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It's Alive! The Gothic (Dis)Embodiment of the Logic of Networks

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THE GOTHIC (DIS)EMBODIMENT OF THE LOGIC OF NETWORKS

by

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ABSTRACT

IT'S ALIVE!

THE GOTHIC (DIS)EMBODIMENT OF THE LOGIC OF NETWORKS

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My thesis draws connections between today's network society and the workings of gothic literature in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century. Just as our society is formed and affected by the flow of information, the eighteenth-century culture of sensibility was formed by the merging and flow of scientific "technology" (or new scientific discoveries) and societal norms and rules. Gothic literature was born out of this science-society network, and in many ways embodies the ruptures implicit in it. Although gothic literature is not a network in the same sense as informationalism and the culture of sensibility are, gothic literature works according to the logic of networks on both a microscopic and macroscopic level. These correlations between networks and the gothic potentially illuminate two of gothic literature's strange and signature qualities: the subversive nature of the gothic convention, as well as the incredible—and almost inexplicable, considering its libeled and unpopular reputation—staying power of the genre.

In Chapter One, I compare the society of informationalism and the eighteenth-century society of sensibility in order to extrapolate a three-pronged logic of networks:

networks are subversive, networks are exclusive, and networks are based on codes. In Chapter Two I trace this logic through eighteenth-century gothic conventions as they are portrayed in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*. This shows how the gothic, like network society, depends on the paradox of containing the ideology that it subverts. In Chapter Three I investigate this paradox on a macroscopic level by examining the connections between "tales of terror" in *Blackwood's Magazine* and gothic literature in both the pre-Romantic and Victorian literature. By both adopting and subverting the conventions of Radcliffean gothic, these tales are a key node in the web of the gothic stretching backwards to into the eighteenth century, forwards into the nineteenth century, and beyond.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: Negotiating the Net

Gothic and the Logic of Networks

We live in an age of information. Mountains of it are available to us through the internet in a matter of keystrokes. We can chat with friends in Europe or conduct everyday business transactions with companies across the world literally anytime and anywhere. Through satellite networks we can watch any television show, see any movie, watch news from around the world, and even rewatch, replay, and manipulate the information to suit our schedules or preferences. As experts point out, information is becoming the commodity we market and exchange. In this increasingly informational and global society, issues about networks are becoming more and more a subject of scholarship across academic fields.

For the most part these networks are positive. Networks disseminate information to an increasingly large and diverse audience. Networks potentially decentralize power, empowering individuals, and equalizing society. On the other hand, as Manuel Castells points out in his book *The Rise of the Network Society*, this multifaceted network connection also leads to problems. The networks of informationalism shake personal identity (3). As individuals, companies, and other entities connect to the network, entities, or qualities of entities, that are not needed or do not serve the network are cut off. We thus become lost and disconnected with ourselves as we connect to the network. This disconnect has led to the rise of many counter-network movements, such as "religious fundamentalism, nationalism, ethnicity, localism, environmentalism, feminism, and sexual identity movements" (Van Dijk, "The One-Dimensional" 130). Although networks exponentially multiply our connections with others, they also lead to alienation

and exclusion. According to Castells, this happens as different entities become located within the virtual space/time continuum of the network, and others in real space and time. The rise of information available through the internet also brings into question the supremacy of the body and mind of man over the network of the computer.

Informationalism, or society based on the technology of information exchange, where power is located in the flow of that information, also has potential ramifications for and connections to the field of literature. Just as our society is formed and affected by the flow of information, the eighteenth-century culture of sensibility was formed by the merging and flow of scientific "technology" (or new scientific discoveries) and societal norms and rules. Gothic literature was born out of this science-society network, and in many ways embodies the ruptures implicit in it. Often, eighteenth-century gothic is seen as questioning and uncovering the faults of historical subjectivity (as in Robert Miles's *Gothic Writing 1750-1820: A Genealogy*). On the other hand, network society is often hailed as the structure that equalizes societal distributions of power—thus empowering the subject, and making individuals free to participate in society on their own terms (Van Dijk, "The One-Dimensional" 134). However, although the projected ends of gothic literature and the apparent goals of network society seem to be at cross-purposes, the workings of gothic literature illuminate the dysfunctions of network society, and dysfunctions of network society help us revisit and reinterpret the workings of the gothic. In this project I plan to examine the logic of networks as seen in informationalism as a way to also understand the logic of the culture of sensibility, as illustrated by, or embodied in, gothic literature. Gothic conventions, as we shall examine, allow gothic literature to take the conventions of sensibility beyond their logical (or illogical)

conclusions, thus offering a unique space to explore the network logic of sensibility, and the ruptures of network society.

The Age of Networks

In his book *The Network Society*, Jan Van Dijk compares the dawn of our age of informationalism to the beginning of modern civilization:

> New roads are being built at tremendous speed and yet we hardly notice. After all, the countryside is not being cleared by bulldozers and covered with rails, canals, or asphalt. These roads are for information and communication. Apparently they are part of an abstract, barely visible reality. We might see them as yet another cable running into our homes. We do not realize that they are making us dependent on yet another technology in our life. We are not only tied to roads, electricity cables, water pipes, gas lines, sewers, post-boxes, telephone wires and cable television, but also to computer networks such as the Internet (1).

We are in the midst of the construction and birth of a new culture. Networks, or interactions between two or more "nodes" or entities (Castells 470), have always been the basis for culture and society. However, although modern culture was built on roads and waterways, this new society is based on invisible roads. According to theorists in the field, the new technologies that form this network base are so powerful that a new unique culture is emerging. As Van Dijk says, "[w]ith little exaggeration, we may call the 21st century the age of networks. Networks are becoming the nervous system of our society, and we can expect this infrastructure to have more influence on our entire social and personal lives than did the construction of roads for the transportation of goods and

people in the past" (2). These new networks, then, not only facilitate the workings of society, they are those workings; networks are becoming/have become the embodiment of society.

As mentioned above, network theorists acknowledge that neither networks, nor societies based on information, are unique to the twenty-first century. According to Castells, information has been the basis for every society: "knowledge and information are critical elements in all modes of development, since the process of production is always based on some level of knowledge and in the processing of information" (17). Development is not possible without it. Van Dijk traces (with the help of historians J.R. and W. McNeill, authors of *The Human Web*) networks throughout time. He mentions five stages of development, beginning with the network of hunting and gathering, and ending with the global network of today, or Informationalism (22-23). Other economists and scholars of network society also point out other times in history where networks were part of society. For example, Eric van der Vleuten talks about how eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thinkers imagined civilizations based on networks: "philosophers and politicians argued that modern societies could be forged through waterway, road, railroad and telegraph line construction; by the 1830s Saint Simonian and future French Senator Michel Chevalier had coined this idea in the concept of the 'circulating civilization.'" (196).

However, although networks are not new, the network society that is emerging with informationalism is a historically unique event. For one, as Castells says, this network is based not on the production of goods, but on the production of information (17). Both Castells and Van Dijk also set the network of informationalism apart from the

other networks of all other ages because the workings of informationalism literally

depend on networks. In other words, as Castells puts it, in network society, "the power of

flows takes precedence over the flows of power" (469). Suddenly, society doesn't

function because of the power of each unit, but rather it functions on the exchange of

power between these units. Van Dijk articulates this another way: "in the network

society the relations themselves are getting more important at the expense of the elements

or units they are linking" (37). The people or companies that make up the network are

not important per se, but rather network society is based upon the interactions between

these people or companies.

Both Van Dijk's *The Network Society* and Castells's *The Rise of the Network*

Society focus primarily on the economic and technological network of informationalism.

However, the unique nature of network society—the power of the flows of power—

causes other aspects of this society's culture to take on network qualities. The

informational network, because it determines the nature of production, also influences

and determines related social aspects of society (Castells 18). For example, network

society threatens the power of patriarchalism as women become part of the network and

adopt new gender roles (2). Informationalism and its new media changes politics as

politicians are able to access more specific and individualized groups in increasingly

multi-media ways (3). Van Dijk briefly examines many other aspects of life that also

work according to the logic of networks. Perhaps most important to this project is Van

Dijk's identification of the nervous system and brain as a network. As he says, "[a]n

increasing number of neurobiologists and psychologists agree that the human mind works

with neuronal networks that are organized on a higher level in mental 'maps' in particular

regions of the brain. The connection between these maps (themselves being neuronal networks) also reveals a network form" (24-25). In this (relatively) young and new society, networks are everywhere; they are embedded in the political and economic stability of nation states, as well as the interactions between people, and the workings of cells. As a society dominated, even personified, by networks, informationalism presents an exceptionally relevant moment in which to explore the logic of networks.

The Logic of Networks

From this study of the network of networks, I would like to suggest three "laws" according to which the networks of informational society work, which serve to encapsulate the logic of networks: networks are subversive, networks are exclusive, and networks are accessed through codes. As mentioned above, and as pointed out by theorists that study network phenomena, network structures are not unique to the twenty-first century. The eighteenth-century culture of sensibility was a network of science and society that also followed the logic of networks. This extrapolated logic of networks becomes useful as we examine the interactions of the culture of sensibility and gothic literature. Gothic literature is not a network in the conventional sense discussed by Castells and Van Dijk. However, gothic convention feeds off the network-like interactions of science and society of the eighteenth century. As a result of this relationship between the gothic and the culture of sensibility gothic literature resembles both the logic and the form of networks in uncanny ways. These correlations between networks and the gothic potentially illuminate two of gothic literature's strange and signature qualities: the subversive nature of the gothic convention, as well as the incredible—and almost inexplicable, considering its libeled and unpopular reputation—

staying power of the genre.

Networks are subversive. This first law refers to the way that networks tend to reinforce the societal norms they seem to overcome. Van Dijk describes the subversive nature of networks well: "[c]ontemporary literature abounds with expressions such as 'we live in a connected world', a 'connected age', a 'human web' and a 'web society'.[sic] At first sight this seems rather peculiar because simultaneously there is much talk about individualization, social fragmentation, independence and freedom. On second thoughts, this coincidence is not that strange because both tendencies might be two sides of the same coin" (1). Networks, as Van Dijk says, by nature support one ideology (decentralization of power, connection, progress, globalization) and simultaneously embrace the opposite. Van Dijk discusses many instances of this paradoxical tendency. For example, he points out how networks promote both competition and cooperation. This conflict is "able to make a society richer and more powerful. [It] also make[s] it more stratified and unequal" (23). In the same way, by connecting individuals to multiple groups and organizations, and organizations to individuals, networks encourage opposing values of globalization and localization (29, 36). According to Van Dijk, this duplicity is why networks work. Networks thrive on a competing and conflicting combination of the individual and the global (40). The very structure of the network embodies this paradox. Individuals make up the network, but the network itself is global. As a global web made up of interconnected nodes (or individuals), the network is essentially essence, conflicted. And it will inevitably sometimes fail to fulfill the needs of the individual in the interest of the globe. Collective and individual needs are met and not met, according to how they fit into the demands and workings of the network. So,

even though networks claim to (and do, in many ways) decentralize power and enable the

individual, it also inevitably must ignore the needs of some individuals, privileging

particular needs over others. As I will investigate in Chapter Two, this conflict is also

embedded in the gothic. Gothic literature is, in many ways, a parody and critique of the

culture of sensibility. By exaggerating the principles of that culture through predictable

and melodramatic conventions, gothic literature reveals the social sickness of sensibility.

However, just as networks reinforce the power structures they overcome, the gothic

conventions that strain sensibility also serve to support it.

Networks are exclusive. The second law is closely related to the first, and refers

to the tendency of networks to exclude individuals and organizations. Although networks

connect theoretically numberless units (individuals, groups, nations, etc), those

connections also inevitably limited, and exclude units. The rise of networks fosters

"uneven development…between dynamic segments and territories of societies

everywhere, and those others that risk becoming irrelevant from the perspective of the

system's logic. Indeed, we observe the parallel unleashing of formidable productive

forces of the informational revolution, and the consolidation of black holes of human

misery in the global economy, be it in Burkina Faso, South Bronx, Kamagasaki, Chiapas,

or La Courneuve" (Castells 2). Anyone/thing that does not fulfill the needs of the

network is cut off from it. This exclusion of groups leads to another level of subversion,

as the excluded group forms their own system of meaning, whether outside the Net, as

Castells says above, or inside the Net, as Van Dijk argues (25). By eliminating groups or

individuals, networks also invite those groups to exclude the network in turn.

Networks also exclude individuality. As Castells states, "global networks of

instrumental exchanges selectively switch on and off individuals, groups, regions, and even countries, according to their relevance in fulfilling the goals processed in the network, in a relentless flow of strategic decisions. It follows a fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism, and historically rooted, particularistic identities. Our societies are increasingly structured around a bipolar opposition between the Net and the Self" (3). Thus, again, even though networks seem to endorse individuality as each unit in a network has theoretical opportunities to connect with potentially infinite other units, in practice, the needs of the network preclude some connections and qualities. Also, even though networks connect us to each other, at the same time they isolate us as these connections become virtual rather than actual. As Castells points out, connections between real people and spaces are overpowered and "fragmented" by the power of the new technological network (476). Van Dijk notes the damage this fragmentation visits on communities: "[t]raditional local collectivities such as communities, extended families and large bureaucracies are fragmenting" (35).

