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The Identity of Conflict in Nineteenth-century Gothic Literature

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The Identity of Conflict in Nineteenth-century Gothic Literature

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Abstract

This thesis looks at conflict as a unifying, ubiquitous concept that runs throughout all Gothic literature, specifically looking at nineteenth-century Gothic texts. The texts chosen are 'Morella', 'The Fall of the House of Usher', and 'The Black Cat' by Edgar Allan Poe; *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë; and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. This study will compare and contrast each text, analysing specifically the conflicts within each text, what these conflicts mean for the plots and the characters, and how these conflicts can be seen to be what binds these texts under the term 'Gothic literature'. Research has been taken to understand the analyses not just around these specific texts, but also the nature of Gothic literature, as well as the importance of conflict to this genre. This last point is one that has been found lacking in current criticisms, and I have aimed to highlight that analysis of Gothic literature should be positioning conflict as a central theme, one which runs through each text and arguably is the defining aspect of this body of literature. The texts have been chosen for their variety, and show the importance of conflict as a unifying factor, given the wide reach and influence of Gothic literature as a whole. Each text is studied both as an independent work that thrives in conflict, as well as another text that contributes to the larger reliance on conflict. The aim here is to address a gap in current critical writings, and highlight that time and time again, Gothic literature can be boiled down to disagreements and conflicts, of all sizes and severities.

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Introduction

Conflict pervades Gothic literature, it is what defines characters, what drives plots, and ultimately what defines this genre, making it the counterculture, transgressive genre that it is. Nineteenth-century Gothic, expanding beyond the religious and feudal roots of Lewis, Radcliffe, and Walpole, encompasses the experiences of writers such as Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Brontë, and Robert Louis Stevenson, all of whom wrote in very different contexts, showing the ever-widening reach of this genre. This thesis will argue just how important conflict is to Gothic texts, and will work to reinforce the argument that, above all else, the defining trait of Gothic literature is that it is driven by conflicts. I will be discussing Poe's short stories 'Morella' (1835), 'The Fall of the House of Usher' (1839), and 'The Black Cat' (1843); Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847); and Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). The chosen texts are varied in setting, tone, and characters, and have been chosen partly for this reason; if one is to discuss nineteenth-century Gothic literature, then its diverse focuses must be explored for a balanced study. These three authors fall under the label 'Gothic', despite their different styles, but as I will discuss, there is a great deal that binds these texts.

I have chosen these texts because despite the differences between them they are unified by relentless, absorbing conflicts. Gothic literature is a genre around which there is much debate, especially surrounding the dates in which it began, and even ended. Each text selected for this thesis has narrators who are significantly involved in their own narratives and whose dependability is compromised; attacks on women, stemming from fragile masculinities and patriarchal paranoia; and questions regarding the nature of one's identity and psychological fortitude. These three topics will form the basis of each chapter, as each

is rooted in conflict. As I will argue, what unifies and drives these works most is their reliance on conflict, and their portrayals of conflicts as central to their narratives. These texts show the increasing reach of Gothic literature's influence as the nineteenth century progressed, and each shows different aspects of this genre. Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* shows the growing investment in a domestic ideal within nineteenth-century fiction, an ideal that she manipulates and mutates into the unstable home of *Wuthering Heights*. The Gothic tone in her novel comes largely from the vilification of Heathcliff for supposedly poisoning the domestic sphere; the superstitions of the local people over Catherine's death and the spirit's perceived 'hauntings'; and the complex web of relationships and betrayals, driven by classic Gothic revenge but inflected with the rising influence of capitalism. Poe writes in the vein of 'American Gothic', a tradition that did not have the same historical background as European Gothic writings did, so had to utilise the isolation and individualist nature of this country and show 'the horror [that] is within the self' as Allan Lloyd-Smith has argued (2006: 117). American Gothic can also be set in exotic, central-European settings, and Poe opts for both methods, setting many of his stories – 'Usher' for one – in European grand structures, whilst also writing stories narrated by guilt-stricken protagonists who slowly mentally decay, as in 'The Black Cat' and 'Morella'. Finally, Stevenson's novel *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* details the same fears as *Wuthering Heights* - that is, the corruption of the domestic territory. However, *Jekyll and Hyde* goes further in exploring the Enlightenment ideal of man, separating himself from his animalistic urges and existing on a 'higher plane' of thought and decorum. Stevenson's novel delves into the psychology of the contemporary man, and not only expresses the fears of man's baser urges coming to surface, but also the key importance of contemporary psychological theories of doubling, repression and desires. In each of these texts though, conflict is ubiquitous and takes on many different forms. I have chosen these texts because, whilst they are very popular Gothic tales, their subject matters

and contexts are starkly different and I wish to outline the unifying importance of conflict to this genre. The significant development of Gothic literature from Poe to Stevenson, and beyond, has led to some debates around what constitutes 'Gothic literature' (Punter 1996: 7) (Baldick & Mighall 2006: 215), but I believe that conflict is what unifies them. By 'conflict', I do not simply mean arguments or disagreements; here, I mean a significant clash of principles and beliefs, clashes which are so personal to the characters that they come to shape these figures. Within each of these texts, the Gothic Other is hated because their existence is seen as an affront to the lives of those that persecute them. Poe's women, Heathcliff, and Hyde all threaten the established patriarchal order, their actions and lives become offensive to the powerful men of the texts, and in this the central and key conflicts are born. Each text, in this study and in Gothic literature as a whole, relies on the outsider, the Other, and when this figure is introduced into society they are met with hatred and scorn and the text is driven by the conflicts this unearths. The development of the world and societies in the nineteenth century informs the realities of these stories, these texts being informed by key events such as the industrial revolution and its implications on wealth and power, the turbulent development of the US into a unified country and its implications on national identity, and the increasing social problems within London slums that emphasised gulfs in living standards, all of which are used to create Gothic villains much closer to the reader's home. This is at the heart of conflict in Gothic literature, particularly in the nineteenth century - the proximity of Gothic threats who invade domestic spaces and how much danger they pose to 'everyday' society and its values. Even if these threats are characters who live within these spheres, they are treated as external and shunned by others who see them as undermining the established culture.

This thesis will be set out in three chapters, one for each author, and will go through the

authors chronologically - from Poe to Stevenson - to build and develop the comparisons of the texts much as Gothic literature developed throughout the nineteenth-century. Each chapter will be split into three major sections: the first will concern the influence, power and culpability of narrators; the second the treatment of women and the conflicts between them and men; and the third will concern itself with repression, psychological conflicts, the Double and the Other. These sections focus on what I would argue are three of the major conflicts within Gothic literature as a whole - those between the narrator and their subject; men and women; and the accepted and the marginalised. The biases of narrators, the controversial roles of women, and the repressed psyches of characters all create conflict by ultimately causing certain people to be labelled as 'Other' and 'outsider'. Binary morality is championed in these texts, and the narrators within them use this thinking to justify their actions by positioning themselves as the ethical, civilised figures and those they dislike as depraved and primitive. The narrators choose themselves as moral guides, creating conflict with those who disagree; women are seen as threats to the patriarchies of these texts; and within each key character there is a mental conflict which inevitably leads to their downfall.

The conflict concerning narrators is one that is particularly relevant to the texts chosen, as *Wuthering Heights* and *Jekyll and Hyde* change narrators multiple times, whilst Poe's short stories are retold by men who have had more than a helping hand in the deaths depicted in these stories. To simply call these narrators unreliable is to disregard just how controlling, biased, and powerful they are. Within this thesis, I will explore the idea that the narrators of these Gothic stories do not just tell the story to the reader, nor simply throw into doubt their role in the tales they are relaying, but actively create and stoke conflict by attempting to portray their own - and others' - pasts in a certain light. As each narrator, bar the first in *Jekyll and Hyde*, plays a significant role in his/her own story, none of them can be

disregarded as a simple storyteller and their roles as narrators are complex. Take, for instance, the issue of class in *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Wuthering Heights* and even 'Usher', something which I will explore fully in their respective chapters. Narratological conflicts are also very important to the issue of gender and patriarchal control over women, as I will explore in this thesis. The narrators of my chosen texts are all men, apart from Nelly Dean - although I will discuss her role in the patriarchy in the second chapter - and these men disregard the safety and happiness of the women in their lives as they become more focused on their own delusions. The narrators all attempt to establish patriarchal dominance over women, yet when their perceptions are shown to be increasingly warped and biased, this comes to undermine the patriarchies of these texts. The internal conflicts of Poe's narrators and Dr. Jekyll, and the humanity of Brontë's negatively portrayed Catherines, throw into doubt the authority of patriarchal narrators who seek to discredit or ignore women. Because the narratives are so invested in upholding the patriarchies which they depict, the reader must see behind the narrators' words to gain a true glimpse into the experiences of the characters. But the blatant biases of these narrators come to undermine their authority, and with this the authority of the patriarchies they benefit from. None of the narrators sympathise with the persecuted Others of the novels, so the texts come to portray the conflicts as battle between good, civilised people (Poe's protagonists; Nelly, Lockwood and Edgar; Jekyll and the other gentlemen) and the evil, devolved figures (Poe's women; Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw; Hyde). But as the hypocrisies of the narrators become evident, their hatred of the outsiders of the narratives starts to look hollow and misguided, and one sees conflicts between their version of events and the one the reader can interpret.

