

Female Gothic and the Institutionalization of Gothic Studies

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Does Female Gothic have anything left to offer? Entrenched in Gothic studies for nearly thirty years and increasingly attacked during the last decade, this critical category seems to many to have outlived its usefulness. Nonetheless, there are still critical lessons to be learned from it, as much about the recent history of Gothic criticism as Gothic works themselves. Indeed, we would do well to contemplate what scholarly reputation not only feminist criticism of the Gothic but also Gothic criticism more generally would enjoy were it not for the intervention of Female Gothic.

Apparently first made public in a lecture delivered in the early 1970s at the University of Warwick (where 'Germaine Greer was a superbly scholarly heckler') and first published in articles for the *New York Review of Books* in 1974, Female Gothic is best known as the subject of a chapter in Ellen Moers' influential study of women's literature, *Literary Women* (1976).¹ Moers was not the first critic to be interested in the positive connections between women and the Gothic (as opposed to the eighteenth-century disparagement of the form's women readers), nor was she the only early feminist literary critic to express interest in the Gothic.² But through the telescoping effect of hindsight, her coinage has become a pivotal moment in the timeline often drawn of twentieth-century Gothic criticism, marking the point when, as Anne Williams puts it, 'feminist critics . . . recognized that gender is crucial in the Gothic'.³

Female Gothic is less noteworthy as an 'original' insight that emerged *sui generis* from Moers' critical sensibilities than as a product of a specific historical moment. Most important, the formulation of this category was the result of the rise of feminism and feminist literary criticism in the US during the late 1960s and 1970s. Moers herself makes the significance of this historical context clear in her preface to *Literary Women*. Recalling that though she had once believed it 'futile' to discuss women writers apart 'from the general course of literary history', feminism, and 'the dramatically unfolding, living literary history' of 'women's liberation' in particular, persuaded her otherwise (xi–xii). More specifically, as precisely the kind

of singling out of women writers that Moers had initially rejected, Female Gothic was an expression of the 'second phase' of American feminist literary criticism, which focused on uncovering the lost tradition of women's literature, rather than revealing cultural traditions of misogyny as Kate Millet, for example, had done in her 'first phase' classic, *Sexual Politics* (1970).⁴

The advantages of hitching the Gothic's wagon to feminism's star by way of Female Gothic were many. As Robert Miles points out, doing so was essential to 'rescuing' the reputation of such women writers as Ann Radcliffe from critics who found her 'childish fantasies', 'gently spooky fiction', and 'concern for external circumstance' lacking the 'deeper implications' available in the work of such male writers as Mathew Lewis.⁵ Maybe just as important, feminist literary criticism also rescued Gothic studies. David Richter, in an examination of the critical reception of the form, argues that feminism was 'perhaps the most obvious force at work' that transformed 'a field that was once neglected at best – and at worst a bastion of bibliophilic cranks' into 'a very important area of study'.⁶ Similarly, David Punter and Victor Sage hold that feminist readings were on the cutting edge of late-twentieth-century criticism of the Gothic, producing 'the most energetic' and 'interesting and important' of these discussions.⁷ Feminism, in other words, was instrumental in institutionalizing Gothic studies. Reflecting on the 'substantial gains' made since the late 1970s, Coral Ann Howells acknowledges that scholars no longer have 'to argue for the legitimacy of Gothic as a proper subject of literary study'.⁸

But there were also disadvantages to the feminist connection. Many of the problems with Female Gothic as a critical category which became evident in the 1990s – that it is 'unsatisfyingly simple' and 'common-sense', encouraging 'certain assumptions' about 'the intrinsic "femaleness" of Gothic fiction' by 'accepting gender as the bedrock of explanation' – were themselves difficulties that post-structuralist theory of the 1980s had discovered in American feminist literary criticism more generally.⁹ (One could perhaps posit, then, that like Moers' coinage, the reaction against Female Gothic was a product of a specific historical moment, in this case, English studies after theory.) It might be too that just as feminism accrued costs through institutionalization, as Ellen Messer-Davidow has recently charted, so did Gothic studies, though, admittedly, at a somewhat lower price. Whereas feminism failed to transform the academy that it was co-opted by, Gothic criticism, as Howells continues, merely fails to 'pay . . . close attention to the slip-pages and oddities in these texts now that we have ready made theoretical perspectives through which to read them'.¹⁰