Michael Gamer discusses the affinity between gothic literature and exclusion and fragmentation in his book *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation*. His argument centers around Romantic writers and critics' simultaneous rejection and exclusion of the gothic, as well as their interest in and use of the gothic in their own writing. Writers such as Coleridge, Wordsworth, and even gothic novelists, both ridicule the gothic, and also incorporate the gothic into their writing. Gothic literature, as illustrated in this last point, lead to a fragmentation among critics, readers, and writers of the gothic: "individuals often occupy both halves of [the critical and popular reception of the gothic] simultaneously by reading, reviewing, and writing gothic

texts" (25). Thus, like networks, gothic literature leads to exclusion and fragmentation

(in genre, in readers, writers, and critics) but at the same time, as Gamer claims in his

book, and as I shall illustrate in my third chapter, the gothic also works as a unifying and

inclusive force as its conventions are found across time and across genres.

      Networks are accessed through codes. The third "law" of the logic of networks

is inextricably tied to subversion and exclusion. Informationalism, as a network born out

of the clash between technology and society, is based on code. Digital codes break up

information, and send it along the web of the network to different units. The code is what

makes informationalism so convenient and work so well. As Van Dijk says, "[the] most

important effect of using digital code is the break-up of the traditional linear order of

large units of information and communication such as texts, images, sounds, and

audiovisual programs, in such a way that they can be transformed into hyperlinks of

items liable to be perceived and processed in the order that the reader, viewer, or listener

wants" (9). The code of the network allows information to be processed and passed; the

code makes information marketable, and thus is the basis of informationalism itself.

Although this, as Van Dijk says, frees those in the network (the readers and viewers) to

access information in creative and personalized ways, those who cannot access the

network, or those that do not have the code, are excluded from the information altogether.

Van Dijk articulates this well: "the use of codes makes networks more selective in their

operations…. Though they are appropriate to connect everybody and to spread

information and communication in principle, they tend to lead to greater inequality in our

present society and organizations in practice" (40). Units that cannot access the code also

cannot access the network, and are thus excluded from it.

This "law" also plays out in gothic literature. By using the language (or code) of sensibility, gothic convention accesses the meanings and assumptions implicit in the culture. As I will discuss in Chapter Two, gothic literature exploits that access in order to subvert the culture of sensibility, stretching the ideas of that culture to the point of foolishness, and exposing its hypocrisies and contradictions. In Chapter Three I explore how gothic literature is also accessed in its turn through gothic codes. This access interconnects literature across boundaries of time and space and forms a web of the gothic.

Thus, according to the logic of these three laws, networks work paradoxically. Although our network society decentralizes power and frees us to access information, communities, companies, and individuals, it simultaneously reinforces the opposite: fragmentation of units, exclusion of groups, destabilization of personal identity. Informationalism is progressive. Scholars examine the subversive nature of networks with concern for the future. However, just as networks propel society forward into the twenty-first century, gothic literature pulls it back. An examination of the gothic, as I have indicated above, reveals corresponding anxieties about subversion, exclusion, and codes, depositing our three laws and the logic of networks firmly in eighteenth-century society.

Network of Nerves: The Culture of Sensibility

The connection between our twenty-first century society based on information and the eighteenth century is referenced, albeit perhaps unintentionally, at the beginning of *The Network Society*. As I quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Van Dijk says that "[n]etworks are becoming the nervous system of our society" (2). He references here the

foundation for sensibility. Whereas networks are the nervous system for

informationalism today, in the eighteenth century the nervous system was the network of

civil society. In the late seventeenth century Newton, Locke, Willis, and others began to

study the intricate relationship between the brain and the nerves. Newton describes this

relationship in *Opticks*: "'Do not the Rays of light in falling upon the bottom of the eye

excite Vibrations…Which, being propagated along the solid Fibres of the optick Nerves

into the brain cause the sensation of seeing?'" Such vibrations 'convey into the Brain the

impressions made upon all the Organs of Sense'" (qtd. in Barker-Benfield 5). The nerves

take vibrations to the brain, and the brain interprets them. The discovery of this new

network of nerves resulted in a paradigm shift: reason was no longer the supreme

motivation for action and understanding, rather action and perception were thought to be

motivated by the body's contact with the world (Jones 1). Knowledge, then, became

intimately and inescapably attached to physicality. Locke's *tabula rasa* stemmed from

this idea. Human beings are born without innate knowledge or predetermined

proclivities, but develop them through their sensory perceptions (Barker-Benfield 3).

Anatomist Thomas Willis also championed this idea, arguing that the soul and the brain

were a single entity and that "[t]he 'nerves alone' were to be 'held responsible for all for

sensory impressions, and consequently for knowledge'" (3).

This connection between knowledge and feeling, or the mind and the body, gave

birth to the culture of sensibility. Just as the network of information society comes from

a clash between technology and society, sensibility emerges from the network of

medicine and science, and society. The culture of sensibility was a crucial force in the

way that the eighteenth-century society viewed of the nature of man and the nature of

society. Aileen Douglas, in her book about literature and the body in Tobias Smollett's writing, discusses this impact. Speaking of Locke in a representative way, she says, "Locke is not simply saying that bodies affect other bodies. He is also saying that bodily experience, what we sense and feel, is primary in what we know and what we are. Locke articulates, and in some measure inspires, the eighteenth-century preoccupation with the physical" (xiii). Through sensibility's view of physiology and the importance of feeling in the acquisition of knowledge, the gap between physical experience and reason narrowed.

Locke's idea of the body and mind as a web of sensations generated social anxiety. If sensuality was the defining characteristic of man, what separates men from monsters, or men from animals? These ideas begged the question of a definition for mankind separate from animals or other living entities (Douglas 6). Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*, as Douglas points out, is a great example of this. By examining all of the feelings of the body, Hume declares that mankind loses itself (19). However, as Douglas points out, "[f]orced by his own method to deny his own existence, Hume seeks more cheerful conclusions elsewhere" (19). Hitting dead-ends in trying to separate men from monsters through merely physiological logic, Hume, and other philosophers of the eighteenth-century, "remake" the body.

Interestingly, they define this new idea of the body through the logic they have just rejected, the network of nerves, extending the way the mind and body work to how bodies among bodies work: "society, like the body, was united by a subtle, invisible force. Sympathy between body parts allowed the heart to affect the skin and the brain to affect the limbs, and, eventually, sympathy of exactly the same kind allowed individual

bodies to affect one another, drawing isolated beings into a coherent, integrated society"

(Douglas 17). Just as the nerves and brain connect all the parts of the body, bodies

connect all parts of society. Sensibility came to mean not only the vibrations of the

nerves to the brain, but the social and humane feelings for fellow creatures, identifying

physical sensation not only with acquisition of knowledge, but with social value. As

Barker-Benfield puts it, "During the eighteenth century, [the physiology of the body]

became a paradigm, meaning not only consciousness in general but a particular kind of

consciousness, one that could be further sensitized in order to be more acutely responsive

to signals from the outside environment and from inside the body (xvii). Sensibility

became not only an expression about the state of one's nerves, but also referred to the

sensitivity and level of one's humanity. The eighteenth-century fixation on human

feelings, and privileging of "sensitive" natures, led to many other movements in the

culture of sensibility. Philanthropy, which I will discuss in Chapter Two, is an offshoot

of sensibility. Also, as Barker-Benfield discusses, this new view of the nervous system

caused a shift in the spheres of men and women, leading, at least partially, to more

freedom and autonomy for women (xxvii).

This network of science and society resulted in a massive shift in the ideology of

eighteenth-century Great Britain as manifested in the culture of sensibility. The

assumptions and beliefs of sensibility become the base for gothic convention. As the rest

of this thesis will argue, the logic of this eighteenth-century network is imbedded in

gothic literature, and is the starting point for understanding the gothic through the lens of

networks.

The Logic of Sensibility

Chris Jones, in *Radical Sensibility: Literature and Ideas in the 1790s*, uses language similar to that of network scholars to describe the effects of the merge of science and feeling on eighteenth-century society. Speaking of the ideology of the culture of sensibility, he says that "[i]n social thinking, the trend was to see society less as a mechanism and more as a system of relationships based on social sympathy" (2). The logic of this "system of relationships" follows the same three laws as the logic of informationalism: sensibility is subversive, sensibility is exclusive, and sensibility is accessed through codes.

Sensibility is subversive. The first law of sensibility, like the first law of informationalism, refers to the culture of sensibility's tendency to subvert ideals it seems to enforce. Sensibility, as discussed above, came to mean the manifestation of a person's sensitivity to outward stimuli, particularly the suffering of fellow creatures. It thus encouraged humane feelings towards others, and used science and the nervous system to validate the naturalness of those feelings. However, because sensibility provided a universal definition of polite and refined conduct, it simultaneously and inevitably conventionalized that conduct. In other words, by labeling particular feelings and manifestations of those feelings as "natural," the culture of sensibility also conventionalizes those "natural" feelings. Chris Jones points out this contradiction: although "[sensibility was a]pparently an appeal to unconditioned natural feelings, it was also a social construction which translated prevailing power-based relationships into loyalties upheld by 'natural' feelings." (7). He uses the example of familial love as "natural," which thus demanded familial love of anyone of sensibility. By claiming that natural feelings were those aroused in a sufficiently sensitive nervous system, the culture

of sensibility "denaturalizes" those feelings; in this way, sensibility makes conventional what it asserts as natural.

Philanthropy, one of the main offspring of the culture of sensibility, is also subversive. Van Sant, in her book *Eighteenth-century Sensibility and the Novel*, discusses the dual nature of philanthropy. She examines several eighteenth-century philanthropic projects and the way that the presentation of the destitute invited opposing feelings of pity and curiosity: "the public presentations of the recipients of philanthropic benefits show them to be simultaneously objects of pity and experimental material, and further that the experiencing beings brought into view in order to create pity were the location of the institutions; socially conservative psychological experiments" (17). These projects encouraged feelings of pity in their audience for their objects of charity, and depended on the charitable motivations of those feelings in the audience for subscriptions and donations. However, philanthropic projects also depended on the excitement of curiosity in the audience. Thus, while claiming altruism as motivation, philanthropy also depended on voyeurism.

Gothic convention borrows this quality from the logic of sensibility in several ways. As I will discuss in Chapter Two, and as I discussed earlier in this chapter, the gothic adopts the ideology of sensibility and extends it to the point of the ridiculous, thus subverting that ideology by exposing its hypocrisy. The gothic also manifests the quality of subversion in the surface functions of its conventions. As I will also discuss in Chapter Two, gothic style depends largely on the creation of pleasure in terror, often accomplishing this by partially veiling potentially terrible (or titillating) sights. In this way, gothic convention depends on calling attention to, or revealing, what it is

simultaneously concealing; in other words, gothic convention thrives on the subversion of

its concealments. Sensibility functions in the same way. Philanthropy, for instance,

depends on concealing the voyeurism of the audience behind altruism. By justifying the

curiosity, pity simultaneously conceals it, but also makes it palatable—thus bringing it

respectably to light.

     Sensibility is exclusive. The second "law" of the logic of sensibility refers to the

inevitable concealment of individuals or groups or their qualities, in the culture of

sensibility's quest to advocate particular people and ways of feeling. In other words,

although sensibility champions humanity and fellow feeling, it also excludes groups

within humanity, thus revealing groups, or aspects of groups, at the expense (thus the

concealment) of others. For example, the spiritualization of sensibility, on the one hand,

privileged sentiment, but on the other it also labeled it as a weakness. Females were

thought to be more sensitive than males. While men used reason, women had feeling

(Barker-Benfield 1). This would seem to elevate women, and in some ways it did.

However, sensibility at the same time degraded them, and limited woman's social

capabilities. As Barker-Benfield points out, women were forced to accept some social

freedoms and give up hope for others: "literate women consolidated their claim to mind

and domesticity at the expense of politics and the sexual promise in sensibility" (xxviii).

By labeling women's bodies and minds as more "sensitive," sensibility highlights

particular qualities, like gentleness and natural goodness, while sacrificing other qualities,

such as intelligence. Thus, while revealing the sensitivity of women's nature, sensibility

also conceals their social potential.

     Philanthropy also excludes groups or individuals from the network of sensibility.

According to Van Sant, philanthropic projects strove to bring the poor to the attention of society. The eighteenth-century parochial system worked to make the poor and destitute invisible. Polite society did not like to be plagued by "throngs, swarms [and] hordes" of the poor (23). Philanthropists, on the other hand, wanted these groups to be visible. Their task, then, was to make the multitudinous poor palatable to the sensibility audience. They did this by representing the group through carefully crafted individuals that "appeal[ed] to the sympathy of the observers" (23). Philanthropists took small numbers of reformed prostitutes or street children and displayed them at public assemblies, asking for donations.

Van Sant gives many specific examples of these types of displays. In one instance, repentant prostitutes from the Magdalen House stood in view of the congregation on Sundays. Philanthropist William Dodd would give impassioned descriptions of their destitution, and the subsequent relief and rescue offered by the Magdalen House. As Van Sant states, Dodd makes "an imaginative creation supported by the physical presence of the women who act as illustrations of the type. An audience is potentially moved both by the intensity of the created type and by the many examples of it displayed before their eyes" (32-33). By creating an object upon which an audience can gaze, Dodd, and many others like him, makes visible the plight of the poor. However, as Van Sant points out, this display actually reveals a fiction. The poor on display become an object to raise virtuous feelings in the hearts of the gazers, rather than real people suffering from actual impoverishment.   Thus, in an effort to cultivate sentiment, the network of sensibility excludes at least part of the humanity and reality of the "objects" that evoke the sentiment.

