Romanticism: Reading as a Social Practice*, and Jacqueline Pearson's *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation*.

⁸ See Emma Clery's and Robert Miles's *Gothic Documents, A Sourcebook 1700-1820*.

⁹ See Adam Fox's *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* for discussion of similar reactions to servant voices in early modern England, p. 193-4.

Chapter 1

¹ See Emma Clery "The Genesis of 'Gothic' Fiction" in which she discusses *Otranto*'s privileged generic status. Clery challenges this position by showing how both the usage of the words "Gothic" and "novel" engage various discursive practices and aesthetic movements in the late eighteenth-century.

² See Frederick Frank's edition of *Otranto* for reviews, p. 290-93.

³ See Walpole's response to debates about authorship in Clery's "The Genesis of 'Gothic' Fiction."

⁴ In *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire*, Trumpener argues that Walpole's imposturing as a translator in the first edition to *Otranto* parodies the Ossian controversy (109-11). Watt agrees with Trumpener's assessment of Walpole as a "relentless skeptic about the testimonial authenticity of bardic poetry" (28). In *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Sweet further demonstrates Walpole's rejection of such national narratives. When finding fault with the methods historians/antiquarians use to recover historical texts, Walpole characterizes their studies as "'old wives tales'" (73).

⁵ Michael McKeon's *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740* investigates the interaction between old and new genres, the romance and novel, as a dialectic in which a critique of the past initiates a negation of its epistemological and social structures but also prompts a skeptical response to investment in "new"/novel forms.

⁶ See Colin Haydon *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England: A Political and Social Study* and Misty Anderson's *Imagining Methodism in 18th-Century Britain: Enthusiasm, Belief, and Borders of the Self* for further discussions on religious rhetoric in the eighteenth century.

⁷ Chapter 2, "The Rise of the Domestic Woman" in Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction*.

⁸ In "Horace Walpole and the Objects of Literary History" Mack suggests that Theodore's voice acts as a force of resistance to usurpation, I argue that he is a character whose agency is devoid of political motive.

Chapter 2

¹ See E.J. Clery and Robert Miles's *Gothic Documents: A Sourcebook 1700-1820*, a collection of critical essays on gothic literature and art, p.182-84.

² Although this chapter focuses on representations of the servant voices in Radcliffe's novels, extensive discussion has been devoted to gender and reading practices. See Jacqueline Pearson's *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation*, which outlines the feminization of reading practices as a socially productive activity to a solipsist performance. Anne Mellor's *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writing in England 1780-1830* further discusses the Gothic novel discursive relationship to the romance, but more specifically outlines gendered reading practices in chapter three, "Literary Criticism, Cultural Authority, and the Rise of the Novel."

³ See Mary Poovey's "Ideology and the *Mysteries of Udolpho*" and Jacqueline Howard's *Reading Gothic Fiction: A Bakhtinian Approach*.

⁴ See Clery's "The Genesis of 'Gothic' Fiction" in which she discusses Samuel Johnson's promotion of the "Richardsonian" model for novel-writing.

Chapter 3

¹ Jacqueline George's article, "Avatars in Edinburgh: *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and the Second Life of Hogg's Ettrick Shepherd," examines the shepherd as an "avatar" that Hogg reinvents in a "competing" textual space outside of the control of the "*Blackwood's* synthetic realm" (23). In "False Friends, Squeamish Readers, and Foolish Critics": The Subtext of Authorship in Hogg's *Justified Sinner* Regina B. Oost examines Hogg's personal history, arguing that *Confessions* presents conflicting voices in order to challenge "reader's tendency to conflate the writer with a single literary persona" (100).

² For a translation, see the Glossary by Graham Tullock, with additions by Ian Duncan in the Oxford edition of *Confessions*.

³ See Duncan's introduction to the Oxford Press edition of *Confessions*.

⁴ See Coleman Parsons *Witchcraft and Demonology in Scott's Fiction* in which he discusses "Scott's cautious and compromising treatment of the uncanny...his Addisonian mixture of practical scepticism and the theoretical belief" (13).

⁵ See Parsons *Witchcraft and Demonology in Scott's Fiction*, p. 12.

⁶ See Charlotte Sussman's article, "The Emptiness at the *Heart of Midlothian*: Nation, Narration, and Population," p. 104 and Celine Sabiron's "Crossing and Transgressing Borders in the *Heart of Midlothian*," p.82.

⁷ Parsons argues that "As far as the Scottish novels concerned, Scott's review of the Devil's intrusion into human affairs may appropriately end with this repeated hint that diabolism is passional, not supernatural" (195). Scott employs the supernatural to convey mental instability and disorder as well (190). I emphasize the implications of class and the imbalance of power depicted between man and his supernatural other.

⁸ See translation in the Penguin edition of *Mid-lothian*.

Chapter 4

¹ In "The Villain in *Wuthering Heights*," James Hafley discusses Nelly's ambition to assert "the same social level as the Earnshaws" (203) and obtain the position "of the mistress of the Grange" (209).

² Judith Stuchiner's "The Servant Speaks: Joseph's Version of *Wuthering Heights*."

³ William Madden's "*Wuthering Heights*: The Binding Passion."

⁴ London argues that Nelly's suppressed passion for Hindley unfolds on the margins of the story she tells (44).

⁵ Steedman's argues against the notion that Nelly acts as "an agent of patriarchy" by showing the ways she performs her duties "stoic[ally]" as a part of her labor contract (213).

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ABSTRACT**SERVANT VOICES AND TALES IN THE BRITISH GOTHIC NOVEL, 1764-1847**

by

REEMA BARLASKAR**August 2017****Advisor:** Dr. Michael Scrivener**Major:** British Literature**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

Servant Voices and Tales in the British Gothic Novel explores representations of servant identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth century Gothic novel, constructing an argument framed around the following questions: how is superstition and community represented in the Gothic novel; in what ways do servant voices interact with individual voice and experience; how do servant voices manifest in the marginal spaces surrounding the dominant narrative and rational discourse of the speaker/narrator; and what oppositional messages and subversive roles do servant characters convey? I emphasize servants' discourse within the context of domestic ideology, and as a result, analyze class, gender, and racial positions through servant/master relations in the home. To delineate the opposition between the rational/skeptic and the credulous/superstitious voice, I further analyze eighteenth-century anti-Gothic rhetoric and highlight hierarchical patterns of experience and knowledge further reiterated in the home. My argument demonstrates servant voices as not only disruptive to rational domesticity but also as subversive, showing how servants act as producers and consumers of superstition in an effort to resist and even parody rational discourse. Through marginal subtexts, they validate the supernatural tale within frame narratives, reports, testimony, and gossip, constructing a pedagogy for reading Gothic texts that opposes

oppressive patriarchal structures by employing the same literary mechanisms, oral tales of ghostly haunting, demonic possession, and illicit desire, that rational discourse assigns as vulgar and gratuitous.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Reema Barlaskar received her M.A. in English from Indiana University in 2010 and her Ph.D. in British Literature from Wayne State University in 2017, with an emphasis in History of the Book. Her research focuses on representations of literacy, orality, and marginality in the British Gothic novel of the long nineteenth century.