If feminist criticism, for better and worse, transformed how the Gothic is read and its status within the academy, the Gothic also changed feminist criticism. Feminist critics offered key insights into the centrality of property in Gothic fiction by women writers; Moers is almost as well known for 'pioneering' the view that 'property seems to loom larger than love in *Udolpho*' (136) as she is for her 'pioneer essay' on the Female Gothic.¹¹ Yet in pursuing these property interests, feminist critics of the Gothic often reproduce the plots and characters of their object of study. The critical tale of Radcliffe's place in the Gothic, and especially of her

relationship with Lewis, is itself a kind of property plot – a tale of claims and counterclaims that finally inscribes both Ellen Moers and feminist criticism into this narrative. Female Gothic as defined by Moers may present difficulties as a critical category, but it still has the power to teach us an important lesson about the sway that the Gothic has had over readers, criticism and culture.

At least some of Moers' and other feminist critics' interest in property issues originates in Anglo-American feminist traditions. Mary Wollstonecraft's call for women's economic self-reliance in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), for example, reverberated in nineteenth-century 'feminist efforts . . . directed to extending women's property rights and gaining recognized entry into employment'. These proprietary concerns continued in the twentieth century, from Virginia Woolf's demand for *A Room of One's Own* (1929) to Pro-Choice rhetoric of the abortion debates of the 1970s and 1980s, the latter forwarding a kind of feminist possessive individualism to argue that women have the right to choose because their bodies are their own.¹² Late twentieth-century American feminist literary criticism, with its claims for women's less literal ownership of a literary tradition, yields a similar concern.

Feminist criticism of the 1970s and 1980s is marked by a series of proprietary metaphors, including 'maps', 'territories', 'breaking ground', 'space', and 'landmarks', that, unremarkable individually, suggest a shared perspective when examined together. Elaine Showalter, for instance, punned on Woolf's demand in her title for *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), which with Moers' *Literary Women* and Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) formed the core of the second phase of feminist criticism in the US, what Showalter later described, in proprietary terms, as the moment 'when feminist criticism set out to map the territory of the female imagination'.¹³ Mapping this territory did not come easily. In 1980, a year after the publication of *Madwoman*, Gilbert framed the difficulties she and Gubar faced in their initial 'attempt[s] to recover . . . the female literary tradition' as a tale of women denied property rights:

The treasures of Western culture, it began to seem, were the patrimony of male writers, or to put it another way, Western culture itself was a grand ancestral property that educated men had inherited from their intellectual forefathers, while their female relatives, like characters in a Jane Austen novel, were relegated to modest dower houses on the edge of the estate.¹⁴

By 1985, the status of these 'female relatives' had improved enough for Showalter to write of their proprietary 'success'. Feminist criticism, she held, opened up a 'space' amidst those 'zealously guarded bastions of male intellectual endeavor' – literary criticism and theory – and recovered a lost inheritance, 'the whole body of texts that make up our literary heritage'.¹⁵ The history of American feminist literary criticism, then, can be summed up by a story of property lost and regained.

In *Literary Women*, Moers similarly highlights the importance of women's 'possession of their own tradition' (42). And nowhere is this proprietary concern more

significant than in her brief definition of Female Gothic and the manner in which it draws on a set of cultural connections between the body, ownership, and texts. 'What I mean by Female Gothic is easily defined', she insists: 'the work that women writers have done in the literary mode that, since the eighteenth century, we have called the Gothic' (90). Moers' assertion of the 'ease' of this definition masks a number of crucial complications, not the least of which is the essentialist link between the biological sex of the writer and the 'gender' of the text. Similarly complex is her implicit claim for women's ownership of a substantial portion of the Gothic. This claim turns on Moers' use of the word 'work', and particularly the phrase 'the work that women writers have done', identifying simultaneously the literary productions of these women writers and the labour that produced them. Like much Pro-Choice rhetoric of the 1970s and 1980s, Moers draws on an argument for ownership based in the body. With literary property at stake, however, her allusion to Lockean possessive individualism also harkens back to reasoning used since the mid-eighteenth-century copyright debates to defend the author's rights to the property in his – or her – work. As Locke maintains in *Two Treatises of Government*, (1690) beginning with one's 'Property in his own Person', ownership extends outward to that which is produced by 'The Labour of his Body, and the Work of his Hands'. Eighteenth-century supporters of authorial rights in turn extended this premise to literary productions.¹⁶ Moers's sex-based emphasis helps to clinch her case for Female Gothic, grounding ownership in the body of the woman writer. She outlines this point early on in *Literary Women*, detailing the way in which the 'great' women writers chose 'among the varying feminine facets of the human condition' and 'transformed this material . . . into literature'; 'Being women, women writers have women's bodies', she asserts, 'which affect their senses and their imagery' (xi).