Sensibility also excludes lower levels of society generally, without the particularity of philanthropic projects. As mentioned above, the network of sensibility conventionalizes natural feeling. By bringing manifestations of these feelings into relief, and by making those feelings indications of humanity, sensibility also hides those who are not "sensitive." Hume makes this distinction in his refiguring of the body. He says, "[t]he skin, pores, muscles, and nerves of a day-labourer are different from those of a man of quality: So are his sentiments, actions and manners. The different stations of life influence the whole fabric, external and internal; and these different stations arise necessarily, because uniformly, from the necessary and uniform principles of human nature" (qtd. in Douglas 20). The conflation of a particular nervous system with a particular aristocratic type of personality excludes those who do not fit that type. Sub-levels of society in this system become sub-human, and are rejected in the culture of sensibility.

Gothic literature is also exclusive. As I discussed in the previous sections, gothic literature thrives on, and causes, fragmentation and subversion. Romanticists, as Gamer has pointed out, tried to define Romantic literature through the exclusion of the gothic, even as they included gothic elements into their own writing. Also, as mentioned previously, although critics and writers of the gothic seem to adopt mutually exclusive opinions of gothic literature, critics often wrote gothic literature, and gothic writers often critiqued it. The gothic is also exclusive at the level of convention. Gothic convention functions largely by creating pleasure in terror through calling attention to what it is concealing. In this way, gothic convention simultaneously includes and excludes visions of reality. The suspense and movement of gothic plots often hang on this paradox.

Although I will address this characteristic of gothic convention in Chapter Two, Jane

Austen's heroine of *Northanger Abbey* highlights well this convention in her

conversation with her dear friend Isabella in the Pump Room at Bath. Catherine is unable

to stop thinking and talking about what is concealed behind the black veil in the castle at

Udolpho: "what can it be?—But do not tell me—I would not be told upon any account. I

know it must be a skeleton, am I sure it is Laurentina's skeleton" (61). As they continue

on to other subjects, she repeatedly returns to the veil: "Oh! The dreadful black veil! My

dear Isabella, I am sure there must be Laurentina's skeleton behind it" (63). The veil

calls attention to what is behind it as effectively as it conceals it. In this way, the gothic

both excludes the audience from reality (it is really a wax figure put there by some

inconsequential priest) as it introduces another (the suspense of possible things behind the

veil).

   Sensibility is accessible through codes. Like informationalism, the culture of

sensibility can be accessed through codes. This code makes up the network of science

and social feeling, and functions on two levels. On one level, the code is made up of

terms that are applicable to both fields. Van Sant points out that "excite" and "stimulate"

can refer to either scientific procedures on the nervous system, or to changes that happen

in emotions. As she says, '[b]oth terms occur regularly in descriptions of psychological

and physiological sensibility" (50). Barker-Benfield also discusses the common language

of the scientific network, listing many medical terms that have come to have meaning for

sensibility as they are used in sentimental novels, such as "fibres," "fancy," "nerve,"

"impression," "spirits" and "vapours" (17-19). He cites many eighteenth-century novels

that use these words to signal the level of sensibility in their characters. For example, in

The Man of the World, the villain's nerves are deadened by repeated acts of depravity, and he is "'unsusceptible' of 'the delight which the finer sensations produce, which thrill through the bosom of delicacy and virtue'" (17). On another level, the culture of sensibility works through a code of conventions. In this culture, people who have high levels of sensibility also have delicate health and appetites. They are sensitive to anything rough or untempered, such as loud noises and bright lights, and are subject to fits and to fainting. For example, Samuel Richardson's doctor, George Cheyne, believed himself to suffer from delicate nerves. As such, he and others like him were troubled with "greater suffering, with weakness, and a susceptibility to disorder" (9).

Thus, the network of sensibility can be accessed through the use of its language its conventions. Using the code to the network will evoke connotations related to both medicine and emotion. So, as Barker-Benfield points out, when Richardson uses "fibres" in his sentimental novels, he draws physical and sentimental connections (16-17).

Gothic literature accesses the network of sensibility, as I will discuss, through both its language and its conventions. Virtually all of the heroes of gothic novels are men of sensibility, and are often described through sensibility language. Virtually all of the heroines are liable to faint, and are always innocent and virtuous. Through this access, the gothic is able to subvert the culture of sensibility by exaggerating its principles. Also, and perhaps more importantly, as gothic literature accesses the network of sensibility, it adopts its logic. Although the gothic is not based on networks in the same way that the culture of sensibility and informationalism are, the logic of networks plays out in gothic literature, potentially expanding our understanding of some of the gothic's peculiar qualities.

Gothic Literature: Embodying the Network

Modern scholarship on gothic literature has burgeoned since Robert Hume's 1960s complaint that "literary histories treat the [gothic] with chilly indifference or condescension, granting it only cursory attention" (282). In fact, gothicism has become a hot topic in the last two decades of literary scholarship. Many scholars have seriously examined and engaged gothic literature from many different theoretical and historical perspectives. Although I have yet to encounter a work that directly examines network theory alongside of the gothic, many scholars use the language of networks to describe the workings of gothic literature. For example, Marshall Brown's book *The Gothic Text* studies the "convergence" of Gothic literature with the works of German philosophers, especially Immanuel Kant. Through this comparison, Brown strives to illuminate the mental processes of Gothic literature, claiming that gothic writers, like philosophers, uncover the human mind and imagination.

Gamer explores the ways in which Romanticism and gothicism mutually define and exclude each other through the conflict of critical and popular reception. He is particularly interested in the network of writers and readers that determine the genre of the gothic, especially when

> the negotiation[s] that precede [the assignation of genre] break off or end in deadlock. Where writers and readers agree fundamentally on a text's cultural status…negotiations may run smoothly and even invisibly. Where writers and readers disagree—or where readers disagree among themselves—we enter into a different situation, one in which writers find

themselves placed in generic spaces that they never intended, and where texts do not get to choose their own genres (2).

Gamer describes the interactions of these readers and writers in terms of interconnected nodes; their motivations, desires, and reception mutually form one another in the web of determining genre. His book, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation*, examines the points of disconnect, or static, that disrupt the flow of the system.

Robert Miles also represents the gothic in terms of networks. In *Gothic Writing 1750-1820: A Genealogy*, Miles looks at Gothic literature as a site of questioning the history of the subject. As such, he works to understand Gothic on its own terms: "[the gothic] should be understood as literary 'speech' in its own right, and not the symptom, the signification, of something else 'out there', or 'in here'" (3). According to Miles, we must begin to understand the gothic in relation to itself in order to understand its meanings. Speaking of the multifaceted nature of the aesthetic, he says: "[o]ne text does not necessarily build upon a predecessor. On the contrary, it may initiate a 'dialogue' with it, extending, or opening, a previous text, or texts, but also, at times, imposing closure upon them" (4). Gothic texts are linked to each other, not in a linear sense, but as a web of mutual influences (that, incidentally, reveal and conceal different texts at different times).

In this project I intend to examine more closely this intentionally or unintentionally apparent correlation between networks and the gothic. In this introduction I have examined network theory, and have outlined what I suggest is the logic of networks. This logic, gleaned from network society, plays out in other societies

that are also based on networks, as I have illustrated with eighteenth-century sensibility. Gothic literature, although not a society itself, draws upon sensibility in the creation of its conventions. By examining gothic literature in relation to network society, it seems that the gothic inherits more than just a set of conventions from sensibility, it also inherits the logic of networks. Gothic literature itself embodies network logic; in this way it becomes fruitful to not only use the language of networks to describe the gothic, but also network theory. This embodiment happens on two levels. Chapter Two will discuss network logic in relation to gothic convention. Through close readings of two representative novels, Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*, I discuss how gothic convention personifies the laws of networks. Again, although the gothic is not a network per se, but rather an embodiment of network logic, network theory helps to illuminate gothic conventions as expressions of anxiety. Network theory focuses on the regression embedded in the progressiveness of networks. Thus, by embodying network theory, gothic conventions embody the failure of networks to ever fully overcome the ideals they seek to subvert.

Along with embodying the logic of networks in its conventions, the conventions themselves form a network. In Chapter Three I examine how gothic literature interacts with and infiltrates other literatures, forming a web that stretches back into the eighteenth century and forward into the nineteenth century. Recent scholarship in gothic literature has begun to examine eighteenth- and nineteenth- century periodicals and their impact on the gothic. In 1995, Robert Morrison and Chris Baldick compiled "tales of terror" from the popular Scottish periodical *Blackwood's Magazine* (a periodical whose tales influenced gothic writers from both sides of the Atlantic). Specifically, Christine

Alexander examines this influence, as well as the influence of other nineteenth-century

periodicals, on the writings of Charlotte Brontë and her siblings. Even more recently,

Nicholas Mason also made the literature of *Blackwood's Magazine* available to scholars

in his multi-volume *Blackwood's Magazine, 1817-25: Selections from Maga's Infancy*. I

plan to discuss how tales of terror from *Blackwood's Magazine* help to transmit gothic

conventions from eighteenth-century gothic literature to nineteenth-century Victorian

novels and beyond, creating a system of the gothic that, like Castells' networks that

overcome space and time, span across genres and centuries.

CHAPTER 2: Gothic Literature's Black Heart: Radcliffe, Lewis, and the Logic of

Networks

Robert Miles, in his book *Gothic Writing 1750-1820: A Genealogy*, points out

that much of gothic criticism up to this point has focused on what is "underneath" or

"beyond" gothic convention. He says, "[g]othic writing needs to be regarded as a series

of contemporaneously understood forms, devices, codes, figurations, for the expression

of the 'fragmented subject'. It should be understood as literary 'speech' in its own right,

and not the symptom, the signification, of something else 'out there,' or 'in here'" (3).

Although many scholars insist that gothic literature and convention must be a symptom

of something else, Miles contends that we ought to understand the gothic on its own

terms and as its own language. In this vein, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick notes that gothic

scholars, particularly those that were first to begin serious studies of the gothic, tend to

examine only the depths in gothic literature: "[d]uring the last twenty years the revival of

critical interest in the gothic has made room for a lot of intelligent writing about depth

and the depths" (255). While not deprecating the value of that scholarship, Sedgwick

asserts that a study of the depths of the gothic ought to be accompanied by (and is

enriched by) an examination of its surfaces.   As she says, "[gothic scholars'] plunge to

the thematics of depth and then to a psychology of depth has left unexplored the most

characteristic and daring areas of Gothic convention, those that point the reader's

attention back to the surfaces" (255).

As we see from these two complaints, a surface study of gothic literature is not

altogether popular. This is with good reason. As many point out, and as is obvious to

anyone who has read an eighteenth-century gothic novel, the surface conventions of the

gothic are trite and clichéd. Robert Miles describes these conventions as second rate camp: "the Gothic novel is transparently formulaic…. Anyone who has read even a single example of the genre will be familiar with its typical ingredients: the dilapidated castle, the winding corridors and dungeons, the distressed maiden, the pursuing, avaricious, and usually 'elderly' villain, the sublime landscapes, peculiar weather, specters, bodies, banditti—not to mention discovered manuscripts, guttering candles or mysterious groans" (Enchantress 3). This is absolutely true. These conventions make gothic novels utterly predictable, and *uncannily* similar to each other. So similar, in fact, that it is often difficult not to confuse the plot lines of different novels. Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* stand as prime examples. Both novels feature evil monks—Schedoni and Ambrosio respectively. Both also star sensitive and orphaned heroines who are courted by noble and tender heroes. The antics of the evil monks hinder the unions of the couples; and both couples are also faced with angry opposition on the part of the male protagonists' parents. Emily, heroine of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, resembles the heroines from *The Monk* and *The Italian* and faces similar problems and situations. A reader can also expect long descriptions of scenery, several sinister objects concealed behind veils, abandoned convents or other similarly large and imposing buildings, several nuns and monks, comic and garrulous servants, as well as explained and unexplained blood in any particular gothic novel. These conventions are responsible for the gothic novel's reputation as sensational and merely superficial literature.

However, in spite of (and perhaps because of) the sensational and superficial nature of the gothic, Miles and Sedgwick and several other recent gothic scholars insist

that an examination of these clichéd conventions is essential to the type of understanding that Miles describes. In this chapter, I will argue that network theory uniquely develops that examination. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, gothic literature is not a network as such. Unlike informationalism or the culture of sensibility, gothic literature is not a web of interconnected nodes—people, companies, and countries connected by flows of information in the case of informationalism; or the science and societal norms connected through the shared language and paradigm of the eighteenth-century understanding of the nervous system that undergird the culture of sensibility. However, a study of the workings of gothic conventions shows that they inherit the logic of the society from which gothic literature springs: the network logic of sensibility that I outlined in Chapter One. Gothic conventions are subversive, exclusive, and depend on codes. In this way, gothic literature embodies that logic of networks and throws into relief a shared anxiety. Van Dijk states that informationalism thrives on, even depends on, the tension between overcoming and reinforcing the power structures of society. Without that tension, network society does not function. Thus, although it will surprise no one that gothic conventions subvert the norms of the culture of sensibility, the relationship between gothic conventions and network society suggests that, like informationalism, the gothic actually thrives and depends upon the paradox of subverting and containing the status quo of sensibility.