Many have written on the ways in which women are treated based on their sex and how they are confined to certain roles by those that control their lives. Kate Ferguson Ellis has argued

that in the eighteenth century, 'a redefinition of womanhood is thus called forth: a "true woman" who sees, hears, and therefore does no evil' (1989: 11), denying women an existence as figures independent of both the domestic sphere and other people (13). The second section of each chapter will discuss the tensions, and inevitable conflicts, between men and women in the chosen texts, addressing the changing roles of women and the power men have over them. Each author presents women differently - they are subtle traitors to Poe's protagonists; either too arrogant or too weak in *Wuthering Heights*; or significantly absent in *Jekyll and Hyde*. Once again, the differences between the stories only highlight the importance of conflict, as one still sees similar clashes between men and women throughout these texts and can see the apathy between them. There is an argument made that many female, Gothic figures are confined – be it emotionally or physically, hampering their influence and development. Those women who would attempt to break free of these confinements create conflict with the controlling men, and are duly attacked for it. There is a key debate amongst critics around whether the women become witnesses due to this, passive and silent, or use more subtle methods to undermine and attack patriarchs. This is something this study will explore, as I believe the role of women in Gothic literature and how they respond to persecution is key to the development of central conflicts between female figures and controlling patriarchs.

Many critics discuss this within studies of 'domestic' or 'Victorian' Gothic, the part of the Gothic genre that focuses largely on the social Other transgressing upon the ideal domestic setting, threatening to poison it from within. Some, such as Stephen Bernstein, discuss the 'corruption' of the domestic sphere (2003: 291-292), blending the private and the personal by mixing work with life at home. This focus on the sanctity of the domestic sphere centres on

the confined women trapped here, and these women are forced to become the foundations on which Gothic domestic settings are built. As such, any woman who does not fulfill this role of the dutiful, domestic figure is shunned and seen as treacherous, as I will explore within the chapters. Julian Wolfreys discusses the Victorian Gothic at length, particularly stressing the idea of contemporary modernity and relatability to the reader, which highlights the 'turn in Gothic, away from belief in hobgoblins and supernatural phenomena, and towards the modern, internalized and domestic' (2008: 99). Whilst the supernatural plays a key part in each text studied here, Wolfreys's point is very important to my argument, as the nineteenth century sees a shift in the Gothic Other being seen as a closer, more tangible threat. With the Other seemingly lurking close to protagonists, there is greater paranoia, and with this more conflict. Women are placed under renewed pressure by fears that the home might be infiltrated, and any lapse in maintaining a strong, healthy domestic environment sees the patriarch of each text attack the woman, and ultimately kill her. The characters of these texts fear the infiltrating Other, the intruder - a figure I will discuss within the chapters - and the tensions within this lead to vicious conflicts. As Gothic literature develops, the Other is no longer simply the patriarch or mysterious wanderer - they can be anyone to the narrators of these texts, leading to paranoia and inevitable conflict.

Psychological conflicts, specifically, and the repression of certain ideas, fears, and figures have always been central to Gothic literature. Murray Pittock, for one, discusses 'the irrational self, excluded from history, [who] attempts to irrupt' into the public conscious (2008: 212). Pittock discusses the Other, that repressed figure that threatens to unsettle and attack society, either from without by brute force or within by infiltrating society. Judith Wilt discusses the same issue, the 'forgotten figure' - fighting back, or 'counter-attacking' as she describes it (1981: 620). Wilt and Pittock detail Gothic conflicts, and for these two critics, the

conflicts of some Gothic texts are the manifestation of tensions between the coloniser and the colonised. To them, conflict is not the specific topic being debated, rather the imperial control over peoples and the repressed returning to the foreground in Gothic literature, however this still builds to the importance of clashes in this genre. Conflict drives these discussions of repression and the Other, and in this thesis I will aim to position conflict as that which the Other feeds off and creates. Each of the texts in this study contains the Other in some form, though one cannot easily tell in what form they exist, and this study will look at the conflict this figure creates, as well as the conflict in which he/she thrives.

The final third of each chapter will also discuss Freud's famous concept the Id (the instinctual drive of the psyche) and the Ego (the tempered, surface-level controlling influence) (Freud 2003: 116). This becomes particularly useful in discussing the irrational natures of Poe, Brontë, and Stevenson's characters, understanding some of them as impulsive people driven by their base desires. As well as this, this study will aim to understand certain characters as Doubles of others, creating conflict by either usurping their Original, or continuing the 'work' of their Original. The Double is the archetypal inescapable figure, creating conflict in its mission to usurp/destroy the Original from which it stems, constantly being tethered to its victim because the Double is an embodiment of the darker, repressed aspects of characters. As Otto Rank discusses in his study of the Double, 'the frequent slaying of the double....is really a suicidal act. It is, to be sure, in the painless form of slaying a different ego: an unconscious illusion of the splitting-off of a bad, culpable ego' (1971: 79). John Herdman argues that fate is the most important idea to the figure of the Double, arguing that characters are bound to face their own dark sides, embodied by the Double (1990: 12). The psychology of characters is key to Gothic literature, but often - as in the case of Doubles and Others - one can see the manifestation of characters' fears and

repressed emotions coming back to haunt them, which I will explore in the chapters. As mentioned previously, conflict in this study comes to mean struggles that stem from a character's definition of who they are, and this is very clear in the conflicts surrounding Doubles. They exist only to usurp or undermine others, and are the ultimate affront to the nature of the characters they haunt. When Doubles become involved in these Gothic texts, they unsettle characters and the conflicts they create are ones which threaten to consume and even destroy the identities of protagonists.

In studying Gothic conflicts, one must acknowledge the genre's counterculture existence as a genre that thrusts the Other into the limelight and focuses on unlikeable, violent people. Conflict has been discussed by many scholars, each shining a new perspective on this topic, but with each study a different focus is emphasised, and in comparing these criticisms an issue arises - can one treat this subject as a defining, theorised part of the Gothic, or is it simply a topic that falls under others, such as race, religion and class? To theorise conflict, I believe one must acknowledge that clashes in Gothic literature are not like those in other genres, and as I have said the conflicts are more than disagreements, they are struggles over the identity of the societies depicted. The change of Britain's economy in the 1800s to one contained within crowded cities which allowed anyone (regardless of their birth) to gain great power is reflected in the anxieties around inheritance in *Wuthering Heights* as well as the paranoid insular nature of Stevenson's upper-middle class gentlemen. Similarly, the fragile and conflicting identities of Poe's characters reflect an America which was at war with itself (socially and later literally) in the 1800s as it came to terms with who was 'American' and which values were 'American'. These conflicts come to infect and define everything in the texts - there is no love that does not contribute to hate, no trust that does not turn to fear,

and no beauty that is not corrupted. The poisoning and destruction of affection and beauty are at Gothic literature's core, whether it be people or structures, and as desolation takes hold conflict thrives. This thesis aims to position conflict as the driving force of nineteenth-century Gothic literature, as the genre expanded its horizons and developed into a more complex collection of works that stopped focusing so much on the past and started to truly reflect the context in which they were written. No longer was the Gothic's focus on unrelatable feudal figures, now the conflicts depicted could resonate with readers and the evils within hit far closer to home. The conflicts within these texts say a great deal about them and their characters, and so one can see the importance of conflict to the genre as it highlights key concepts.