Feminism's (and post-enlightenment Western culture's) investment in property as the ground for rights and personhood help to account for some of the concern for ownership in Moers' definition of Female Gothic. But the particular shape of her and later feminist critics' narratives of women's claim to the Gothic more closely resembles Radcliffe's narratives and, in particular, the 'property interests' in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) that Moers was the first twentieth-century critic to remark upon. As Moers explains, 'property interests dominate the second half of the novel': 'the death of her aunt makes Emily an heiress; in most of the ensuing chapters, she is engaged gently, pensively, yet firmly in the consolidation of her property. Her struggle with the villain Montoni is essentially legalistic, [and] concerns her property rights' (136). In its simplest terms, this plot charts Emily's initial claim to real estate (not only her aunt's but also her father's) that Montoni usurps from her but which she finally reclaims as her own. (The 'last page', notes Moers, 'is given over to legacies, estates, [and] marriage portions' [137]). Though especially pronounced in *Udolpho*, this property plot also forms the backbone of *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Italian* (1797), and is even suggested in Radcliffe's first romance, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789).

Beginning with Moers' remarks on Radcliffe in her article-turned-chapter on Female Gothic, the feminist response to Radcliffe casts her as Emily in a critical tale that endures for several decades. Though Moers is clearly more interested in the birth myth of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), at the onset of her discussion of Female Gothic she grants Radcliffe primacy in the Gothic domain (somewhat anachronistically, as we now know). According to Moers, Radcliffe 'firmly set the Gothic in one of the ways it would go ever after' and was consequently hailed 'as mistress of the pure Gothic form' (91). (Significantly, perhaps, Emily too is 'mistress', of herself and her father's and aunt's estates.)¹⁷ Despite often explicitly positioning themselves against this early feminist project, many later feminist readers of the Gothic followed Moers' lead in their representations of Radcliffe's proprietary claims. Comments by Margaret Doody (in 1977), Cynthia Griffin Wolff (in 1983), and Eugenia DeLamotte (in 1990) plot a history of the Gothic in which Radcliffe takes precedence. Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) and its immediate successors, they argue, only offered 'the trappings of the Gothic story without its essence' and 'assembled the materials of Gothicism'.¹⁸ As the 'great inaugurator of the genre', Radcliffe 'issued the "invitation to form"' and 'introduced Gothic conventions into the mainstream of English fiction'.¹⁹ If any single author could be said to 'own' the Gothic, they suggest, it is Radcliffe.

More tellingly Gothic is feminist criticism's representation of the literary transactions of Radcliffe, Matthew Lewis, and his scandalous novel *The Monk* (1796). Of course, feminist critics did not invent the story of Radcliffe's and Lewis's intertextual relationship; well before the 1970s it was common to read *The Monk* as a response to *Udolpho* and *The Italian* as a response to *The Monk*. By emphasizing gender, however, Moers and subsequent feminist readers reformulated the relationship. As Kate Ferguson Ellis has recently observed, the Gothic's 'feminist defenders have argued that it was practically created by women writers . . . From this perspective, the earliest male Gothicists undertook to wrest the form from the female hands in which they saw it too firmly grasped' – what Deborah Ross contends was 'an attempt to regain some lost ground' and 'masculinize, or remasculinize, Gothic fiction'.²⁰ From this rough outline it is but a short step to Gothic heroines and villains struggling over property rights, with Radcliffe playing Emily to Lewis's Montoni (a role he seems to have anticipated, likening himself to the 'Villain' of *Udolpho* in a letter that acknowledges his debt to Radcliffe).²¹ Just as Emily is repeatedly 'shocked' by Montoni's acts of 'deliberate villainy' (*Udolpho*, 270, 363, 436), Radcliffe was apparently 'shocked' by Lewis's attempt to 'wrest the form' from her, as well as to sully it with sexual content.²²