Ann Radcliffe is certainly the best known and most successful eighteenth-century gothic novelist, both now and among her contemporaries. By the time she published *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, she had made a favorable name for herself as an authoress. As Deborah D. Rogers points out in the introduction to *The Critical Response to Ann*

Radcliffe, Radcliffe was hailed in her day as "'the Shakspeare [*sic*] of Romance Writers'" (xx), "'among the first novel writers of her age'" (xx), the founder of a new school (xxii), and one of the "pioneers of Romanticism" (xxii). She was also the highest paid gothic novelist. *The Mysteries of Udolpho* sold for the then-incredible sum of 500*l*. As Rictor Norton points out in his biography, *Mistress of Udolpho*, "the authors of three-volume Minerva novels usually received only 10*l* to 20*l*" (94). This price was so exorbitant that it started crazy rumors—some said that Radcliffe received 1,000*l* for *Udolpho* and 1,500*l* for *The Italian* (95). Norton relates the anecdote that, "[s]uch an amount was 'at that time so unusually large a sum for a work of imagination, that old Mr Cadell, than whom no man was more experienced in such matters, when he was told that 500*l*. had been given, offered a wager of 10*l*'" (95). In *Udolpho* Radcliffe introduces in earnest what becomes her signature stylistic move: the explained supernatural. Responding to critiques of this convention from her reviewers, Radcliffe revisits and perfects the explained supernatural in her final novel, *The Italian*. Since it is arguably the best example of her gothic style, I have chosen to use *The Italian* to investigate the interactions between gothic convention and the culture of sensibility.

If Radcliffe is the most famous gothic novelist, Matthew Lewis is the most controversial. His gothic novel, *The Monk*, met with polarized reviews. On one hand, as Emma McAvoy points out in her introduction to *The Monk*, critics were scandalized by the content of Lewis's novel. They called it blasphemous, immoral, and (in light of the French Revolution) revolutionary and treasonous. The novel was still a rising genre. Many critics worried about the new genre's effect on young and impressionable minds. These critics felt that "*The Monk* threatened to corrupt youth because of its supposed

irreligion, which they associated with a dangerous revolutionary spirit" (viii). T. J.

Mathias, one of the most outspoken writers against *The Monk*, went so far as to bring a

law suit against Lewis. As a result, Lewis censored his novel and put out a new edition

sans murder descriptions, all sexuality, and the final rape scene (ix). On the other hand,

alongside these negative reviews, other critics praised and defended *The Monk.* As

McAvoy states, "the *Monthly Mirror* reckoned not to remember 'to have read a more

interesting production'" (vii). Others claimed that it illustrated strict purity by showing

the results of straying even once from the path of virtue (x). And some readers enjoyed

the scandalous scenes for scandal's sake. McAvoy describes one audience at a censored

dramatic adaptation that featured "Matilda [as] a virtuous woman and all ends happily"

(xi). Apparently this "outraged its audiences so much that they hissed, causing one of the

actresses who was carrying a wooden baby to exit too quickly, bump into a door, and

knock the baby's head off" (xi).

Lewis looked to Radcliffe for inspiration. In the midst of writing *The Monk*,

Lewis told his mother that reading *The Mysteries of Udolpho* motivated him to finish his

own gothic novel (Rogers 25). Radcliffe apparently did not appreciate the connection.

Following the publication of *The Monk*, Radcliffe published her own version of the same

plot, *The Italian*, written explicitly in what she saw as an entirely different style.

Radcliffe would later publish an essay in *The New Monthly and Literary Journal* entitled

"On the Supernatural in Poetry" defining the differences between terror and horror

gothic. These definitions continue to cling to the works of Radcliffe and Lewis

respectively. As the antithesis of Radcliffe's *The Italian*, I will also investigate the

conventions of *The Monk* and how Lewis's brand of gothic also follows the logic of

networks. In the spirit of following this logic, I will first examine how the conventions of *The Italian* depend on code to access the network of sensibility. Then I will move into an analysis of the exclusive nature of the conventions of *The Italian* and *The Monk* in creating what I see as the heart of gothic literature while simultaneously subverting the heart of the culture of sensibility.

As mentioned above, the story of Radcliffe's *The Italian* follows the usual gothic formula. The orphaned and beautiful Ellena must flee from her future mother-in-law and the evil monk Schedoni. She travels from convent to convent, encountering many malevolent nuns, and one very kind nun (does she recognize Ellena?!), and is pursued through an underground labyrinth, only to find a locked door at the end. Fortunately an old father frees Ellena and her lover from the dungeons. Unfortunately Ellena is captured by Schedoni and his men on a stormy night in an ancient chapel, right before she marries Vivaldi. Ellena spends a couple of days in a broken down, abandoned shack on the beach, while her captors try to poison and stab her. Luckily through all of this, Ellena occasionally finds comfort in sublime landscapes. Schedoni thinks he's Ellena's father and ends up saving her life instead of stabbing her (although it turns out that he's actually her uncle that seduced her mother). He stows her safely in yet another convent (with only nice nuns). Vivaldi, the hero, falls in love with Ellena at first sight. In an effort to marry, rescue, marry, rescue, and marry her, Vivaldi and his loyal, comical, servant Paulo, are haunted by a mysterious black robed informer. They pursue the mysterious figure into the dungeons and become trapped in a vault with a guttered torch and a pile of bloody clothes. Later they are again trapped in a dungeon and subjected to cruel

questioning by many black-clad cold-hearted monks. In the end, the wicked are punished, Ellena finds her mother, and Ellena and Vivaldi get married.

The Italian creates its stock characters and situations (i.e. its conventions) by accessing the conventions of the culture of sensibility through codes. By using the language of sensibility, these gothic conventions infiltrate that culture and access the multifaceted meanings the language has gained in the network of sensibility. For example, the word "delicacy" is often used in *The Italian* to describe the character of Ellena. Her feelings and decisions are seldom mentioned without also some reference to her delicacy. In the culture of sensibility, delicacy carried intertwined cultural and medical connotations. Van Sant points out that Samuel Johnson's social definition of delicacy included "daintiness, fineness in eating; pleasing to the senses; softness, feminine beauty; nicety, minute accuracy; neatness; politeness, gentleness of manners; indulgence; tenderness; and weakness of constitution. The specifically eighteenth-century additions…are a refined sense of what is modest, a regard for the feelings of others, and nicety of perception" (3). Through the network of sensibility, the medical term delicacy was inflected with these social definitions. As Van Sant says, "[i]n order to describe the minute physical structures of the nervous system, physiologists adopted a vocabulary of refinement that was standard in the culture. The word *delicate*, for example, has the status of a technical term in physiology" (4). Thus, the physiological and social constructions of the term delicacy informed one another. This dual connotation served to privilege the feelings the term describes by labeling them as innate rather than learned (4). By using "delicacy" to characterize Ellena, Radcliffe accesses the medical and social network inherent in the term, and Ellena is immediately understood to

espouse particular feelings and to have a heightened sensitivity to her world—both to nature and to the suffering of her fellow creatures. Ellena is the well recognized female of sensibility.

The sensibility-laced convention of the delicate heroine enhances the terror and suspense of the plot—which, as I will argue later, is the indispensible quality of gothic novels. For example, Ellena's delicacy prevents her multiple times from first accepting the affectionate advances of Vivaldi, and then later his marriage proposals, even when reason and her own feelings urge her otherwise. At the beginning of the novel, Ellena's delicacy forbids her from allowing the attentions of a young man when his family would disapprove of her social station and birth (9). As Vivaldi tries to win her affections, he hesitates to serenade at her window because "he had too lofty an opinion of Ellena's mind and delicacy, to believe, that the trifling homage of a serenade would either flatter her self-love, or interest her in his favor" (14). Ellena's delicacy keeps the reader on tenterhooks and she wonders if and how Ellena and Vivaldi will get together. Finally, with the consent and urging of her aunt, Ellena and Vivaldi become engaged. Vivaldi's parents, however, oppose the marriage, and the Marchesa (Vivaldi's mother) and the evil monk Schedoni plot to separate the lovers. Thus, although Ellena loves Vivaldi and the thought of being separated from him "made her pause and shrink with emotions, of little less than horror" (122), and even though she is actually engaged to him, her delicacy demands that she still refuse to marry him. Even after he rescues her, when marriage would secure their happiness and her safety, her delicacy makes her hesitate to commit to that step (150). Ellena's delicacy, since it will not allow her to make Vivaldi her rightful

protector, puts her squarely in harm's way; this heightens suspense as crisis after crisis threatens to separate the lovers forever.

Although I will focus on the subversive nature of gothic conventions, particularly the convention of the veil, later in this chapter, I would like to point out here that this use of the language of sensibility in order to create characters is also subversive. Yael Shapira discusses this idea in her article "Where the Bodies Are Hidden: Ann Radcliffe's 'Delicate' Gothic." She contends that Radcliffe employs the language of delicacy to negotiate the clash between polite society and the sensationalism of her chosen genre. Delicacy, according to Shapira, is the "code that seeks to regulate female interaction with the body's verbal representations" (454), or the code that admits Radcliffe into the network. By using the language of delicacy, Radcliffe connects to the refined culture of sensibility, enabling her to comment on the difficulties of physicality for women in the eighteenth-century, without stepping beyond cultural boundaries. (455). In other words, Radcliffe uses sensibility in order to mask her critique of the way that sensibility impairs and labels women. This subversion is manifest in the extreme hardships that Ellena suffers in the name of delicacy. After the umpteenth time of preferring kidnapping and potential rape or death to the care and protection of the man she loves and trusts, the demands of "delicacy" start to feel arbitrary.

The Italian uses the language of sensibility to describe the feelings of several of its characters by describing them as being moved by their hearts, or as having their hearts moved by some external force. These terms, like delicacy, have interdependent medical and social meaning. Barker-Benfield discusses how terms like "fibre" and "vibrations" that referred to the workings of the nervous system found their ways into the sensibility

novels of the eighteenth century (17-20). Van Sant also discusses the social implications of the medical terms of the heart and nerves: "seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scientific knowledge of circulation and neural processes made internal function increasingly vivid and therefore increasingly available as a literal and metaphorical means of describing interior experience" (13).   Like the term delicacy, words like "fibres" and "heartstrings" served as markers or metaphors for social sensibility. Because these terms were scientific, they helped spiritualize "deeper" emotions and suggested that those who felt these emotions were naturally more sensitive and thus more virtuous. Again, as with the term delicacy, the medical and social connotations behind these terms privileged and heightened the emotions they describe.

Radcliffe unexpectedly uses this language to illustrate the emotions of her villains. Not only are the sensitive hero and heroine subject to the workings of their nervous systems, but both the evil Marchesa and Schedoni are moved to pity by the workings of their hearts. For example, Schedoni ridicules the sensibility of the Marchesa as she falters in her evil purpose when she hears music in the church: "[a]ssail but her senses, let music, for instance, touch some feeble chord of her heart, and echo to her fancy, and lo! All her perceptions change…the victim of a sound!" (178). The Marchesa is moved to pity or fear as music activates the vibrations of her heart. Even Schedoni feels the pangs of sensibility. When he sees the sufferings of Ellena on the beach as he approaches to help Spalatro murder her, he asks himself: "[s]hall the view of her transient sufferings unnerve my firm heart[?]" (223). Then, once he finds out that he almost murders his own daughter, he is a victim to sensibility even more: "Schedoni, meanwhile…was trying to subdue the feelings of remorse that tore his heart; and was so

enveloped in a world of his own, as to be fore some time unconscious of all around him. He continued to stalk in gloomy silence along the chamber, till the voice of Ellena…again touched the chord that vibrated to his conscience" (248). The "chords" of his heart and conscience are so disturbed that he cannot pay attention to anything else. By describing these emotions as results of movements of the heart or thrumming of the heartstrings, Radcliffe accesses the multiple connotations of sensibility. Because these feelings are situated in the network of sensibility, they are understood to be deeper and more natural. They show that these characters are physically susceptible to deep emotion. And, just as the delicacy of Ellena enhances the suspense of the story, so too do these emotions in the antagonists. The reader is no longer sure about the actions of the villains because they prove to have some sensitive feelings within them. The use of this language to describe the feelings of the villains is also subversive of the culture of sensibility. Sensibility reserves the movement of the heart and heartstrings for sensitive and virtuous people. This convention, though, suggests that evil people are also "moved."

Thus, by using the language, or code, of sensibility, the conventions in *The Italian* access the meanings and values of the network of that culture. On one hand, these meanings and values contribute to the suspense of the plot. On the other, these conventions stretch the values and meanings of the network of sensibility in order to expose the problems implicit in sensibility—the arbitrary and conventional nature of what it claims is natural. The workings of these conventions in *The Italian*, like the logic of network society, depend on code and subvert the culture of sensibility. However, also like network society, these conventions are supported on a paradox—they use sensibility

in order to create suspense, but also subvert the very sensibility on which that suspense depends. This paradox becomes even clearer in an investigation of the correlating key quality of the gothic and the culture of sensibility.