'Morella' (1835), 'The Fall of the House of Usher' (1839), and 'The Black Cat' (1843)

Edgar Allan Poe's narrators have the distinguishing quality of being, for the most part, the protagonists at the centre of his Gothic tales, and usually are the individuals experiencing the dramatic downfalls of each text. Because of this, one is intimately acquainted with the madmen that inhabit Poe's short stories, learning what drives them, infuriates them, and gaining a key insight into the slowly decaying minds of the narrators and/or protagonists. In my three chosen texts - 'The Black Cat', 'Morella', and 'The Fall of the House of Usher' - the former two are narrated by the mentally decaying men at the centre of the stories, whereas the latter is recounted by the faithful childhood friend of the now unstable Roderick Usher. Because of this intimacy and Poe's choice to write through narrators who are heavily involved in their stories, there are a number of issues to be discussed around the influence of the narrators, as well as their roles within these stories. Poe's narrators attempt to portray specific realities, and in doing so they create a conflict between their versions of the truth and the version which one may see implied. The narrators of these texts are not omniscient, nor unbiased, but rather heavily implicated in the events of these stories and their own experiences, and so one must look beyond, or unpack, the narrations to understand the conflicting truths behind these short stories. Each protagonist is a figure of irrationality, emphasised by the 'normal' figures of each story: the narrator in 'Usher'; the narrator (speaking of his past self), and his wife in 'The Black Cat'; and the narrator of 'Morella' also looking back on his 'former' self. Each narrator understands the insanity that is present in his story, whether it be that of a different person or of a past self which they see now as a separate, disturbed entity. Through this separation, the narrators position themselves as

rational, and the protagonists they speak of as irrational, creating the tension between the guilty protagonists and supposedly absolved narrators.

One of the key issues with the protagonists is that their sense of morality is contrary to the rational, narratorial voice, or is totally absent. Gothic literature has long been associated with what David Punter terms 'the old-fashioned as opposed to the modern; the barbaric as opposed to the civilised' (1996: 5). In agreeing with Punter, one may argue the perverse behaviour of Poe's characters fits comfortably into the Gothic genre. The Ushers have isolated themselves, and their strange ways of life are emphasised by this lack of contact with an outside world which would condemn them (Poe 2012: 61). The same can be said of 'Morella', in which the married couple isolate themselves (31) and the husband turns neglectful and paranoid. He understands that his treatment of Morella became contemptible and would be condemned in a social setting, later acknowledging that he has 'the heart of a fiend' (33). As in 'Morella', the narrator of 'The Black Cat' insists that 'I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity' (183), referring to gouging out Pluto's eye. The narrator, speaking of his past self, understands these evils now and positions the protagonist as a separate, evil man to be condemned. The conflict in these situations arises from the clash between the moral views of the protagonists and the narrators, with the latter looking into the past and acting as the moral compass for the story. The narrators condemn the protagonists' actions, and imply that in these realities the actions that are detailed are not the accepted norm by apologising (if referring to themselves) or excusing the behaviour (if referring to Roderick Usher). Poe's protagonists revel in their own evil deeds - 'I looked around triumphantly' (Poe: 189) - or encourage, and allow, descents into neglectful madness - 'terrible were the tumultuous thoughts which crowded upon me' (Poe: 35), 'the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out' (Poe: 72). By being so overtly morally

reprehensible, the protagonists make it difficult for the narrators to defend them, and the starkly different views of the two parties create conflict as the narrator attempts to present himself, or his friend, in the best light whilst acknowledging the awful behaviour he was involved in.

One key highlight of evil is the neglect of the women in these men's lives, who each become the scapegoats and targets of the increasingly disturbing behaviour that the protagonists exhibit, a matter which I will study in further depth later. On this matter, however, Kirsten Møllegaard, on 'The Black Cat', argues that 'what remains troubling in this scenario is that while the narrator offers his alcohol-induced paranoia as an explanation for torturing and killing Pluto, he offers no reason for killing his wife, other than anger that she prevents him from killing the second cat' (2014:17). Møllegaard's observation summarises the ethics of the protagonists very well, as each man typically shows no real care or guilt for his actions, and when one does - in the case above - such guilt as there is, is for Pluto the cat, rather than the woman he is married to. These twisted morals, or lack thereof, create one of the key conflicts associated with these texts. The women remain silent in these texts, and as the reader is taken further into the narrators' descent into their own, or Roderick's, madness they lose credibility and their patriarchal control is undermined. The conflict between narrator and protagonist serves neither of these figures, and one can within this conflict the failings of patriarchies.

By being so ethically misguided, the narrators force the protagonists to insist that they are themselves rational, despite appearing mad in recounting fantastic stories. The narrator of 'Usher' feels that Roderick's paranoia was spreading to him as they spent time together (72), forcing him to preface his story with a mention of 'a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but

mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me' (62) when he first saw the house, emphasising how conscious he is of sounding ridiculous in the present. The narrator of 'The Black Cat' insists 'yet, mad I am not' (182) as he prepares to recount his supposedly supernatural tale. And the narrator of 'Morella' mentions the 'tumultuous thoughts' (34) which came to him in his darkest moments, acknowledging their strange and irrational nature, yet attempting to separate himself from the man that has harboured them. As Ed Piacentino argues, the narrator of 'The Black Cat' blurs distinctions between the present narrator and the past murderer, 'affording him the opportunity to voice and authorize his current judgments and rationalizations for his past actions' (1998: 158). There is a key difference in the narrators' pleas for kind judgement, though: in 'The Black Cat' and 'Morella', the narrators attempt to separate themselves from their pasts, and the emphasis on rationality they both employ is an attempt to be seen as innocent. In 'Usher', the narrator attempts to position himself as believable in order to preserve the memory of Roderick, his friend who - one is led to believe - the narrator saw as truly innocent in the events of the story. Each moral conflict between the narrators and protagonists has significantly different motives, though they all inevitably lead to the narrators excusing themselves first and foremost.

Poe's narrators in these tales may be the rational, normalising voice which remind the reader that the actions of the protagonists are not acceptable, but they themselves are not completely innocent or trustworthy. The tussle between the protagonists who are obviously delusional and the narrative voices that speak with such reason is a contentious issue, as the two have such strong bonds and the comforting, sensible narrations conflict with the descents into madness that are allowed to happen. The narrator of 'The Black Cat' speaks of his 'original soul' (183) momentarily leaving him in fits of violent rage, some spirit

'possessing' him (183), and his language implies that he is largely rational, but loses himself. The narrator of 'Morella' puts forward a similar argument, asking 'what fiend spoke from the recesses of my soul' (35) as he names his daughter after her mother, seeing his obsession with his former wife as a characteristic of some 'demon' in his soul, rather than as an intrinsic part of who he is. This moment can also be attributed to the second Morella's nature as a Double of her mother, rather than to the father's obsession, though I will discuss this later. The narrator of 'Usher' does not have the same window into the protagonist's soul, but his praise of Roderick's 'lofty and spiritual ideality' (74), accompanied by his mention of Roderick seemingly 'giving up his soul' (77) in his moment of pure madness, attempt to position his old friend as temporarily insane, only due to the absence of his true, rational nature. In each case, the moral compass of the narrator is undeniably warped and his past actions contrast with the rational personas whom they attempt to present to the reader, thereby creating conflict between these complex storytellers and the past figures they are invested in. The narrators, looking back on what has happened, insist now though that they are the rational voice and understand the wrongs they have allowed. The narrators do condemn murder and neglect, but their excuses towards their own, or their friend's, actions emphasise the conflicted nature of these men that the reader is asked to trust. One may see their narratives as inherently stoking conflict, as the guilt of the protagonists is clear and if it is not condemned then these narrators are showing clear bias in excusing actions which they know are contemptible. The narrators hold some understanding of their wrongdoings, yet not enough to understand the internal conflicts that are dominating their minds. These internal conflicts threaten their very natures, or how they perceive themselves, and manifest themselves in dishonesty and violence.

The reliance one has on the narrator to convey the truth in these texts is troublesome, and undeniably the narrators are biased. As Jonathan Auerbach has argued, the storytellers tend to miss key, obvious points in what they are recounting (1989: 25). On the other hand, Ed Piacentino argues that the narrator of 'The Black Cat', 'the retrospective narrator, who is actually two personas, the man who killed his wife and the retrospective teller of the tale is an untrustworthy and unreliable authority' (153). Piacentino highlights the dual nature of this narrator, calling into question his role as the source of information on his actions, as does Auerbach - both highlight that the narrators do not give the reader the unedited 'truth', instead carefully choosing their focus.