In Moers' initiation of the feminist version of this literary relationship, Radcliffe, like Emily, does not retreat into feminine propriety in the face of such villainous transgressions. Though Radcliffe 'seems to have been dismayed by Matthew Lewis' avowed imitation of her work in his shocking novel called *The Monk*, writes Moers, 'in defense of her genre she then wrote *The Italian*, a work which is at once a borrowing from and a severe corrective to "Monk" Lewis' erotic fantasy' (137). And it is what Moers highlights as Emily's 'essentially legalistic' debates with

Montoni over her aunt's property that structures much of the feminist reception of Radcliffe's response to *The Monk*.²³ According to Syndy Conger, *The Italian* is 'a sustained counterstatement' to and a 'near point-by-point refutation of' *The Monk*. And for many critics, Ross reports, 'Radcliffe had the last word in this "debate".' Emily is finally able to reclaim her Gothic territory from Montoni; likewise, 'Radcliffe succeeded in claiming Gothic as "female"; Susan Wolstenholme argues, and in 'reclaiming a certain textual space' from male writers of the Gothic, particularly Lewis.²⁴

The reproduction of this Gothic property plot is very likely due to a number of causes. As I've argued elsewhere, such critical Gothic tales are endemic to the history of Radcliffe's and Lewis' receptions, emerging almost from the moment their romances were first published.²⁵ Cultural and critical imperatives also help to explain the Gothic nature of feminist criticism. As we've seen, like post-enlightenment culture, both Female Gothic and Anglo-American feminism share a common fascination with property. Moreover, feminist literary criticism draws connections between its objects of study and its own project. Moers, for instance, attributes to Radcliffe influence not only on feminist criticism but feminism more broadly, declaring 'the Gothic fantasies of Mrs Radcliffe . . . a locus of heroinism' – another of Moers' coinages – 'which, ever since, women have turned to feminist purposes' (126, 147). Similarly, Gilbert and Showalter find that feminist criticism repeats 'the revisionary imperative' and 'patterns of influence and rebellion that mark the female literary tradition.'²⁶ As a result, feminist critics see themselves and each other as part of the tradition they study. In a commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of *Literary Women*, for example, several scholars influenced by Moers figure her as the very type of 'literary woman' she described. Just as Moers saw her work as a 'celebration of the great women who have spoken for us all' (xv) and a 'tribute to the great women of the past who did in fact break ground for literary women' (63), so too do these later admirers 'celebrate the ongoing influence of Moers' work' through 'meditations on Moers' legacy'. Not surprisingly, they do so in proprietary terms. *Literary Women* is not only 'groundbreaking'; it was part of a movement in feminist criticism 'that gave definition to the critical landscape', itself 'laying claim to great and unmarked territory' and enabling Moers to 'explore the significance of women's literary inheritance.'²⁷

Although Moers might not have made such grand claims for herself, it seems clear that like much feminist criticism of the Gothic she was part of the Female Gothic tradition. As we have seen, the feminist response to Radcliffe, particularly in relation to Lewis, is often 'work that women writers have done' in the Gothic 'mode'. But it is not only the Gothic tale of Radcliffe and Lewis that incorporates these critics into the literary women's tradition of Female Gothic. Feminist criticism of the Gothic has also tended to vilify earlier (male) critics for attempting, like Lewis, to 'reclaim some lost ground' from women writers. When Leslie Fiedler, for example, finds that Radcliffe's 'gently spooky fiction' misses out on the 'deeper implications' of the Gothic, he is, insists DeLamotte, casting Radcliffe off of her own estate: 'Radcliffe . . . is defined out' and 'relegated to the periphery of the genre

she herself did most to define.²⁸ In countering this villainy, feminist criticism becomes more thoroughly embedded in the Female Gothic tradition, finally figuring critics themselves as heroines. By asserting Radcliffe's and other women writers' rights to the Gothic, feminist critics, like Emily and Radcliffe in their legalistic debates with Montoni and Lewis, offer their own 'point-by-point refutation of' and 'severe corrective to' the masculine counterclaim. Yet it is Moers who remains the most proprietary of these critical heroines. In naming Female Gothic, she initiated women's claim to the Gothic and reclaimed women's lost legacy from masculinizing villains such as Fiedler.