So far I have focused on the way that gothic convention, as illustrated by Radcliffe's *The Italian*, accesses the network of sensibility through code. By using that code the gothic both supports and subverts sensibility. Now I would like to turn to what I claim is the heart of the gothic, and the indispensible quality of its literature: the delicious sensation of pleasure in terror. The simultaneous experience of these feelings is described in Freud's definition of the uncanny: "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar" (930). This paradox, the familiarity of what is disgusting, and the allure of what is perverse, creates feelings of simultaneous revulsion and fascination, which are the foundation of gothic experience. I touched on this idea of suspense in my analysis of the codes used by gothic convention. However, the sensation of pleasure in terror comes to particular fruition through the exclusionary nature of gothic convention. I will conclude this chapter with an examination of these conventions and their interaction with the culture of sensibility as they play out in *The Italian* and *The Monk*.

This key gothic characteristic of creating pleasure in terror mimics similar feelings at the heart of the culture of sensibility: mixed pleasure and pain at the sight of suffering. Such feelings, according to the culture of sensibility, mark a man or woman of sensitivity. Pleasurable pain, like loaded language of the culture of sensibility, gained meaning and status through the network of science and society, and is the center of the

culture of sensibility. Barker-Benfield articulates the birth of the meaning behind these feelings well:

> [Sensibility] denoted the receptivity of the senses and referred to the psychoperceptual scheme explained and systematized by Newton and Locke. It connoted the operation of the nervous system, the material basis for consciousness. During the eighteenth century, this psychoperceptual scheme became a paradigm, meaning not only consciousness in general but a particular kind of consciousness, one that could be further sensitized in order to be more acutely responsive to signals from the outside environment and from inside the body (xvii).

In the culture of sensibility the nervous system not only objectively measured the effect of stimuli on the body, but it also determined the type of body and person receiving the stimuli. More "sensitive" bodies meant more sensitive people. Also, in the culture of sensibility, outward stimuli expanded to privilege emotional and visual forces over mere physical ones.   Pleasure and pain depended on seeing or hearing something that conjured sympathetic feelings in the observer. These feelings are simultaneously pleasurable (the sensitive person can delight in their own sensitivity), and painful (at the sight of another's suffering). Hannah More critiques these feelings: "remove [the woman of sensibility] from the sight and sound of that misery, which, when present so tenderly affected her – she now forgets that miserly exists…because Pleasure ha[s] blocked up the avenues through which misery used to find its way to her heart" (qtd. in Van Sant 9).

The network of pleasure and pain is particularly manifest in the philanthropic projects of the eighteenth century. As I outlined in Chapter One, charitable groups

displayed the "unfortunates" in their care to the public in order to evoke both pain at the suffering of the poor, and pleasure at seeing their reform. Van Sant points out that particularizing the subject of pity distances the observers from the observed, creating both safety, and an "artificial context" for viewing the objects of charity (39). These contexts allowed the audience a twofold reaction. As Van Sant describes: these "[s]cenes of suffering pierce the sensibility, causing pity and leading to sympathetic identification. At the same time the observable sensibility invites curiosity" (56). The person of sensibility not only finds pleasure in curiosity, but also in the goodness of their own feelings: "observers may be interested not only in the sensibility being displayed before their eyes but also in the responses raised in themselves by the distress" (57).

Gothic conventions, as I mention above, cultivate pleasure in the midst of terror through exclusion—or, in other words, through what they reveal and conceal in the plot. One of the conventions that is ubiquitously used in both Radcliffe's and Lewis's novels is also particularly appropriate for a study of the exclusionary nature of convention. The opposing aesthetics of *The Italian* and *The Monk* repeatedly use veils to strategically reveal and conceal elements of the story (villains, virgins, dead bodies) in order to create pleasure through terror or horror. Elizabeth P. Broadwell explores the frequent use of the veil in Radcliffe's works in her essay "The Veil Image in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*." According to her, the veil is a convention that runs through all of Radcliffe's novels, but "reaches considerable sophistication in…*The Italian*" (76). Broadwell explores several different kinds of veils, such as social veils, psychological veils, veils of physiognomy, as well as literal cloth veils. As she says, "the veil image, in short, is woven throughout *The Italian* in the various literal covers, cloaks, disguises, and veils that characters wear

and in the secrets that they keep from one another" (85). Sedgwick examines the convention of the veil in both *The Italian* and *The Monk*. According to her, the veil works to conceal something and also to represent what it is concealing. For example, "the veil that symbolizes virginity in a girl or nun has a strong erotic savor of its own" (256). This latter point is what, in the context of the logic of networks, is most significant about the use of veils to reveal and conceal elements of the plot; concealment calls attention to the concealed as much as it hides it from view. It is this paradox that creates the pleasure in terror of the gothic; and it is this exclusionary aspect of the conventional veil that both subverts and sustains the culture of sensibility.

A key moment of pleasure in terror in *The Italian* comes during one of the crises of the novel. Ellena is imprisoned in the convent of San Stefano. Vivaldi finds her and tells her that he will find a way to communicate plans to rescue her during festival that evening for the convent and the neighboring community of monks. Ellena wears a nun's veil in order to disguise herself from the Abbess, and Vivaldi shields his face so that he can mingle with the monks and pilgrims. As Ellena walks through the crowd of nuns, she tries to discern Vivaldi from the crowd of shrouded men on the other side of the partition. She thinks she sees him, approaches the wall, and reveals herself. The suspense of the moment comes from the necessity on both of their parts to remain concealed until the exact right moment for revelation. I quote this moment at length in order to capture that suspense:

> [p]resently, she observed a stranger, in a pilgrim's habit, station himself
> near the grate; his face was partly muffled in his cloak, and he seemed to
> be a spectator rather than a partaker of the feast. Ellena, who understood

> this to be Vivaldi…having reached the grate, ventured to lift her veil for one instant. The stranger, letting his cloak fall, thanked her with his eyes for her condescension, and she perceived that he was not Vivaldi! (130).

Radcliffe creates suspense through strategic concealing of Ellena and Vivaldi, and then strategic revealing of the wrong man. This creation and destruction of expectations through revealing and concealing evokes both pleasure and terror as the reader gazes on danger from a safe distance. The suspense continues as Ellena sees another pilgrim that could be Vivaldi:

> another stranger approached with quick steps, whom she instantly knew, by the grace and spirit of his air, to be Vivaldi; but, determined not to expose herself a second time to he possibility of a mistake, she awaited for some further signal of his identity, before she discovered herself. His eyes were fixed upon her in earnest attention for some moments, before he drew aside the cloak from his face. But he soon did so;—and it was Vivaldi himself. Ellena, perceiving that she was known, did not raise her veil, but advanced a few steps toward the grate (131).

The anxiety of when and where to reveal and conceal oneself once again creates pleasure and terror. Ellena is sure that the new stranger is Vivaldi, but is he? By excluding their definite identities from each other, and Vivaldi's from the reader, by hiding Ellen and Vivaldi behind veils, Radcliffe creates this signature gothic suspense. The reader, with Ellena, feels horrified that Ellena showed herself to the wrong man. However, at the same time, the reader feels pleasure as she watches Ellena's mistake. Although at this moment Radcliffe does not call direct attention to the voyeuristic nature of pleasure in

terror, she calls it in to question towards the end of the novel when Schedoni says that

Vivaldi's weakness is "[a] susceptibility which renders [him] especially liable to

superstition" (397). Like Vivaldi, the reader is too anxious to find pleasure in the terror

of others. Thus, through the exclusionary nature of the convention of the veil, *The Italian*

both creates and subverts pleasure in terror.

Lewis's *The Monk*, although perhaps atmospherically different from Radcliffe's

novel, could almost exchange plot lines and characters with *The Italian*. Beautiful,

orphaned Antonia, divided from her lover by mean in-laws, must try to find her own way

in a friendless world. Ambrosio, the evil and sensual monk, is enraptured by Antonia's

innocence and beauty. He plots with his demonic mistress and Satan (in a couple of

scenes involving lots of dungeons, crypts, and lightning) to somehow deceive and seduce

Antonia, but is foiled by Antonia's mother. Afraid of being exposed as an adulterous

demon conspirer, and driven by his lust for Antonia, Ambrosio kills Antonia's mother,

chalks it up to her illness, and ends up raping and murdering Antonia. Unfortunately, it

turns out that Antonia is his sister and that he killed his own mother. In the meantime,

Lorenzo, our hero, fell in love with Antonia at first sight. However, Antonia's mother

refuses to let Lorenzo see her daughter without his parents' blessing. While working on

talking to his parents, Lorenzo runs into his old friend, Don Raymond.

Don Raymond is in love with, wants to marry, and has impregnated Lorenzo's

sister, Agnes. Unfortunately Lorenzo and Agnes's parents have their hearts set on Agnes

becoming a nun for superstitious reasons. We find out that these superstitions might not

all be unfounded when Don Raymond is kissed multiple times by a dead nun while he is

visiting Agnes at her aunt and uncle's castle. Lorenzo and Don Raymond (and Don

Raymond's trusty and comical servant, Theodore) determine to rescue Agnes from the convent. However, the Mother Superior finds out that Agnes is planning to elope with Don Raymond and locks her in a dungeon, but tells Lorenzo that Agnes is dead. Lorenzo eventually finds her in the dungeon, half crazy and holding her worm-eaten dead baby. All of these things are so distracting that Lorenzo doesn't save Antonia in time, but ends up finding another lady to love. They save Agnes, she marries Don Raymond, and Ambrosio goes to Hell.

The Monk takes Radcliffe's "terror" to a new level. As McWhir puts it, "Instead of escaping from superstitious fear back into a world of reasonable order, Lewis goes through it and out the other side, finding a chaos of sex, hilarity and horror." (40). Radcliffean terror, in general, focuses on concealment, whether literal or metaphorical. Lewis, on the other hand, creates his aesthetics by acts of unveiling (in many senses) or revealing; his conventional use of the veil is exclusionary as a means to call attention to what he is excluding and enhance the moment of revelation. Also, whereas Radcliffe's text only implicitly hints at subverting pleasure in terror, Lewis's novel calls attention to the fact that his reader is finding horror pleasurable.

Several scenes in the The Monk use the veil to reveal scenes of horror in order to invite the gaze and fascination of the audience. One of these instances centers around the love affair of Don Raymond and Agnes. They plan to elope in order for Agnes to avoid taking the veil and decide to capitalize on the widely believed superstition of the bleeding nun. According to legend, this specter visits Agnes's castle once every five years carrying a lantern and a dagger, and bleeding from a wound on her chest. Agnes plans to dress up as the nun on the night the ghost is supposed to appear and walk out of the castle

to the waiting carriage. Everything goes according to plan. A veiled nun with a dagger and a lantern enters the carriage. Raymond embraces the figure he believes to be his fiancée. The nun we believe to be Agnes keeps her face veiled. The horses drive so fast that the carriage upsets, Don Raymond is knocked out, and the nun disappears. As he is convalescing, the same nun visits him, but reveals herself to be not Agnes like Don Raymond believed, but the bleeding nun. That Lewis invites us to take pleasure in this horror is manifest in the following passage:

> Suddenly I heard slow and heavy steps ascending the stair-case. By an involuntary movement I started up in my bed, and drew back the curtain…The door was thrown open with violence. A figure entered, and drew near my Bed with solemn measured steps. With trebling apprehension I examined this midnight Visitor. God Almighty! It was the Bleeding Nun! It was my lost Companion! Her face was still veiled, but she no longer held her Lamp and dagger. She lifted up her veil slowly. What a sight presented itself to my startled eyes! I beheld before me an animated Corse. Her countenance was long and haggard; Her cheeks and lips were bloodless; The paleness of death was spread over her features, and her eyeballs fixed steadfastly upon me were lustreless and hollow. I gazed upon the Spectre with horror too great to be described. My blood was frozen in my veins. … The Apparition rose from her seat, and approached the side of the bed. She grasped with her icy fingers my hand which hung lifeless upon the Coverture, and [pressed] her cold lips to mine (159-61).

In this scene, we are both horrified and fascinated by what is revealed and concealed. At first the nun is hidden behind her veil. This very act of concealing creates pleasure and suspense as we are led to believe that it is Agnes, but with the continual question literally (through Don Raymond) before our eyes. Once the nun "reveals" herself, the horror and fascination increase. Lewis describes this pleasure and terror in the reaction of Don Raymond. His blood runs cold, and he cannot move his body. But just as he is frozen by horror, he is also frozen by fascination: "[t]he Apparition seated herself opposite to me at the foot of the Bed, and was silent. Here eyes were fixed earnestly upon mine: They seemed endowed wit the property of the rattle-snakes, for I strove in vain to look off her. My eyes were fascinated, and I had not the power of withdrawing them from the Spectre's" (160). As Don Raymond is fascinated by the bleeding nun, the reader is also obliged to be fascinated. By inviting the reader's gaze through exclusion, the convention of the veil calls attention to the mystery behind the veil. The revelation that follows the concealment forces the reader to take pleasure in horror. In this way, Lewis's convention reveals the prurience of gothic suspense.