Piacentino is right, as the narrators of these texts deliberately, yet subtly, insist that they are innocent to a degree, and imply that the women of the texts are still at fault. Auerbach, though correct that the narratives miss key details, is not giving enough credit to the narrators' missions to convince the reader of their innocence. In 'Morella', the narrator attempts to apologise for the ill treatment of his wife, but still insists that 'she seemed, also, conscious of a cause, to me unknown, for the gradual alienation of my regard' (32), implying that Morella has had a hand in her own downfall. The narrator of 'The Black Cat', despite the atrocities he has committed, prefaces his story with how these events 'have tortured - have destroyed me' (182), focusing on himself as the victim first and foremost, in an attempt to soften his own evils. Both narrators, despite acknowledging their past evils, still frame themselves as the rational figures that should be trusted. Auerbach however, argues that the narrator of 'The Black Cat' has fallen for his own reasoning on matters (39), being significantly unaware of the mental decay/ignorance that is going on in his own head. One may see this ignorance particularly in the narrator of 'Usher' who frequently alludes to the unease that the Usher house gives him (60, 64), but does not explore exactly why he is

feeling so oppressed and allows the conflict within the household to grow and the animosity to fester, failing to use his position of trust to stop the mental rot occurring within Roderick's mind. Each narrator, though, is sane enough to tell their story and understand how insane it sounds, despite Auerbach's assertion. They are culpable in attempting to cover up their parts in the conflict of these stories, and are presenting the reader with two conflicting personalities - the man who acknowledges his guilt, and the man who excuses it, attempting to have the best of both scenarios. Here one can see conflicts not just as contained disagreements, but also continuous clashes between accounts and minds - the narrators are unable to exist in harmony with their past actions, and the conflicts on show highlight the mental fragility of these men, a very important aspect of the Gothic genre.

In creating and feeding off conflict, Gothic literature typically tends to create binaries - good and evil, civilised and savage, and victim and villain. The narrators of Poe's texts have a great deal of power in creating the roles of victim and villain, presenting their versions of the truth. Conflict creates sides, and invites those involved to choose which party they are with - this is exactly what occurs with the reader of Poe's texts. As they are being confided in by the neglectful figures of each story, they are invited to choose whether to trust the possibly unreliable narrator or the possibly supernatural women. The narrators do not deny what they have done, or have allowed to happen, but rather try to manipulate what has happened to appear as if they are the victims, unable to explain their actions. The narrator of 'The Black Cat' acknowledges his evil deeds, even the fact that they were not provoked, but attempts to philosophise on 'who has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or a stupid action, for no other reason than because he knows he should *not*' (184). Even in accepting his evil ways, the narrator attempts to pass himself off as the victim of 'the longing of the soul to *vex itself*' (184), attempting to invite the reader to empathise with him. The narrator of

'Usher', the hapless observer, soothes Roderick after Madeline's burial, telling him 'we will pass away this terrible night together' (74). As I have established, their focus is on themselves, not the woman they may have buried alive, and in a different way to the more overtly murderous protagonist of 'The Black Cat', the visitor to the Usher house attempts to convince the reader that the true pain is being felt by Roderick. The same can be said of the narrator of 'Morella', whose descent into madness is brought on by his time with Morella - 'there fell as shadow upon my soul' (32) as he spends more time with her, and it is his own emotional issues that are the focus of this story, positioning himself as the victim. As such, though each narrator acknowledges the past conflicts, they do not frame these clashes in a way that appreciates their own guilt. Each conflict stems from the men's actions, but they deny this and attempt to be seen as the victim of circumstances. They show an understanding of how these conflicts undermine their supposed positions as the moral patriarch of their homes, yet see themselves as the victims rather than the creators and owners of these conflicts. Their downfalls as people and authoritative patriarchs are their own doing, but they will not admit this to themselves nor the reader.

By attempting to enlist the reader to their sides of the conflicts running through these texts, the narrators show the nature of their manipulative storytelling. These conflicts, and the sides they create, further inform the conflicting interpretations one may find in these texts, as one attempts to identify who are the real victims in these stories. There has been a great deal of critical discussion on this point, some arguing that the protagonists have been led to their doom by supernatural figures, usually women who are secretly vampires (Richmond 1972: 93-4), or generically, mysteriously powerful (Liebman 1970: 585). Others argue that the protagonists are 'terrorized to the point of madness by memories of violence that release his inner demons' (Møllegard 2011: 123), eventually dragging their loved ones down with

them. It is entirely possible to see the protagonists as neglectful, and yet ultimately victims of supernatural forces working against them. Each male lead is eventually destroyed by a mystical figure, but this does not make him the general victim of the conflicts as Liebman and Richmond would argue. In fact, each protagonist receives their due judgement for neglecting and killing the women in their lives, by being torn down by these very women. The conflicts between these parties are brought to the reader by the driving forces of these clashes - the narrators. One must look beyond the manipulation, or ignorance, of each narrator to see the true nature of the conflicts within these texts, and resist the labelling of characters as 'victims' or 'villains' based entirely on what has been relayed by the men who have been scorned. The clear and unfair shifting of blame onto women highlights the bias and paranoia of the texts' patriarchs, and as the reader sees how dishonest the male narrators are, this serves to undermine the authority of Poe's patriarchies. Whilst Poe's narrators attempt to portray themselves, or Roderick, as the unfairly treated victims, they only underline the harsh treatment of women and reveal to the reader their dishonesty as well as the influence that these women actually hold over them, whether the women know it or not. Gothic literature forces these contemptible figures into the limelight, and creates conflict between them and the supposedly rational narrator. Perhaps one should look at Gothic literature as the truly inflammatory influence, as it creates conflict and exists through it, and in reading a Gothic text one is forced to confront conflict, and choose a side. Conflict and its importance here shows just how reliant the genre is on provocative outsiders as one may see that Gothic literature exists only by its use of these figures and the controversy they cause.

On the idea of these narrators as rationalising, Elaine Hartnell-Mottram discusses the importance of what is 'normal' in Gothic realities, and the idea that there is 'a generalized

social pressure to conform for conformity's sake', leading to a point in which 'the human subject is placed in an endless state of self-violence as she or he constantly questions whether or not she or he is "normal"' (2010: 43). In the conflicted, irrational natures of Poe's narrators, one sees the same pressure to conform, clashing with the murderous, neglectful personalities of the narrators of 'Morella' and 'The Black Cat', and the narrator's naive, forgiving nature towards Roderick Usher. Gothic literature's focus on pressure to conform, and condemnation of those who are seen as perverse, reinforces the importance of conflict to this genre, as the clashes between those who are socially accepted and those who aren't are at the centre of many texts, particularly Poe's. One may see these clashes in the repeated searches of the house conducted by the police in 'The Black Cat', searches which did not worry the protagonist who felt 'secure, however, in the inscrutability of my concealment' (190), even taunting these figures. Or in the 'peculiar sensibility' (61) of the Usher family which leaves them isolated and incestuous, having failed to broker alliances with other aristocratic families. Or even the reincarnated Morella being kept isolated and cut off from the world (35) as her very existence is a reminder of the protagonist's guilt, and an affront to contemporary family dynamics which position women as the primary caregivers of the house (Kennedy 2001: 140). Considering these arguments, it is acceptable to see the protagonists of Poe's texts as the archetypal marginalised Gothic figure, whose very existence causes conflict with the society that shuns them. Gothic literature is seen by many as the genre of the isolated and the marginalised (Wein 2002: 17) (Baldick & Mighall 2006: 210) (Phillips 1964: 60), and Poe's decision to place morally reprehensible figures in the spotlight of his texts reinforces this theme. This is the key theme that makes Gothic literature so reliant on conflict - its insistence on forcing marginalised figures into the public conscious. Mr. Hyde and Heathcliff, the key villains of the other texts in this study, are condemned by their fictional peers and the narrative voice of the texts. In being placed into the mainstream

conscious, these characters cause conflict, and do so by embodying what is to be ignored or shunned from society. This history of inflammatory and marginalised figures is at the core of Gothic literature, creating conflict between the texts/characters and the reader who is confronted with them, and often asked to sympathise with them, or at least hear their stories. Poe's protagonists simply anticipate this trend, they create conflict by blurring the lines between the seemingly rational narrator and the insane figure at the centre of their stories. Gothic literature exists to create conflict through its insistence on putting unsettling and transgressive figures at the fore, and Poe's male protagonists come to undermine themselves and their patriarchal dominance in the texts as they show how unstable they truly are.