By the early 1990s, it was increasingly difficult to maintain such claims for Female Gothic. In addition to the complications of making reference to, much less connections between, 'body', 'text', 'women', and 'literature', the influence of this category and the Gothic in general on Gothic criticism became both apparent and suspect.²⁹ For Diane Long Hoeveler, especially damaging was feminist criticism's reproduction of what she describes as 'victim feminism', 'an ideology of female power through pretended and staged weakness' that Female Gothic texts did not simply express but contributed to. 'Discussions of the female gothic', she writes, 'have, unfortunately, uncritically participated in the very fantasies' that the Gothic helped to create.³⁰ By the late 1990s, then, Female Gothic was something to rid ourselves of. Indeed, not only has the familiar tale of Radcliffe's – and her feminist critics' – struggle with masculinist villains such as Lewis and Fiedler fallen by the wayside; it is now possible to publish on women's Gothic fiction with only cursory reference to Female Gothic and none at all to Moers.³¹ The disappearance of this Gothic tale seems not to mean, however, that Gothic criticism has finally escaped the clutches of its object of study. Mark Edmundson, for instance, finds that aspects of the form have seeped into theory itself. 'Much, though surely not all, of what is called theory draws on Gothic idioms', he argues. He cites Derrida and Žižek but concludes that 'the most intriguing exponent of Gothic theory is surely Michel Foucault' with his 'haunting agency' of 'Power'.³² If Edmundson is correct, the very tools used to dismantle Female Gothic as a critical category are themselves Gothic.

Does the beginning of the twenty-first century mark the end of the story for Female Gothic and Ellen Moers' critical legacy? I realize that by attempting to recuperate Moers and make a claim for her rightful place in the history of Gothic criticism, I enter into the Gothic plot she laid out so well. Just as Moers positioned Radcliffe as her proprietary heroine, so too am I situating Moers as Radcliffe and asserting that she has an equally valid claim to the Gothic domain. The inevitability of this move is in fact part of my point. Moers has a place not only in the history of Gothic criticism but also in the Gothic tradition, as much, really, as Radcliffe. Neither is quite the 'originator' of Female Gothic, as tradition or critical category, as was once believed, but their importance as 'pioneers' in both is indisputable. My argument might be more persuasive if we consider the genre in which Moers wrote and what it implies for her work on Female Gothic. Though far from a Gothic romance, *Literary Women*, like her articles for *The New York Review of Books* and

like Radcliffe's works as well, was intended for an educated, but essentially non-academic, reading public.³³ Moers remarks in her preface that one effect of the feminist movement was that it 'pulled [her] out of the stacks and made the writing of [her] book' something of 'an open-air activity' often born out of 'public lectures' (xii). Traces of this 'open-air' process of writing *Literary Women* can be seen in the ease with which she refers to such campy, contemporary, pseudo-feminist icons as Virginia Slims cigarettes and Patty Hearst (129) and 'present[s. . .] the critic herself', as Janet Todd notes, 'the writer situated in a specific time.'³⁴ If we do not acknowledge the ways in which *Literary Women* is deeply different from the kind of literary criticism we have come to expect in an age of super-specialization, and instead continue to read and institutionalize it as *only* an academic project, we are doomed to relegate Moers to the periphery of a field she helped to define. In other words, Moers' discussion of Female Gothic is not only a lens through which to view the tradition of Gothic texts she mapped but also part of this tradition and therefore part of our object of study. Further, her work marks the point at which 1970s feminism began to participate in the Gothic tradition. Intriguingly, Anne Williams points out that 'The advent of feminist criticism in the early 1970s coincided with a decline of the '60s mass-market Gothic.'³⁵ It is perhaps feminist literary criticism of Female Gothic, with Moers as its chief contributor, that became the alternative.