The Monk uses the convention of the veil in several other instances to mix titillation and horror. In each situation the convention, through its exaggeration and the voyeuristic reactions of the characters involved (and thus, by force, the reader), subverts the gothic atmosphere of pleasure in terror. For example, the encounter between Ambrosio the monk, and Rosario/Matilda the young boy/woman/(devil) uses concealment and revelation to evoke feelings of horror and pleasure. Also, when Lorenzo first meets Antonia her face is veiled. This barrier creates pleasure as Lorenzo both recognizes, and can't see enough to recognize, a beautiful woman. The veil makes

her beauty more seductive.   The reader (through Lorenzo) finds pleasure in looking

because Antonia is concealed. So, although this is not a "terror" moment per se, the

exclusion of Antonia appearance calls attention to her and makes the pleasure Lorenzo

finds in looking at her painful as he sees enough and not quite enough at the same time.

The minuteness of description in this scene again subverts pleasure in terror by calling

attention to the prurience of Lorenzo's (and the reader's) gaze.

The subversive nature of Lewis's veils is well illustrated in one of the final, and

most outrageous, scenes of the novel. Ambrosio and Matilda are on trial in front of the

inquisition for charges of witchcraft and murder. Matilda appears in Ambrosio's cell and

tells him that she sold her soul to the devil to buy some more time before being consigned

to Hell. Ambrosio follows her example, summons the devil, and signs away his soul.

The devil takes him from the prison, but when Ambrosio demands his extra time, the

devil "unveils" all of Ambrosio's sins:

> [h]ark Ambrosio, while I unveil your crimes! You have shed the blood of
>
> two innocents; Antonia and Elvira perished by your hand. That Antonia
>
> whom you violated, was your Sister! That Elvira whom you murdered,
>
> gave you birth! Tremble, abandoned Hypocrite! Inhuman Parricide!
>
> Incestuous Ravisher! Tremble at the extent of your offences! … I long
>
> have marked you for my prey … I observed your blind idolatry of the
>
> Madona's picture. I bad a subordinate but crafty spirit assume a similar
>
> form, and you eagerly yielded to the blandishments of Matilda (440).

Before this moment, the full truth of Ambrosio's wickedness is excluded from the text.

This revelation is Lewis's most extreme act of unveiling. The devil, even, is the one

drawing back the veil; and the crimes revealed are more evil than the all of the misdeeds committed in the plot previously (rape, murder, incarceration of a pregnant woman so that her baby is born and dies, calling on the devil). Not only did Ambrosio murder, but he murdered his mother. Not only did he take advantage of Antonia, but Antonia was his sister. Not only did he break his vows of chastity, but his partner was a demon. Also, in this scene the revelation was not made to one of the characters exclusively. Although the devil is talking to Ambrosio, he is also acting as narrator in the style of Ann Radcliffe, revealing to the audience the tricks behind the plot. Ambrosio and his sins are presented to us as horrible, but fascinating in their excessive horribleness. By preparing for our gaze, rather than a character's, the most horrific and fantastic revelation, the disgusting aspects of pleasure in horror are doubly revealed.

In each of these instances, Lewis uses a literal or metaphorical veil to exclude or conceal facts. These veils call attention to what is being concealed and then they are ripped away, revealing the horrific truth behind it. By recording the character's reactions to these exclusions and revelations Lewis exposes the concupiscence of finding pleasure in horror. However, although Lewis's novel subverts this key component of gothic literature, his story also hangs on it; the drive of his plot depends on this atmosphere of horror and pleasure.

The aesthetics of Radcliffe's "terror" gothic and Lewis's "horror" gothic are almost opposite. Radcliffe relies on suspense through strategic concealment and subtle chills, whereas Lewis creates horror through flamboyant unveiling. However, both types of gothic use exclusion to reproduce a version of sensibility's pleasure in pain. And through these conventions they extend the status quo of sensibility beyond the limits of

reason and subvert it by bringing into relief the problems implicit in finding pleasure through sympathetic feelings of pain or feelings of terror and horror.

The conventions of the gothic are not a network per se. However, through their interactions with the culture of sensibility these conventions do conform to the logic of networks. Gothic conventions depend on code. By using the language of sensibility Radcliffe accesses the medically and socially sanctioned meanings of the woman of sensibility and the depth behind sensitive feelings. She uses these meanings to flesh out her characters and to create suspense. Gothic conventions are exclusive. The veils used by Radcliffe and Lewis exclude important facts and aspects of the plot in order to create the gothic environment of pleasure in terror. Gothic conventions are subversive. Both authors use moments of revelation to subvert the gothic environment, and, by relation, the culture of sensibility's pleasurable pain. In this way, gothic literature embodies the logic of network society and brings to light the unique space that both the gothic and network society inhabit. Network society depends upon the tensions between a global web and the needs of the individuals that make up the web. There is no web without individual nodes, but the needs of the individual are at times subsumed into the needs of the globe.

In the same way, although these gothic conventions, through codes and exclusion, subvert the pleasurable pain of the culture of sensibility, they also contain it. Gothic literature depends on the creation of suspense; and that suspense, as I have discussed in this chapter, is created through codes that access, and exclusions that reproduce, the culture of sensibility. Gothic conventions literally "contain" the society it subverts—the status quo of the culture of sensibility runs through the heart of the gothic. The gothic cannot function without the suspense formulated through the use of the culture of

sensibility, and the suspense subverts that same culture. Thus, like network society,

gothic literature thrives on the tension of the simultaneous subversion and containment of

the culture of sensibility.

CHAPTER 3: The Web Extends: *Blackwood's Magazine* Revives the Gothic

a real Magazine of mirth, misanthropy, wit, wisdom, folly, fiction, fun,

festivity, theology, bruising, and thingumbob.

--Odoherty. Noctes Amrosionae

After the heyday of Ann Radcliffe and Matthew Lewis, the gothic novel began to lose its status in popular reading culture. Scholars mark the decline of gothic literature in the early nineteenth century. Some date its fall as late as 1820 with C.R. Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, others as early as 1797, "the day Ann Radcliffe 'laid down her pen'' (Potter 4-5). At any rate, the highly popular gothic novel was falling from popularity, and its formulaic plot line apparently finally became too formulaic. However, although the early nineteenth century may have seen the decay of the Radcliffean gothic novel, gothic tropes continued to be used across literary genres throughout the nineteenth century, and are still used today. This is especially and immediately true of a new literary resource in the early nineteenth century: Edinburgh's outrageous *Blackwood's Magazine*, and the new genre it helped to popularize: the tale (Jarrells viii). In volume two of *Blackwood's Magazine, 1817-1825: Selections from Maga's Infancy*, Anthony Jarrells points out how *Blackwood's* uniquely incorporated short stories with its more serious critical pieces. These tales took many forms, including tales of terror (xv).

Baldick and Morrison, in their compilation *Tales of Terror from Blackwood's Magazine*, discuss the monumental impact of the tales of terror on the preservation and proliferation of the gothic. According to them (and other scholars such as Robert Heilman), the tales of terror signal the rise of a new gothic, shifting from the melodramatic supernatural of Radcliffe and Lewis to more realistic renderings of

superstition. As Baldick and Morrison state, "[t]he tales [*Blackwood's Magazine*] published in its first fifteen years set a new standard of concentrated dread and precisely calculated alarm" (xiii). Its tales of terror display a gothic that is different from the gothic of Ann Radcliffe, Horace Walpole, and Matthew Lewis: "[c]ertain kinds of 'terror', or at least of anxiety, were developed in quite sophisticated ways by Radcliffe and other Gothicists in the late eighteenth century, primarily through ominous suggestion and the careful evocation of 'atmosphere'. The *Blackwood's* authors differ markedly from the Gothicists not just in their concise scope but also in their sharper and more explicit rendering of terror" (xv). This realistic gothic, according to Baldick and Morrison, is the transition from the Radcliffean aesthetic to the dark aesthetic of Victorian literature that can be found in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Edgar Allan Poe's short stories and poems, and Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*.

In many ways, marking the tales of terror as the turning point of the old to the new gothic is accurate. The realistic aesthetics of the early nineteenth-century gothic as seen in *Blackwood's Magazine*'s tales of terror, not to mention the gothic of Victorian novelists, depart considerably from the Romantic aesthetics of late eighteenth-century gothic literature. However, this association of the old gothic with Radcliffe, the transition gothic with *Blackwood's*, and the new gothic with Brontë seems to present a problematically hierarchical relationship, where one phase ends before the next begins. And although the hierarchy is not perhaps undeserved, and is possibly in many ways appropriate, I propose that, in the style of Gamer and Miles, the interactions between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century gothic aesthetics in the light of *Blackwood's* tales of terror are more complex.

In Chapter One I articulated the opposing goals of network society and gothic literature. Informationalism, on one hand, aims to connect and unite different entities through flows of power. Gothic literature, on the other hand, strives to fragment and generally problematize the modern subject. Studied together, however, I suggest they reveal a shared anxiety: both network society and gothic literature depend on the tension between fragmentation and unification. In Chapter Two I looked at this phenomenon on the microscopic level by examining the conventions, or building blocks, of gothic literature. In this chapter I hope to construct a similar argument, but on a macroscopic level. While agreeing with Robert Miles that the gothic works toward fragmentation by uncovering the ruptures of the modern subject, network theory would suggest that gothic literature also, and at the same time, does the opposite: networks both form and disturb connections, and the gothic, similarly, simultaneously produces both fragmentation and unification. Just as the gothic depends on the tension between subversion and containment on the level of plot and atmosphere, it also embodies this tension on the level of the interactions of different gothic works among and across genres. *Blackwood's Magazine*'s tales of terror are a key component of the unification aspect of the tension within gothic literature. By both drawing upon and transforming the conventions of Radcliffean gothic, these tales help to form a larger gothic web that spreads backwards into the eighteenth century and connects those strands forward into the nineteenth century (and beyond). In this light, the old, middle, and new gothic interact in a web of shared and adjusted conventions, rather than in a linear exchange.

Blackwood's Magazine, fondly called Maga by its founder William Blackwood, was first published in 1817 in Edinburgh as a conservative adversary to Archibald

Constable and Francis Jeffrey's *Edinburgh Review*. After a rough and dull first several issues under Whig editors, Blackwood promptly found new ones in conservatives John Wilson and John Gibson Lockhart. From that moment, the politically tame and boring *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* became the scandalous, libelous, and partisan *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. Blackwood's*, in the midst of the rise of periodical culture in nineteenth-century Britain, is unique and innovative in its genre for several reasons. First, it departed from the Enlightenment style of criticism employed by the *Edinburgh Review*, and presented, according to J.H. Alexander, a wholly new Romantic critical style. As Alexander states, "[a]ccording to *Blackwood's*, Jeffrey shared in a general inability to cope with the tremendous excitement of the new literature which we call Romantic" (57), which inability the editors of *Blackwood's Magazine* felt they overcame. Instead of criticism by critics, "Wilson and his colleagues proposed to substitute creative criticism by poets—all of the main *Blackwood's* contributors could turn their hands to verse, if not always to poetry—and the *sine qua non* of this creative criticism was enthusiasm" (58). Also, along with their new enthusiastic form of criticism, *Blackwood's Magazine* was notorious for mixing entertaining pieces with their serious content. As Mason says, "this would become the *Blackwood's* pattern: devoting the majority of its pages to serious literary, political and scientific discourse and the remainder to uproarious satirical attacks, combative political rhetoric and all sorts of 'quizzes', 'bams' and 'balaam'" (xviii). Maga's scandals and lawsuits centered around this "balaam," and it was this entertainment that earned *Blackwood's* its outrageous reputation.

Scholars articulate the inventiveness of Maga, appropriately enough, through the language of network society. For example, Morrison describes the "nexus" of which

William Blackwood is the center: "[i]n his capacity as publisher and editor, Blackwood placed himself at the centre of a vast nexus of cultural, social, legal, economic, political, and interpersonal forces, and a study of his publications and correspondence reveals the highly collaborative and heavily mediated conditions of cultural production" (30). *Blackwood's*, then, is not a single entity, but a composite of interacting—and sometimes contradictory or subversive—ideas and demands. Maga's incorporation of both fiction and criticism also interacts like a network, the two genres often spilling into one another. As Jarrells describes it, "the generic openness of tales often made it difficult to distinguish between fiction and non-fiction, agreeable relaxation and active exertion; and it is this character that allowed contributors to use the space of the tale to introduce, rather than merely reflect, their critical and political concerns" (xi). Maga is also famously full of opposing political and social ideas that are constantly at odds—a characteristic, as Jarrells notes, particularly suitable for the flexible genre of the tale (xiii). David Finkelstein describes the place of *Blackwood's* in nineteenth-century literature as if he's describing the place of the internet in modern technology: "The House of Blackwood … 'represented a specific social space as well, an invisible arena that accommodated shifting bands of contributors and authors who were encouraged to meet, mingle, imbibe a common 'culture', and share common, unspoken assumptions about their identities within this large, all-embracing Blackwoodian ecumene'" (11). Like the internet's virtual spaces that employ their own lingos (for example, "blogging" and the abbreviations and new verbs employed in Facebook and Myspace pages), *Blackwood's* created an "invisible arena" where multiple "contributors" meet and share a common "culture" (read: code).