It is often women who are portrayed by the male narrators as the key antagonists of these texts, and regardless of their culpability this makes them key to conflict within Poe's narratives. The very presence and actions of women in these texts cause clashes, highlighting the importance of conflict as it is constantly linked to female characters' existences. Though the narrators of these texts accept guilt, they attempt to share this guilt with the women of the stories, presenting the female figures as complicit in their own - and the protagonists' - downfalls. Early on, the narrator of 'Morella' tells of how he 'abandoned [him]self implicitly to the guidance of my wife' (31), implying the influence that she held over him, a matter of great importance as his paranoid delusions focus on her perceived power. The same can be said of Madeline Usher, a mysterious woman whose shyness reinforces the perception that she is a powerful figure with unknown capabilities. Given the dread and fear that Morella and Madeline stir in the protagonists (31) (72), there is an undeniable perception that these women are powerful, not-fully-understood figures that threaten the protagonists with their supposed power. The narrators would have the reader believe that

the women, by flaunting their power over these men, create conflict by controlling and suppressing them. I would argue, however, that the conflict comes from these delusions, and the women are scapegoated and feared for being supposedly powerful, whilst the protagonists seek to undermine and attack them in order to establish dominance. Conversely, in 'The Black Cat' the wife is presented as fallible, but still scheming and dishonest towards her husband. Those such as Paul Lewis would argue the wife subtly works against the husband (1989: 538) after the long period of neglect and abuse she receives from her husband, attacking him subtly and aligning herself with the second cat for the misery he has caused her, an argument that gives another dimension to the conflict between this protagonist and his wife. Once again, the protagonist in this story sees his female counterpart as an enemy, someone who challenges his position as the patriarch; in each story, women's supposed power is feared, this fear turning to murderous hatred before long, spelling doom for the women. The male protagonists see the women as threats to their roles as the dominant patriarchs, and attack their wives/sister because of these misguided perceptions that their patriarchal power is being undermined.

One must, however, also discuss the idea that women are the passive personalities in each text. Women are idealised a great deal, and because of this they are still just another 'piece of furniture within the bourgeois setting' as Dennis Pahl has argued (1996: 18). Women's lives are seen as secondary to the whims of men, and they can actually be seen to have emotions and ideas projected onto them, despite the support they provide. The protagonists look to blame women for the evil that grows within them, growing more paranoid as they do so. Take, for example, Madeline's unsettling, 'suspiciously lingering smile' (72), supposedly evidence of a conspiracy against Roderick and the narrator, but actually evidence of the projection of their paranoia onto her. This is also true of Morella's interest in 'mystical

writings' (31) and the accompanying implications that she has a connection to dark magic (31), points that are obsessed over by the protagonist and become supposed evidence of her powers over him. The passive façades, however, do not last forever - largely, the women allow themselves to be controlled by the patriarchs that they are tethered to, but as the neglect each woman suffers peaks in their death/burial, these once passive figures take charge and set about enacting revenge. It is Morella who returns from the grave to plague her husband; the black cat is found with the wife, the two damning their shared enemy with their last actions; and Madeline escapes her tomb to kill Roderick for attempting to kill her. This act of revenge (a conflict) is a key moment in the Gothic narrative of oppressed women, highlighting the importance conflicts have within archetypal story arcs of the genre.

Diane Long Hoeveler argues women accept their attacks because 'Gothic feminism is not about being equal to men; it is about being morally superior to men. It is about being a victim... victims earn their special status and rights through no act of their own but through their sufferings' (2004: 31). I agree with Hoeveler's assertion that the women are victims and are morally superior, but not her later argument that they triumph because they have patiently suffered (31). In each of the texts in this study, the women are left as the greatest victims of the stories, and it is the patriarchs typically who have caused them misery. Conflicts between men and women do allow the latter to occupy the moral high ground, and in Poe's case this additionally leads to the women being given the chance to destroy their attackers, though only being able to do so by sacrificing themselves. The conflicts are created and stoked by the men, contrary to what the narrators may imply, but as these clashes develop the women snap and the roles reverse, leading to one last conflict between Poe's men and women, each clash ending in the doom of the man. One may see whole relationships between men and women as conflicts in Gothic texts, battles for supremacy

between two warring parties which claim a number of victims, always killing the female figures. Once again, the conflict in these stories stems from and highlights a truly significant fear - that of being destroyed; the men fear those with whom they live, and the women come to see that their lives are threatened by these patriarchs. The struggle between the two makes women the victims, certainly, but they are not passive as Pahl has argued - the women are victims of paranoia and violence, and the mysterious strength of those such as Madeline and Morella undermines the patriarchal control of their husband/brother, leading to their deaths.

Presented as powerful by the male narrators, and supposedly feared due to this power, women are inevitably vilified, even to the point of evoking the Gothic figure of the vampire, one that is arguably quite prominent in Poe's writing. In Poe's texts, it is women who are seen as the metaphorical or sometimes literal vampires, as James Twitchell (1977: 388) and Lee Richmond (1972: 93) argue in relation to 'The Oval Portrait' and 'Morella' respectively. They are seen to drain the men that they are tied to, using the lives of these men in order to escape death themselves. This figure is particularly relevant to Morella, who insists "I am dying yet I shall live" (33), wherein begins the narrator's descent into madness and his existence as a man eternally close to death. Women are tethered to what Peter Coviello calls 'the unenviable fate of femininity in Poe's Gothic fictive world' - inescapable death (2003: 897); significantly, the symbolism of the undead vampire only reinforces this bond between women and death in Poe's texts. The vampire is, as Aviva Briefel argues, also the symbol of the past existing in a present to which it doesn't belong (2007: 513). The vampire creates conflict by invading the present and disrupting the world that has moved on, much as the Usher family and the protagonist of 'Morella' become increasingly isolated as they become more counterculture and perverse. Though the biased narrators and some critics

may attempt to present women as the draining vampire in these texts, one may see the protagonists as the symbols of transgression, as these irrational men are affronts to a context such as Poe's in which university education was increasingly available, stressing the importance of an elite level of knowledge and reason (Kennedy: 23). One may see the vampire, then, as either the symbol of life being drained out of characters; or as the symbol of a past presence and influence disrupting a future that has attempted to move on. The women do not drain the men, it is the men who drain the women; these female characters live existences as dictated and controlled by the patriarchs, unable to escape and slowly being worn down by neglect and mistrust.

More significant than the importance of the vampire as the symbol of the past, is its implications on the treatment of women in Poe's texts, and the idea that the vampiric women create conflict as figures who do not belong in the protagonists' worlds. Kate Ferguson Ellis discusses the importance of the woman as the source of domestic stability in Gothic literature (1989: 11-12), a role which is avoided by the women of Poe's texts, leading to them being attacked by the protagonists. The domestic sphere and its sanctity is an issue which is important to each chapter of this study, and in Poe's texts - as in Brontë's and Stevenson's - the home is a key setting. The women of these short stories are trapped in these homes, as women are in *Wuthering Heights*, and as Ellis states, there is the perception that Gothic women prop up the home. When Poe's women are seen to 'betray' their roles as faithful domestic partners, they are blamed by Poe's protagonists for causing conflict by blurring the accepted roles of dominant man and passive woman. By not fulfilling their 'duties' as domestic figures, they again seemingly pose a threat to patriarchal power and are persecuted. In actual fact, these women do a great deal for the men. One need only look at the dynamic between the narrator of 'The Black Cat' and his wife, as he only admits that his

wife was 'the most usual and the most patient of sufferers' (188) right before he details her death when saving the cat. The belittling of the female experience is handled in a different way in 'Morella', however. The title of this text is enlightening in itself, as she is undoubtedly obsessed over, but she is disregarded, and shunned, condescended as 'yet was she woman, and pined away daily' (32), her experience of neglect and isolation being summarised in this sexist remark. One may see that Poe's creation of conflict between men and women is at the centre of these texts, and the texts thrive off these clashes. Each conflict reinforces the inescapable issues between men and women - in each text, the protagonist lives with a woman that he thinks is hiding something from him. Each woman is vilified and shunned, and the conflicts between men and women are rooted in the assumption that the female characters should be, and should do, anything that these men think fitting. When the women do not, they threaten male dominance and the men's identities as powerful figures.