Notes

- 1 Ellen Moers, 'Female Gothic: The Monster's Mother' and 'Female Gothic: Monsters, Goblins, Freaks', *New York Review of Books*, 21 March 1974, pp. 24–8 and 4 April 1974, pp. 35–9. Moers, *Literary Women* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976; Rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. xii. Page numbers for subsequent quotations from *Literary Women* will appear in parentheses in the body of the text.
- 2 David Richter attributes twentieth-century feminist critics' interest in the Gothic in part to the earlier, negative view of Gothic as 'female reading'. See *The Progress of Romance: Literary Historiography and the Gothic Novel* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1996), p. 2. Bette B. Roberts, in *The Gothic Romance: Its Appeal to Women Writers and Readers in Late Eighteenth-Century England* [1975] (New York: Arno Press, 1980), pp. 5–6, and Jacqueline Howard, in *Reading Gothic Fiction: A Bakhtinian Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 60, point to several twentieth-century critics who addressed the connection between women and the Gothic before Moers. Feminist critics interested in the Gothic contemporary with Moers but apparently unaware of her work include Coral Ann Howells (as Howard notes, p. 59) and Roberts.
- 3 Anne Williams, *Art of Darkness: A Poetics of the Gothic* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 100
- 4 See Vincent B. Leitch, *American Literary Criticism from the Thirties to the Eighties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), chapter 11.
- 5 Robert Miles, *Gothic Writing 1750–1820: A Genealogy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 124; Lowry Nelson, Jr, 'Night Thoughts on the Gothic Novel', *Yale Review*, 52 (1963), 238; Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* [1960], Revised Edition (New York: Stein and Day, 1966), p. 129; Robert D. Hume, 'Gothic Versus Romantic: A Revaluation of the Gothic Novel', *PMLA*, 84 (1969), 285.

- 6 Richter, *The Progress of Romance*, p. 2.
- 7 David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day. Vol. 1: The Gothic Tradition*, Second Edition (London and New York: Longman Group Ltd., 1996), p. 211; Victor Sage, 'Introduction', *The Gothick Novel: A Casebook*, ed. Sage (London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1990), p. 25.
- 8 Coral Ann Howells, *Love, Mystery and Misery: Feeling in Gothic Fiction* [1978] (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: 1995), p. vii.
- 9 Williams, *Art of Darkness*, p. 11; E. J. Clery, 'Ann Radcliffe and D. A. F. de Sade: Thoughts on Heroinism', *Women's Writing*, Special Number: Female Gothic Writing, ed. Robert Miles, 1/2 (1994), 203; Robert Miles, 'Introduction', *Women's Writing*, 1/2 (1994), 134. For discussions of the shortcomings of American feminist criticism, see Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985); Janet Todd, *Feminist Literary History* (New York: Routledge, 1998) pp. 1, 76; and Ellen Messer-Davidow, *Disciplining Feminism: From Social Activism to Academic Discourse* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002), chapter 5.
- 10 Howells, *Love, Mystery and Misery*, p. vii.
- 11 E. J. Clery, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762–1800* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 194 n.; Sage, *The Gothick Novel*, p. 25. For subsequent feminist discussions of the importance of property in Radcliffe's works, see Mary Poovey, 'Ideology and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*', *Criticism*, 21 (1979), 307–30; Kate Ferguson Ellis, *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), chapter 6; and Diane Long Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), chapters 2–3.
- 12 Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), in *Mary Wollstonecraft: The Political Writings*, ed. Janet Todd (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), pp. 67–296; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987), p. 453; Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* [1929] (San Diego and New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1957). See Lauren Fitzgerald, '(In)alienable Rights: Property, Feminism, and the Female Body from Ann Radcliffe to the *Alien* Films', *Romanticism on the Net*, 21 (February 2001) [accessed April 17, 2001] <<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~scat0385/21fitzgerald.html>>.
- 13 Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Showalter, 'Introduction', *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory*, ed. Showalter (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), pp. 3, 6.
- 14 Sandra M. Gilbert, 'What Do Feminist Critics Want? A Postcard from the Volcano', *ADE Bulletin*, 66 (1980), rpt. in *The New Feminist Criticism*, ed. Showalter, p. 33
- 15 Showalter, 'Introduction', p. 3.
- 16 John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government: A Critical Edition with an Introduction and Apparatus Criticus*, ed. Peter Laslett, Second Edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 305–06, Locke's emphasis. Mark Rose holds that the copyright debates disseminated a 'blending of the Lockean discourse [of private property] and the aesthetic discourse of originality'. 'The Author as Proprietor: *Donaldson v. Becket* and the Genealogy of Modern Authorship', *Representations*, (1988), 56. William Enfield, for