Scholars also use language pertaining to gothic networks when referencing *Blackwood's.* For example, Morrison talks about the "veiled editor," Christopher North, whose function is to conceal the real identities of the *Blackwood's* editors, while revealing their political and literary opinions (28). Morrison's description of the workings of Maga reads like a gothic novel: "[t]his was after all a magazine that was founded in scandal, that willfully cloaked its operations in fiction and disguise, and that often seemed hell-bent on disrupting the world of public discourse through tergiversation, audacity, satire and character assassination" (34). *Blackwood's* is personified as a cloaked, crazed murderer borrowed from the pages of Lewis or Radcliffe. Finally, William Blackwood's tastes and demands mirror a definition of the uncanny. As Morrison puts it, "He required novelty and innovation, for his product had to be at once familiar and unusual, recognizable and unexpected, consistent and contradictory" (31).

Arguably the most innovative contribution *Blackwood's Magazine* makes to the history of English literature, and certainly its most important feature in regards to the gothic, is its publication of original fiction (Jarrells vii). William Blackwood, as a professional publisher, incorporated his interest in fiction into his magazine, creating, as noted by Mason above and by many other scholars, his unique blend of the "*dulce* and *utile*" (Alexander, Romantic Form 63). As Morrison says, "Blackwood's fascination with and respect for fiction was a highly distinguishing feature of his magazine, and one that had an enormous impact on the publication and reception of fiction in the nineteenth-century and beyond" (37). Although, as Jarrells points out, scholars reference the later publications and serialized novels of big name Victorian authors such as George Eliot and Joseph Conrad when they speak about the influence of *Blackwood's* on short fiction,

the early years should not be overlooked in their influence on the rise of the tale: "[b]y 1820 'tale' overtook 'romance' and 'novel' to become the most commonly used title for prose fiction. *Blackwood's* played an important role in this rise, providing, in Wendell Harris's words, 'the first steady and respectable market for short fiction'" (Jarrells vii).

These tales came in many forms: "terror, humorous tales, moral tales and parodies, to name a few genres" (xv). But, as Morrison points out, *Blackwood's Magazine* was especially fond of tales of terror: "Blackwood was most interested in 'the exciting, the terrible, and the grisly,' and during his editorship he published tales of terror by Galt, Hogg, Maginn, Walter Scott, Warren, and Wilson. These tales were sensational and shamelessly commercial, but their immediacy and concision gave them a remarkable ability to startle, dismay, and unnerve" (37). Thus, a key aspect of the rise of the tale in *Blackwood's* was the rise of the tale of terror and this new aesthetic. More raw, sensational, and, frankly, shameless, as befits a shorter genre, this aesthetic both draws and departs from the ruins of gothic convention, and by doing so forms a network of interaction between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature. I have chosen two tales from *Blackwood's Magazine* that represent, one each, adaptations of the two main schools of eighteenth-century gothic aesthetics.

Daniel Keyte Sandford's "A Night in the Catacombs" (1818) is a great example of how the tales of terror both connect to eighteenth-century gothic literature and expand the aesthetic to ultimately include later gothic works. Jarrells, in his introduction to this tale, observes this connection. He says, "[w]hat is interesting about Sandford's tale – and perhaps *Blackwood's* tales of terror generally – is the way it synthesizes the terror/horror divide in the novels of Radcliffe and Lewis" (72). Radcliffe, according to Jarrells, and as

we saw in the previous chapter, presents terror through sustained suspense that, in the end, proves unfounded. Lewis, on the other hand, "does not rationalize the terrors of the imagination but instead shows them to be real and often worse than could be imagined" (72). Although a read-through of this tale shows that it indeed incorporates both aesthetics, "A Night in the Catacombs" especially draws on Radcliffe's terror gothic.

For example, Sandford's tale is presented as a letter within a letter, similar to *The Italian*'s story within a story. Sandford writes to "the editor" of *Blackwood's* to offer a letter written to a friend (Mr. S) by a young man (Mr. E), chronicling Mr. E's scary experience in France. Mr. E begins his letter lamenting how much he believed in superstition as a child and adolescent (which he partly attributes to living in 'the wildest district of Wales'). Mr. E is very shy, and after the death of his mother he travels around Europe alone. One day he decides to visit the catacombs. His group is so impatient to begin the tour that the tour guide forgets to take a head count. When they descend into the catacombs, Mr. E's superstitious feelings are so overpowered by the graves and skeletons that he runs away from the group and gets lost. At first he panics. He runs blindly up and down the passages, yanking down skulls and bones, screaming and yelling, creating ghosts and apparitions from his superstitious mind. Finally his senses can handle no more. He falls asleep and dreams of peace and serenity. When he wakes up he is no longer afraid and waits calmly for the next group to come. Through his experience, he overcomes his superstition.

This story incorporates many elements of Radcliffe's aesthetic. For one, Sandford uses the language of sensibility to characterize the hero, Mr. E. Although Mr. E was well educated, his tutor "did not apply himself to correct the wild tissue of absurd

and superstitious notions, which an accurate observer must have detected in my bosom, or the greedy taste for fiction, and nervous sensibility, of which I myself perceived and lamented the excess" (76). By describing his hero as susceptible to "nervous sensibility," Sandford references the typical gothic protagonist man or woman of feeling. Mr. E, like many Radcliffean heroes and heroines, has lost both parents (one, typically, to illness, and the other, typically again, to sorrow over his her husband's death), and is left to the care of a loving but superstitious nurse. As Mr. E describes it, "[e]ven after I had emerged from the nursery, it used to be my great delight to steal to her apartment in the evening, and sit listening for hours to her ghostly narratives, till my knees shook, and every nerve in my body trembled" (76). Phrases like "trembling nerves" access eighteenth-century gothic convention and puts the reader in mind of Radcliffean heroes like *The Italian*'s Vivaldi or *The Mysteries of Udolpho*'s Valancourt.

Along with creating the conventional gothic character, Sandford also references Radcliffe's aesthetic by employing the convention of pleasure in terror, first through his character and then also through the audience. Like Vivaldi, Mr. E craves terror. When he descends into the catacombs, he feels like he cannot get enough of the feeling: "I rushed as far as I could penetrate, to feed in solitude the growing appetite for horror, that had quelled for the moment, in my bosom, the sense of fear, and even the feeling of identity" (78). However, once he satiates his need for horror, Mr. E ceases to feel pleasure in the horror and becomes truly frantic. Instead of Mr. E enjoying the pleasure in terror, the audience is invited to feel pleasure in terror as we observe Mr. E's horror.

In several ways this tale of terror weaves strands of eighteenth-century gothic conventions into its plot. In this way, the tale connects itself to the gothic novels of that

particular formula. However, "Night in the Catacombs" also forms different gothic

aesthetics, sending out additional conventional strands that would eventually connect to

other gothic literature and expand the gothic web. For example, Radcliffe creates

pleasure in terror through concealing the real nature of the supernatural. On one hand,

Sandford's aesthetic creates pleasure in terror in much the same way—the true nature of

the supernatural is concealed from Mr. E, and he is terrified of the dead and rotting

bodies in the crypt because he believes that ghosts could appear at any moment. "I

imagined I know not what of horrid and appalling, and saw, with preternatural acuteness,

through the darkness as clear as noon, —while grisly visages seemed glaring on me near,

and a red and bloody haze enveloped the more fearful distance" (79). And, as I

mentioned above, his frenzy creates pleasure in terror for the audience. However,

although Sandford creates this aesthetic by concealing the nature of the supernatural from

his character, it also works differently from Radcliffe's aesthetic. Whereas in Radcliffe's

novels the reader is as ignorant as the characters about what is and is not supernatural in

the plot, in Sandford's story the reader is perfectly aware the entire time that Mr. E is not

trapped with ghosts, but with a bunch of dusty skulls.

This difference leads to a more rational rendering of terror. Although this tale had

many opportunities to incorporate melodramatic tropes such as bloody daggers,

entrapped monks, and sinister plots, "Night in the Catacombs" only describes what would

realistically be found in a tomb and how a person might react in a scary (but possible)

situation. Baldick and Morrison describe this difference well: "[t]he usual tone in these

stories is one of clinical observation (although without the customary detachment) rather

than of genteel trepidation, and for the most part the terrors are unflinchingly 'witnessed',

not ambiguously evoked: here there are fewer phantoms or rumours of phantoms than actual drownings, suicides, murders, executions, and death agonies, veiled by only the thinnest layer of euphemism and moralizing" (xv).

This expansion of the web of the gothic also follows network logic. For one, the new aesthetic is subversive. While "buying into" eighteenth-century conventions (characters of sensibility, situations that arouse pleasure in terror), tales of terror reject gothic melodrama for a more "realistic" experience. Also, while subverting the melodrama of the gothic, this new aesthetic also subverts itself. Even though it embraces a more realistic aesthetic, the tale of terror also embraces a more intrusive brand of voyeurism concealed behind the realism. Baldick and Morrison point out this paradox (speaking specifically about Samuel Warren's tales, but the principle is applicable generally): "Aiming, as he put it, 'to furnish both instruction and amusement to the public', Warren tends to disguise the sensational and the prurient basis of the amusement under a cloak of sermonizing instruction and obtrusive erudition, thus maintaining at least the pretence of offering us 'improving fiction'" (xvii). Thus, the realistic gothic conventions of "Night in the Catacombs" embody the network tension of the gothic. Just as networks are fueled by both fulfilling and failing to fulfill the needs of the individuals that make up the network, this tale of terror depends upon a simultaneous reinforcement and subversion of Radcliffean terror. The tale must both invoke Radcliffe through the hero of sensibility and possible contact with the supernatural and also subvert those tropes through the reader's awareness of the lack of supernatural in order to create its particular brand of "realistic" gothic suspense. It reveals the problems with pleasure in terror and, at the same time, it also reinforces that prurience. Thus, like the gothic

conventions of Lewis and Radcliffe discussed in Chapter Two, "Night in the Catacombs" is based on the network tension between subversion and containment. Also, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, the network logic manifested here within Sandford's tale leads directly to a construction of a gothic web. By both connecting to and branching away from eighteenth-century gothic texts, the tales of terror in *Blackwood's Magazine* help to connect the gothic across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

J.H. Merivale's "Tales from the Cloister" (1820) also draws upon eighteenth-century melodramatic gothic style, this time—marking one of the moments noted by Jarrells in which the content of *Blackwood's Magazine* conflicts with its conservative politics—favoring the horror conventions of Matthew Lewis. "Tale the First" ('*Of the terrible chance that befell one who, with evil design, took upon himself the religious habit'*) tells the story of a "certain sorry and wicked person" (109) named Bernardin who decides, at the suggestion of the devil, to join the monastic order to corrupt the morals of the brotherhood. As Bernardin gets more involved in his life as a priest, the devil begins to worry about Bernardin's soul. Thus, to expedite Bernardin's death, Satan transforms himself into a horse loaded with money bags and a new set of knight's armor. Bernardin, sick of being a monk, steals the devil/horse and rides to a new town. As per the horse/Satan's plans, Bernardin lusts after the innkeeper's daughter. He haggles with the innkeeper for her, and finally offers to marry her, to which the innkeeper agrees when he sees Bernardin's money. They get married that night. After the festivities, Satan shows up at the door and double-crosses Bernardin, telling the innkeeper that Bernardin, really a monk, is not allowed to marry, and is thus dishonoring the innkeeper's daughter. The innkeeper runs to the honeymoon suite and kills Bernardin. Satan and Bernardin

disappear into Hell, and the innkeeper's daughter is left drenched in Bernardin's blood. Luckily, she marries a nicer man later.

"Tale the First" brings into play many gothic situations typical to eighteenth-century gothic novels, particularly those found in *The Monk*. For example, the hero of the story is an evil monk, just like Lewis's Ambrosio. Satan visits Bernadin in order to seduce him away from the monastic life, just as a demon, in the form of beautiful Matilda, visits Ambrosio. Bernadin wants to violate the chastity of an "innocent" girl, mirroring Ambrosio's desires in regards to Antonia. And just as Ambrosio rapes then murders Antonia, in "Tale the First" Satan warns the innkeeper that the "innocent" girl will suffer a similar fate: "[Bernadin will] carry away thy daughter, whom, after having satiated his carnal appetite, he will complete the measure of his villainies by putting in like manner to death" (111). Also, just as Ambrosio is claimed by Satan at the end of *The Monk*, Bernadin is murdered and carried away safely to hell. By using these familiar situations to build his tale, Merivale accesses the conventions of *The Monk* and in this way connects "Tales from the Cloister" with these earlier novels.

Merivale also presents these conventions in much the same way that Lewis does. Radcliffe, as discussed in Chapter Two, conceals elements of the plot in order to create suspense and terror. Lewis, on the other hand, creates his horror by dramatically revealing plot elements. Merivale, like Lewis, favors revelation over concealment. He makes no bones about Satanic visitations, Bernadin's lust (Bernadin even asks the innkeeper if he can have his daughter), the innkeeper's greed, or the subsequent murder. However, although "Tales from the Cloister" employs Lewis's revelatory style in order to present many of the over-the-top gothic conventions found in *The Monk*—satanic

visitations, monasteries, evil priests, a damsel in distress, rape, and murder—at the same time, it adapts and changes Lewis's style. In this way it both connects to the eighteenth-century gothic novel while also creating new aesthetic threads that eventually expand the gothic web. In *The Monk*, Satanic encounters and Ambrosio's raging lust are presented as horrible, thus creating gothic's signature pleasure in horror. Merivale, on the other hand, presents them as reasonable, making his story funny instead of melodramatic. Thus, while he "buys into" the convention, he rejects the horror.