The presence of women in these texts, and their positions as antagonists to the patriarchs, clearly highlights the importance of the binaries of good/evil and victim/villain emphasised by male narrators. Women (or at least the perceptions of them) are inherently antagonistic, and consistently create conflict. The hatred towards women, though, only further emphasises the fragility of the male ego and one may see in the male/female conflicts repressed emotions, establishing of women as Doubles, and inevitable mental declines. Though these ideas have been discussed in the previous conversations, I wish to focus on them through a lens of psychoanalytical study. I believe this section clearly shows the importance of conflict as a significant, metaphorical struggle between principles and personalities - the binaries discussed in this section exist in conflict with each other, and are driven and defined by these clashes. One may see conflicted as the defining trait of each male protagonist's

mental state - whether one believes the patriarchs or their female counterparts to be 'guilty', it is undeniable that the interactions between them create great mental anguish within the men, anguish which defines them. This genre has a great tradition of challenging rational empiricism, given its emphasis on the supernatural and later moving into the realm of metaphorical monsters and the fear of one's self, as Julian Wolfreys argues, as mentioned previously. To expand on the latter, there is a great deal to be said on the role of Gothic literature in opening dialogues concerning the repressed and thus 'challeng[ing] rational empiricism by opening the door to the psyche's latent fears' (Møllegaard 2011: 121). Brett Zimmerman's discussion of the physical home of the Ushers as a phrenological allegory of the psyches of the characters (2010) is interesting in its interpretation of Poe's text. Particularly interesting are his ideas on Madeline's tomb, 'the vault of distempered Amativeness [the phrenological part of the brain concerned with sexual love], whence the sister rises' (69). The perverse relationship between Madeline and Roderick, stemming from the implied incestuous nature of the Usher family (61), is a key representation of the loss of rational thinking that one may find in Poe's texts. I would argue that this is also a clear case of the characters' psychological Ids overpowering, even bypassing, their Egos. If one supposes that the rational, tempered Ego has been forgotten or ignored by Poe's protagonists, then the heinous acts witnessed in these texts can be explained by deep desires to procreate, murder, and harm at will. The Gothic's tendency to give a voice to irrational figures, and the ensuing conflict that these marginalised figures create with their presence, can be theorised as a representation of an Id lashing out instinctively, being condemned by the Ego or Superego that has attempted to repress it. The protagonists of Poe's texts, in their sprees of murder, incest, and neglect, abandon the psychological authority of the Ego, indulging in their abhorrent instincts. The Id-ruled men create conflict within and outside of the novels, coming into contact with characters and readers who obey

their Egos, informed by the Superego of societal pressure. They are figures of conflict because they challenge the notion that one must at all times act rationally, and so they must be shunned. In theorising these conflicts through psychoanalytical ideas, one may argue that the clashes of Poe's texts are not simply based on characters disagreeing; there is an inherent desire in Poe's protagonists to go against the assumed order, and allow their 'base' urges to rule them. The outsiders of these texts, and Brontë and Stevenson's, act irrationally and with little regard for the rules of their societies - this is why they cause so much conflict and offend the inhabitants of their worlds.

It must be noted, however, that Poe's short stories do not simply highlight a clean abandonment of morals and societal approval; the tensions between Id and Ego are, naturally, internal and unspoken. The insight one gains into these conflicts is achieved by interpreting the complex narrations and the abrupt acts of evil that these men gradually come to terms with, and it is the emotions and clashes that dwell below the surface that are what drive these men to act as they do. There has been a great deal said on Poe's mission to explain circumstances through understanding the primal Id of man, leading to a situation in which 'man explores the innermost reaches of his irrational self... [and] finds destructive impulses at war with the reason which rules his external, surface life' (Furrow 1973: 20). Internal, psychological conflicts are the true influences of these texts, and instead of Poe creating protagonists that continually and overtly welcome their evils, the reader is presented with men who mentally decay over time and become less caring and more irrational as their mental capacities diminish. Reason temporarily disappears in fits of rage in 'The Black Cat' (184), and in their prolonged states of fear, the protagonists of 'Usher' and 'Morella' give in to their Ids' selfish desires. Ultimately this leads to them neglecting Madeline - '*we have put her living in the tomb*' (76) - and Morella - 'I longed with an earnest and consuming desire for the

moment of Morella's decease' (33). This explains the guilt that consumes Roderick Usher and Morella's husband, as they know they have doomed their partners, and as the protagonist of 'The Black Cat' gloats (190) he is still under the control of his Id, which resumes until he is incarcerated and he becomes the narrator. The men at the centre of these texts commit evil acts, but in studying their words and the complexities of their manners, one may see that the core conflicts of these texts are not just between characters, or narrators and readers, but between the 'good' and the 'bad' within each protagonist as they slip into insanity and lose control.

Sharon Furrow, quoted above, uses the word 'destructive' in discussing the urges that exist within the deeper reaches of Poe's characters' minds, and this desire to inflict pain on themselves is a key aspect of the conflicts within these characters, as Kirsten Møllegaard argues (2011: 123). The narrator of 'Morella' asks 'what prompted me, then, to disturb the memory of the buried dead' (Poe: 35) as he names his daughter after her mother; the narrator of 'The Black Cat' invites the police to find his wife's body as he bangs against the tomb in which the cat is sealed (190); and Roderick Usher, in his fear of being succeeded by Madeline, entombs her, sealing his own fate as she returns to kill him (77). Each of the central male characters invites their ultimate demise, either through a goading of the figure that they are clashing with, or through an unrelenting fixation on this same figure, a fixation which consumes them. Due to the issues with narrators' biases, the blame for this destruction is not accepted by the men themselves, but is shifted onto others - be it women, animals, or even a supposed temporary loss of sanity. Here, one returns to the earlier discussion on issues of narrators accepting their influence and their own evils, and this issue of blame can be deemed a psychological matter. As the self-destructive Id fights with the Ego, the characters' psyches are unable to consciously accept their own faults, and so these

issues are projected onto the black cat, Morella, or Madeline. Just as fictional conflicts inform clashes between reader and text, the internal conflicts of these protagonists create and feed the conflicts that they have with the figures surrounding them. Kristen Møllegaard argues that this reinforces the context in which Poe wrote, as an American writer in the nineteenth century: 'the divided self, symbolized by the physical separation of the shadow from the body of its host, can thus be seen to incorporate the tensions and growing pains of the nascent democratic nation-states of the 1830s and 40s.' (2011: 120). Møllegaard argues that Poe's focus on the unstable, self-harming figure is indicative of the political and social upheavals of his time, which I agree with - as with each of the texts discussed, the conflicts which surrounded authors often come to inform the conflicts of their narratives. In Poe's work, one may see the influence of the ever-changing national identities of those living in America in the 1830s due to the shift from an agricultural economy to a capitalist one as well as a significant boom in the size of cities such as New York, Philadelphia and Boston (Kennedy: 33), creating greater anxiety as survival in America required new ways of living and shifted the idea of what the country 'was' to its inhabitants. Poe himself was even the biological child of English-born woman, taken in by a Scottish merchant who took him to both Scotland and England as a child before returning to America. The complex identities of Americans, and the anxiety that came with these, informs the paranoia and internal conflicts that are so central to the natures of Poe's protagonists. One may see in the psychological conflicts of his texts a reflection of the anxieties within 1830s America as it adjusted to a significantly different existence and identity.