- example, a contemporary man of letters involved in the debates (as well as a reviewer of Radcliffe's works for the *Monthly Review*) maintained that because 'Literary compositions are the effect of labour[,] authors have therefore a natural right of property in their work'. *Observations on Literary Property* (1774), in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774–1775*, ed. Stephen Parks (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1975), p. 21.
- 17 Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. Bonamy Dobrée, introduction by Terry Castle (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 516. Page numbers for subsequent quotations from this edition will appear in parentheses in the body of the text.
 - 18 Margaret Anne Doody, 'Deserts, Ruins, and Troubled Waters: Female Dreams in Fiction and the Development of the Gothic Novel', *Genre*, 10 (1977), 552; Eugenia C. DeLamotte, *Perils of the Night: A Feminist Study of Nineteenth-Century Gothic* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 10.
 - 19 DeLamotte, *Perils of the Night*, pp. 10, 12; Cynthia Griffin Wolff, 'The Radcliffean Gothic Model: A Form for Feminine Sexuality', in *The Female Gothic*, ed. Juliann E. Fleenor (Montreal: Eden Press, 1983), p. 223.
 - 20 Kate Ferguson Ellis, 'Can You Forgive Her? The Gothic Heroine and Her Critics' in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. David Punter (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), p. 257; Deborah Ross, *The Excellence of Falsehood: Romance, Realism, and Women's Contribution to the Novel* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), p. 140.
 - 21 Quoted in Louis F. Peck, *A Life of Matthew G. Lewis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 209.
 - 22 Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Desire and Truth: Functions of Plot in Eighteenth-Century English Novels* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 150; Syndy Conger, 'Sensibility Restored: Radcliffe's Answer to Lewis's *The Monk*', in *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression*, ed. Kenneth W. Graham (New York: AMS Press, 1989), p. 113.
 - 23 At least a few feminist critics, however, have read Radcliffe and Lewis's literary relationship not through *Udolpho* but *The Monk*. See Lauren Fitzgerald, 'Crime, Punishment, Criticism: *The Monk* as Prolepsis', *Gothic Studies*, 5/1 (2003), 43–54.
 - 24 Conger, 'Sensibility Restored', pp. 129, 144; Ross, *The Excellence of Falsehood*, p. 141; Susan Wolstoneholme, *Gothic (Re)Visions: Writing Women as Readers* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), p. 16.
 - 25 Lauren Fitzgerald, 'Gothic Properties of Walpole's Legacy: Ann Radcliffe's Contemporary Reception', *Fictions of Unease: The Gothic from Otranto to The X-Files*, eds Andrew Smith, Diane Mason and William Hughes (Bath: Sulis, 2002), pp. 29–42.
 - 26 Gilbert, 'What do Feminist Critics Want?', p. 35; Showalter, 'Introduction', p. 4.
 - 27 Deborah Epstein Nord, 'Introduction', 'Commemorating *Literary Women*: Ellen Moers and Feminist Criticism after Twenty Years', *Signs*, 24 (1999), 733, 736; Sharon O'Brien, "'I Can Dare to Generalize": Celebrating *Literary Women*', *Signs*, 24 (1999), 757–8, author's emphasis.
 - 28 DeLamotte, *Perils of the Night*, p. 12.
 - 29 See, for example, Eve Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* [1975], Revised Edition (New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 140; Elizabeth Napier, *The Failure of Gothic: Problems of Disjunction in an Eighteenth-Century Literary Form* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 2; Chris Baldick and Robert Mighall, 'Gothic Criticism', in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. David Punter (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), p. 210.

- 30 Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism*, pp. 7, 3.
- 31 See E. J. Clery, *Women's Gothic: From Clara Reeve to Mary Shelley* (Tavistock: Northcote House, 2000).
- 32 Mark Edmundson, *Nightmare on Main Street: Angels, Sadoomasochism, and the Culture of Gothic* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 40–1.
- 33 *Literary Women* was initially published by a commercial press, Doubleday, before being reprinted by Oxford in 1985. As such it seems to be on the cusp of a change Messer-Davidow finds in the publication of feminist works in the 1960s and 1970s. Initially commercial presses were 'careful to select only [works] that would attract a crossover audience' – which excerpted reviews from such popular US magazines as *Saturday Review*, *Newsweek*, and *Ms Magazine* reprinted on the back of the Oxford paperback edition suggest *Literary Women* did. Soon, however, these presses 'backed away from feminist trade books that hybridized the elements of movement and academic discourses' – which *Literary Women* did also. Messer-Davidow, *Disciplining Feminism*, p. 133.
- 34 Todd, *Feminist Literary History*, p. 25.
- 35 Williams, *Art of Darkness*, p. 7.

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