A prime example of this difference is Lewis's and Merivale's distinct presentations of demonic objects of desire. In *The Monk*, a demon appears as a seductive woman, dangerously tempting Ambrosio to break his vows. In "Tale the First" Satan appears as a beautiful horse, making Bernadin's amorous reaction ridiculous rather than dangerous, which, to convey that effect, I will quote at length:

> he [Satan] at last appeared before him one day in the likeness of a
> beautiful horse, ornamented with the fairest trappings, and furnished with
> every accoutrement necessary to the equipment of an honourable cavalier,
> which, when the false novice saw, as he issued forth from his cell to cross
> a meadow that lay between it and the refectory of his monastery, he cast
> thereon an admiring and covetous eye, accounting it the best and most
> gallant steed that it had ever fallen on his lot to behold. Accordingly,
> finding himself alone and unobserved, he went to the noble animal and
> began to caress him.… Bernadin marveled greatly … and began to
> conjecture who might be the fortunate possessor of such treasure, whom
> he imagined, without doubt, to be some one among the honourable

knights of the vicinage. He did not, however, stop long in thinking about it, but soon threw off the religious habit in which he was clad, and…then sprang into the saddle right gladly (110).

Without delving deeply into the implications of the parallel reactions of Ambrosio when he first sees Matilda, and Bernadin when he first sees the horse, by making the object of seduction an animal, Merivale makes the "covetous eye" and "caresses" funny rather than horrible. In *The Monk*, Satan's visitations are horror-filled for Ambrosio, and he resists almost to the last the allure of Satan's offers. However, in "Tale the First" Bernadin is a "willing captive" (110) of Satan's, and shows no compunction or remorse for stealing the horse or buying the innkeeper's daughter. Satan's appearance to the innkeeper is treated as common-place, and Satan is described as waiting for the soul of Bernadin with "good will" (112). Also, the innkeeper and the daughter are not innocent victims, as Antonia and her mother are to the persecutions of Ambrosio. The innkeeper, once he sees Bernadin's wealth, is persuaded to give him his daughter, and the daughter's consent was "gained with greater facility, and suitable arrangements being made for the succeeding nuptials [she was] little loath to indulge him in anticipating the sanction of a solemnity she knew not how ineffectual" (111).

Merivale's adaptation of Lewis's style, like "Night of the Catacombs" adaptation of Radcliffe's terror aesthetic, acts according to the logic of networks. For one, the hilarity of the conventions as they are used in "Tale the First" subverts the horror of the conventions as they are employed in early gothic novels. Although this does not create the "clinical" aesthetic of "Night in the Catacombs" per se, this aesthetic, like the clinical aesthetic, is presented as realistic. Just as "Night in the Catacombs" chronicles Mr. E's

reaction to a possible event, "Tale the First" presents this story of Satan and his monk as if it were possible and probable. In this way this realistic aesthetic also contains the gothic/network tension. It depends on invoking Lewis's horror gothic through violent sexual encounters and satanic visitations just as much as it also must undermine that horror in order to create its "realistic" aesthetic. Thus, on one hand it rejects the pleasure-in-horror conventions Lewis and, on the other, that rejection inevitably retains the voyeurism of enjoying suffering. Again, this network tension at the local level of an individual tale helps to form a global gothic web by both connecting to and expanding from the horror gothic of the eighteenth century.

By employing the terror and horror conventions of early gothic literature, the tales of terror in *Blackwood's Magazine* connect themselves to eighteenth-century gothic. These tales also create and send out other gothic strands by making the melodramatic conventions more rational, extending gothic aesthetic into the next century. Many scholars recognize the impact *Blackwood's Magazine* had on Victorian writers. As noted previously, Maga published tales and novels from several of them. The tales of terror were particularly influential, as Morrison notes, having "a powerful influence on writers such as Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, and all four Brontës, and [laying] the groundwork for the emergence of the modern short story as an internationally significant form in these decades – in the writings of Nicolai Gogol, Aleksandr Pushkin, Honore de Balzac, Prosper Merimee, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and of course Poe, who emulated, parodied, and reworked *Blackwood's* tales throughout his career" (37). Victorian writers tapped into the gothic aesthetic of *Blackwood's Magazine*, and by accessing that new aesthetic, they help expand a web of gothic reaching back into the eighteenth century.

The Brontë siblings are perhaps the best-chronicled examples of the impact of *Blackwood's Magazine* on Victorian writers on the British side of the Atlantic. Although this project focuses on the British side of gothic literature, the web of the gothic through *Blackwood's Magazine* also, notably, extends into the United States through Edgar Allan Poe. *Blackwood's* tales of terror were hugely influential on his gothic aesthetic. Baldick and Morrison express this influence well: "[*Blackwood's* style was] one that was astutely recognized, parodied, and reworked by Edgar Allan Poe, with momentous consequences for the tradition of the short story in English. Poe grasped that there was a common principle of exaggerated intensity at work in several of *Blackwood's* more successful tales, and that its further exploitation had a real cash value for an aspiring magazine writer like himself" (xiii). Poe's writings undoubtedly form an important part of nineteenth-century gothic literature, especially in relation to *Blackwood's Magazine*. An investigation of his style and relationship to the gothic web would form a key component of an examination of the transatlantic gothic network.

Christine Alexander examines the correlations between the Brontë's juvenilia and *Blackwood's Magazine* in her article "Readers and Writers: *Blackwood's* and the Brontës." According to Alexander, the Brontë siblings read and loved *Blackwood's Magazine* from a young age, and patterned much of their imaginary play world, Glass Town, after it. The siblings, particularly Charlotte and Branwell, wrote about life in their civilization in the style of *Blackwood's*. Alexander compares the contents of *Blackwood's* in the 1820s with the Brontës' writings during that time and notes that "the same range of subjects [were] woven by the Brontë s into their stories and poems [as were found in *Blackwood's Magazine*]: subjects entitled, for example 'On the Study of

Natural History', 'On poetic Inspiration', 'A Geographical and Commercial View of Northern Central Africa', 'Byron's Three New Tragedies', On the Politics of de Stael'… 'Rhapsodies over a Punch-Bowl', 'Letters from the Dead to the Living…and so on" (58-60). Not only did they write the same subjects into their town, they even created a Glass Town monthly periodical, "Branwell's Blackwood's Magazine" (60). Also, like the Maga editors, Charlotte and Branwell took on multiple editorial personas that would fight with and undermine each other. For example, Branwell as editor revised Sergeant Bud's (a member of Glass Town, and a character of Branwell's) reading of the *Poems of Ossian* (64). Charlotte and Branwell even created their own version of Maga's *Noctes Ambrosianae*, staging conversations between the fictional editors of the Magazine and characters of Glass Town at the town pub, 'Bravery's Inn' (62).

Besides learning how to "assume different literary voices" (60) and gaining opinions about the issues of the day (64), Charlotte, in particular, learned how to write gothic from *Blackwood's Magazine* and other periodicals. As agrees with the premise for this chapter, Christine Alexander does not see gothic literature as a hierarchy of change from old gothic to new gothic. Although Robert Heilman names Charlotte Brontë as the head of a "new" gothic aesthetic, Alexander shows that Brontë's "new" gothic actually dates from several sources that Brontë read and studied as a child. Among these sources was *Blackwood's Magazine* (60). Thus, the change from "old" into "new" gothic is not a linear process that culminates in one author. Rather, gothic aesthetics interact with one another in web of changing styles and conventions. Because her novels draw upon the gothic literature of the periodicals, particularly the writing and style of *Blackwood's Magazine*, Charlotte Brontë stands as an example of how the *Blackwood's* aesthetic

penetrates Victorian literature, interconnecting eighteenth- and nineteenth-century gothic literature.

The interaction of Brontë's gothic with the gothic web also follows the logic of networks. For one, as mentioned above, the Brontë siblings learned the style of subversion from *Blackwood's Magazine*. Like her brother Branwell, Charlotte also took on different personae that contradicted one another. For example, Lord Charles, one of Brontë's characters, demonizes his brother, Zamorna, another of her characters (That Kingdom 433). Also, just as Brontë learned subversion from *Blackwood's*, her gothic aesthetic, like *Blackwood's*, feeds on both adopting and subverting gothic convention. Christine Alexander gives an example of this tension in Brontë's early writings. Captain Tree (one of Bronte's voices) wrote a gothic romance entitled "The Foundling." The tale abounds in gothic stereotypes: lost parents, a ruined castle, secret tunnels, torture, and murder (431). As Alexander says, "[t]here is little hint in this story of Brontë's awareness of its extravagant absurdity until Lord Charles's reply three months later with 'The Green Dwarf'" (431). This tale, on the other hand, makes fun of the melodramatic situations and characters it creates (431). Thus, Lord Charles and Captain Tree subvert each other, and Brontë (through Lord Charles), subverts the gothic stereotypes she creates. Thus, as Alexander states, "She was clearly conscious at this early stage of the value of parody's technique of repetition and doubling: while exposing the artifice of what is parodied, she could perversely enjoy the forbidden fruits of the parodied text" (431-2).

Brontë continues this pattern of both adopting and subverting gothic conventions in her mature writing. Alexander points to a moment in *Jane Eyre* that is a compelling

example of this aesthetic: "When Rochester approaches [Jane] on horseback at night Jane thinks of the 'Gytrash,' the North-of-England spirit that came upon belated travelers. To Rochester, Jane is equally insubstantial: a spirit who might have bewitched his horse" (421). This instant of superstition in both characters is immediately dashed, as Alexander points out, when Rochester falls off his horse and Jane offers to help him. However, even though Bronte undermines the supernatural, "[Jane's] spirituality remains a compelling attraction for the world-weary Rochester" (421). Here, the atmosphere of *Jane Eyre* is situated on top of the tension between adopting, subverting, and adopting again gothic convention. It invokes the terror of the supernatural, rejects it with reality as Jane and Rochester meet each other, but this reality is necessarily inflected with that first intimation of the supernatural. Thus, along with *Blackwood's Magazine's* tales of terror, Radcliffe's and Lewis's novels, and the gothic in general, Brontë's novel depends on retaining the connotations that she undermines.

This happens again in *Jane Eyre* in the character of Bertha. The gothic and the supernatural cling to this woman. She lives in the uninhabited attic of Thornfield Hall. Her identity and the reason that Mr. Rochester lets her stay are both hidden secrets. None of the servants seem to know who she is, and Jane is kept purposefully in the dark. Her appearance is hideous. As Jane describes her, she is "purple: the lips were swelled and dark; the brow furrowed; the black eye-brows wildly raised over the blood-shot eyes" (297), and she is compared to a vampire and a goblin. She also has murderous tendencies, visiting Jane and tearing the wedding veil in half, attempting to set fire to Mr. Rochester in his sleep, and finally burning down Thornfield Hall. However, Brontë subverts these gothic stereotypes by revealing the woman to be, not a monster, but Mr.

Rochester's wife. But then, again, she adopts the gothic, as the consequences of Bertha's identity are much more "terrible" than they would have been if she had remained the gothic monster.

Again, like Radcliffe and Lewis and like the tales of terror, the network tension within Brontë's gothic works on a local and global level. By invoking the "realistic" aesthetic of *Blackwood's Magazine*, Brontë's text connects back to eighteenth-century gothic novels and extends that gothic forward into the nineteenth century. Thus, rather than an "old" gothic giving way to a "new" one, network logic helps suggest that the gothic resembles a network of shared and subverted aesthetics that span across genres and centuries. The paradox of subversion and containment that is necessary to and implicit in network logic and manifested in gothic conventions leads to the construction of a gothic web. By simultaneously adopting and converting the aesthetics of eighteenth-century gothic writers, the tales of terror in *Blackwood's Magazine* are key nodes in the formation of that network.

Gothic literature is a subversive genre in many senses. On a microscopic level, as discussed in Chapter Two, gothic conventions in individual novels subvert themselves and the culture of sensibility in which they function. On a macroscopic level, as we have seen in this chapter, one gothic text will adopt and then subvert the conventions of a fellow gothic text. Miles also notes this subversive tendency in the interactions between texts. At any given time, one gothic story will conceal or reveal another. In a similar way, the readers, writers, and critics of the gothic, as Gamer points out, subvert each other and themselves as they both ridicule the gothic and then also adopt it into their own writing.

However, comparing gothic literature and informational society reveals the opposite about the gothic: although it is subversive, the gothic is also strongly connective. Returning to where we started, network theory asserts that informational society depends on the tension between the progressive decentralization of power and the regressive reaffirmation of centrally powered social structures. Networks, then, are "powered" by this paradox of subversion and containment. In Chapter One I proposed a three-pronged system of network logic: networks are subversive, exclusive, and based on code. In Chapter Two I examined how gothic literature, although not a network in itself, embodies this three tiered logic through its interactions with its parent culture of sensibility. In conforming to this logic, the gothic also, like network theory, depends on the paradox of subversion and containment. This similar base between network theory and gothic literature has made space, in this final chapter, for a connective construction of gothic literature. Thus, although the gothic certainly fosters fragmentation and destruction, it also inevitably depends on unification. This view of gothic literature as inescapably both fragmented and contained offers, on one hand, an explanation for the appearance of outdated gothic tropes in current media as they pass along the web from Radcliffe to current artists. It also renders more complex the relation of eighteenth-century gothic literature to its own historical moment as it both subverts and contains the status quo of the culture of sensibility.

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