These internal conflicts, which lead the characters to abandon conventional morals and their grips on reality, exist within the key Gothic tradition of giving into 'savagery' and rejecting Enlightenment ideals of bettering oneself through conscious work. This sense of optimism is

particularly evident in American society and collective thinking, and has been since its inception, argues Allan Lloyd-Smith (2006: 110-111). This informs the branch of American Gothic, with its 'anti-utopian' (Lloyd-Smith: 114) depictions, in which the utopia that Americans strive for has been fallen short of, leaving a perverse, damaged society. John Herdman discusses the same American optimism, and the dark side of this striving for brilliance. By emphasising the better parts of man's psyche, there is also an acknowledgement of the darker sides that threaten to upset these purer attributes and come to the fore of the mind (1990: 88). The 'anti-utopia', and the loss of any mission to improve oneself is precisely what Poe depicts, fitting perfectly into the trend of American Gothic literature. In 'Morella', there is an interesting, consistent focus on her darker, concealed side represented by her focus on 'forbidden pages' (31) and 'the mystery of my wife's manner' (32). She, with her Presburg education (31), should be a symbol of lofty, European ideas, but instead she symbolises unsettling ideas on death (32) and the darker side of this education. Similarly, the speech in 'The Black Cat' which discusses man's supposed desire to do wrong *because* it is wrong contributes to the idea that Poe's characters, with high educations ('Morella'), loves for animals ('The Black Cat'), and their high birth ('Usher') should be better, but easily lose themselves to the dark side of their psyches. Each of the Gothic texts in this study focuses on the 'savage' in its own way, but American Gothic taps into the optimism felt by the inhabitants of this young country, and exploits it by emphasising the internal conflicts that exist within each of us, while highlighting the consequences of giving in to darker urges. Poe's protagonists give in to fear, hatred, and jealousy, and each is ultimately punished for this. The conflicts they create, and the conflicts within them, are the results of submitting to 'savagery' and abandoning the morals of society. Perhaps Poe's texts can be seen as cautionary tales, warning the reader not to abandon self-betterment and accept self-destruction, a particularly important idea in American Gothic literature. The

conflicts here, as in each of the texts in this study, are important because of the fears of the reader which they tap into. Each of Poe's texts was written in the context of the Jacksonian democracy, supposedly emphasising power to the 'common man', though only if they were a white male (Belko: 2015). The contemporary American idealism stemming from this political thinking is warped and the conflicts in these texts stem from characters who come to symbolise the darker side of the American psyche, one which offends and unsettles the contemporary reader and highlights Poe's importance as an American writer. Instead of conquering and expanding, as was considered the right of white Americans by many (Kennedy: 23), Poe's protagonists remain isolated and reclusive, something at odds with contemporary belief in expansion and improvement.

The male protagonists' self-destructive downfalls are consistently put, fairly or not, down to the marginalised figure of the Other. The Other, by its nature, is a vague figure in order to evoke fear of the unknown, and in Poe's texts it takes on a number of forms. It can be the Eastern Other represented by the inclusion of 'arabesque' patterns (Poe: 64) as 'the arabesque appears synonymous with decay', according to Molly K. Robey (2010: 61). Or one can see the labelling of the protagonists ultimate enemies as Others - just as the black cat is 'the ultimate other, the monster' (Møllegaard 2014: 23). The Other is, of course, a key figure in Gothic literature as a whole, as it represents the figure that has been shunned from society, argues Andrew Smith (2007: 80), or is an embodiment of previously discussed ideas of psychological repression. The Other may also represent the internal struggles that the narrator/protagonist is experiencing, bringing the discussion back to the idea of projection onto Poe's women and cementing the idea that the Other is labelled as the conflict-creating influence of these texts. The protagonist of 'Morella', in his guilt over how he treated his late wife, finds 'the heaven of this pure affection' felt towards his daughter disappears as 'the

child grew strangely in stature and intelligence' (Poe: 34). Due to his guilt and inability to accept his own wrongdoings, the protagonist projects his fears onto his own daughter. By doing this, she becomes the new Other, replacing her mother as either the antagonist or the victim (depending on whether or not one believes the narrator). Either way, she is the new thorn in this protagonist's side, and the internal conflicts that he has been projecting onto Morella and attributing to her are now shifted onto the shoulders of the daughter. There is a similar dynamic present in 'The Black Cat', as the second black cat not only takes on the hatred attributed to Pluto - 'I soon found a dislike to it arising within me' (186) - but also becomes the Other to the protagonist in the 'absolute dread' (187) that it stirs in his mind. The protagonist has attempted to vanquish his enemy, Pluto, but in doing so allows Pluto to return, stronger and with the mission to destroy the protagonist, much as Madeline Usher returns, with 'the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her' (77). Each of these figures is the Other to the protagonists, made so by the protagonists' attacks on them, each attack leading to their own downfalls. The Other is irrepressible, then, and its fate is to always return to the front of the narrative, preventing it from being ignored any further. The Other exists inherently as a figure on the margins of society, shunned and neglected by those who are 'accepted', and so its very nature is to cause conflict. By existing, it causes conflict; by interacting with other characters, it causes conflict. The Other is a Gothic figure whose entire existence stems from clashing with society - if it did not, it would not be the Other, and so this archetypal character must have conflict, cementing the importance of this concept to the genre.

I have discussed the conflicts between Madeline and Roderick Usher, arguably stemming from Roderick's fear of being succeeded - or usurped - by his twin sister, who Peter Coviello has argued is his Doppelgänger - 'he is, literally, the double of his sister and twin, Madeline,

and what they share is no mere family resemblance (2003: 888). Their intertwined fates, coupled with their battling for supremacy, are starkly similar to those of the Original and their Double, two figures constantly locked in conflict with each other. The Double is, I would argue, undoubtedly a figure that stems from and is buried within the psyches of the characters it mimics. Madeline may not be Roderick's literal Double, but their bond as twins and her position as his successor cause him, in his growing paranoia, to project his fears onto her and see her as his Double and his enemy. Roderick mentally deteriorates, even beginning to fear the sentience and actions of vegetables (70), a damning piece of evidence that the narrator mentions but once again fails to link to his friend's insane treatment of Madeline. The Double in these specific texts is either a rival figure labelled as the destructive Id to the protagonist's Ego, or the conscience of these protagonists externalised as a material presence that can be identified and attacked. Madeline Usher is rather the former according to Brett Zimmerman, who argues that the Usher twins are two sides of one psyche (59), and I must agree. There is a great deal of importance placed on mirror images within this texts (Poe: 62), and in many ways the two twins come to mirror each other and can be seen as the same person, just two different sides of them. Madeline is thought of as Roderick's psychological Other by her brother, she is the part of him that he wishes to repress and as he is dying he believes that this repressed part of him must not be given free reign after he is dead, so attempts to destroy her. Madeline is the figure of conflict to Roderick, and so the narrator, because she does not want to be characterised as the secondary part of Roderick's mind, once again bringing the discussion back to the misogyny in male Gothic narrators' treatment of women. If Madeline only exists as the repressed, secondary part of Roderick's mind, she is just another female, Gothic character whose worth is measured only by her relationships to men, something she fights and is ultimately punished for. The positioning of women as the Other/Double, the figure that is creating

conflict, in Poe's texts is another example of patriarchal narrators belittling women in Gothic literature, reinforcing 'deep-rooted female fears about women's powerlessness and imprisonment within patriarchy' (2004: 57), as Diana Wallace argues. Conflicts between men and women in Poe's texts have so much meaning behind them - they are battles for power and struggles to establish one's identity. The strength and importance of Madeline threatens the supremacy of Roderick and his childhood friend, and so she is positioned as the evil, powerful, and yet passive female character who serves only as an antagonist to the male protagonist and a Double whose identity is based entirely on her brother's.

The Double exists only in chaos, he/she is a figure rooted in conflict as their very existence and presence is perceived as an attack. As stated above, The Double can be generally viewed as the externalised, judgemental conscience of characters according to Herdman (92), but in 'Morella' and 'The Black Cat' the Doubles go against this trend and do not exist in order to challenge the positions of their Originals, instead avenging their deaths. The second black cat and Morella are physical copies of their predecessors to evoke guilt from the narrators; the only dissimilarity is the cat's white patch, which comes to foreshadow the gruesome fate of the narrator (187). The Doubles in these two texts exist not to attack or judge the figure from which they originated, but to bring justice to the neglectful, murderous protagonists, and in this manner the Double is truly the figure of conflict. By existing in order to shame and attack these protagonists, the Doubles undoubtedly clash with those they are chasing, and their importance to Gothic literature further cements the importance of conflict to this genre. As well as embodying Morella and Pluto, these Doubles have a role as mirrors to the narrators themselves, forcing them to reflect on what they have become, eventually destroying them. The Doubles in each of Poe's texts force the protagonist to face themselves, even if they are faced by another character's Double; this returns to the idea of

projection, and each central male character projects his own guilt onto these Doubles and sees in them a reflection of himself. As these men are faced with eyes that can look into their souls, as Morella's did, (34) or a cat that has also had its eye mercilessly gouged out (186), they reject the evidence and blame the figures that they project emotions onto. They attack the doubles not only for reminding them of the guilt of their actions, but also causing these protagonists to reflect on and begin to understand who they have become. The Doubles, whether they originate from the protagonists or their loved ones, create conflict by forcing the protagonists to gain a sense of awareness about who they really are, threatening the ignorance that the narrators live in comfortably. The Doubles create conflict here by forcing the narrators to understand that they are not the men they think they are, creating an internal conflict which challenges their principles and leads to their later instability.

Wuthering Heights (1847)

The issue of whether or not to trust a narrator is extremely important to this text, arguably more so than it is to Poe's short stories or Stevenson's novella *Jekyll and Hyde*. The differing opinions and narratives presented within Brontë's novel create tensions between the characters and their versions of events. Difference does not always equate to conflict, but in *Wuthering Heights* it frequently does. When I speak of differing arguments and perceptions in this chapter, I refer to the idea that each of these dissimilarities contributes to the established barriers between people in this text, whether they originate from class, race, or jealousy. Conflict drives *Wuthering Heights* - the differences and clashes between characters are never laid to rest, and the central progression of Heathcliff's character is based in his exclusion from society and his existence as an affront to the upper class families. I wish to highlight the conflicts that exist embedded within Brontë's novel, and will argue that conflict is not just one part of this text, but at its core, comes to define this piece of work and its characters.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the conflicts between Poe's narrators and the other characters. This sense of tension between the narrator who presents the reader with one truth and the characters who are portrayed negatively in these narratives is significantly relevant to *Wuthering Heights*, a novel which thrives on the conflict created by Lockwood and Nelly Dean. The two narrators present to the reader their own versions of events, and much of what is told to the reader comes from Nelly's personal experiences. Although Lockwood is relaying Nelly's version of the events prior to his arrival, supposedly as accurately as possible (Brontë 2003: 157), he presents the reader with an unfavourable view of *Wuthering Heights* before he has even met his new housekeeper and chief source of

information. Lockwood is undeniably a melodramatic narrator, most notably espoused by his brush with the 'four-footed fiends' (7), Heathcliff's dogs, and his bold reaction of keeping them at bay with a poker. The narrator's penchant for exaggeration is clear from early on, as is his snobbery as he discusses the 'primitive' furniture in his room-for-a-night in the Heights (5), thinking to himself that his apartment looks like that of a 'homely, northern farmer' (5). Lockwood's ill will towards the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights blossoms quickly, as he clashes with Hareton the 'clown' (13) and Catherine who speaks so 'repellingly' (12). Reinforced by 'no one uttering a word of sociable conversation' (14), the conflict between Lockwood and the company he keeps at the Heights is conspicuous. Though he may know nothing of the tumultuous events that have preceded him, he is still offended and repulsed by the atmosphere into which he has stepped, and further stokes the conflict within. Lockwood's negative view of this family is not as thoroughly condemning as Nelly's, but I would argue that his bias against them contributes to his willingness to accept the boldly negative and scornful story that Nelly relays to him. As with Poe's texts, the reader is once again forced to decide whether to trust the narrators, ones with very strong views who are invested in their own stories. Readers must look beyond these narrations for evidence of a more complex 'truth', setting up the conflict between reader and narrator.

The harsh atmosphere that Lockwood encounters, whilst likely due to the avarice that has been encouraged to fester in the Heights, can certainly be attributed - if only partially - to his part as the intruder into this household. Cathy enquires if he were actually asked to tea (11), emphasising the awkwardness of his arrival. Lockwood does not belong in this area, and this intrusion into the very insular, isolated lives of Brontë's characters is not easily forgiven. Paula Krebs has highlighted the scene in which Catherine Sr.'s ghost appears to Lockwood - another example of his melodramatic imagination. The visitor, disturbed by this spectre,

reacts by pulling her wrist onto jagged glass, a disturbingly violent and bitter action that emphasises his position as the intruder. Krebs rightly argues that it is not the ghost that is scary in this scene, but Lockwood himself as he attacks this phantom in the most vicious way he can think of, an act of violence against what is arguably a young girl (1998: 47). Lockwood's stay at the Heights and the 'attacks' on him are centred around his intrusion into what is a very isolated environment. Physical isolation is undeniably important to Gothic literature, particularly earlier texts according to Michele A Massé (1990: 679), but I would argue as Thomas Schmid does that 'spatial/geographical isolation can also signal varieties of psychological and social alienation within Gothic texts' (2009: 19). In *Wuthering Heights*, isolation is not just a part of the locals' lives - it defines them; the harsh, secluded moors of Bronte's novel mould their inhabitants into suspicious people. Lockwood may think himself unfairly insulted (16), but he is undeniably an intruder into this secluded home, and as Heathcliff argues 'a stranger is a stranger, be he rich or poor' (16). He is the figure of conflict to each of these 'primitive' northerners, intruding on their lives and becoming the focus for their anger and bitter feelings towards each other. Julian Wolfreys makes a very interesting point on Lockwood's role as the contemporary southern outsider, as Lockwood is as alienated as the reader by the Earnshaws family who are 'not quite middle class in any unequivocally modern...familiar Victorian sense' (2008: 116). Wolfreys argues that the strange identities of this Yorkshire familiar, and their place somewhere in greater British identity, is concerning to the reader, and Lockwood allows this insight. He represents 'modern, Victorian' values in this text, and when he is confronted by the isolated, archaic world of the Yorkshire Moors two ways of living conflict and collide. As John Tosh has outlined, contemporary family values emphasised a father's role as one of care and focus on making his son the 'best' man that he could be (1998: 83). When Lockwood, the

representative of these values, encounters fathers such as Heathcliff (and through Nelly, Hindley and Mr. Earnshaw) he is alienated and turned against these people.

Lockwood may think highly of himself, but in the isolated setting of the moors he must gain influence through charisma alone, and does not have the skill to converse with these people. Though this isolation and movement to a more harsh, alien environment is one that the 'misanthropist' (1) Lockwood has volunteered for, he attempts to find people he can empathise with, and looks down on those that are not of his standing. For one, he clashes with the residents of the Heights because they do not have the redeeming quality of intelligence that Heathcliff seems to (8). In Nelly Dean, though, Lockwood finds his saviour - he has supposedly attempted to escape the gossipy environment of London, only to seek out his housekeeper 'hoping sincerely she would prove a regular gossip' (33). He finds in her someone to satiate his desire to feel involved in the community, and by indulging her to speak at length over the pasts of the local families he feels less isolated, and privy to the oral history of this area. Though Lockwood is a creator of conflict when he first arrives in the Moors, he does not relish this role, instead opting to spend his time with the one person who can make him feel as if he is involved in the stories and secrets that Nelly holds onto. His narration, and that of Nelly's which he passes on, are then steeped in bias - he will not attack the woman who is making him feel part of the community, and so her story is accepted and given to the reader. Interestingly, the different versions of the truth are not based in the Lockwood's investment - as in Poe's texts - but in fact are based in his detachment from what has happened before him and separate to him. This is the basis of his role as the conflict creator - by being detached from this landscape, he cannot truly understand the lives of the Earnshaws and Lintons. He creates conflict by being the figure who passes on their story, an intruder who relays a history of which he knows so little; the conflict that Lockwood

creates is between the version of events he relays and that which may have actually happened. Lockwood conveying Nelly's biased narrative to the reader (mixed with biases of his own) creates tension between their perceptions of the past and the one which is indicated through a close reading of the text. This conflict emphasises the characters' places 'outside' of wider history and society, they have their own histories and stories which exist separate from the identity of the wider country, particularly Lockwood's former home London.

This detachment leads him to rely solely and significantly on Nelly Dean, his new housekeeper who is more than keen to divulge the history of the Earnshaw/Linton feud - 'oh, certainly Sir... I'll sit as long as you please' (35). Nelly's bias is undeniable, referring to the Linton family as 'us' (34) before correcting herself, and immediately referring to Heathcliff as a 'cuckoo' (35). As Catherine Earnshaw grows older, Nelly grows more impatient with her and her 'nonsense' (83); she comes to think so little of Heathcliff that she is supposedly surprised that he can cry (163); and she even supposes that she is the 'one sensible soul' in the Grange (120). Her involvement in the lives of the Earnshaws and Lintons keeps her close to every issue and argument that she relays to Lockwood, and in contrast to his detachment she is a figure who has at no point been separate from and impartial to the lives of her employers. As such, Nelly's role as the narrator of Brontë's novel is extremely similar to that of Poe's narrators - she is the reader's only connection to these events, and must be trusted to a certain degree. One may see, though, that there are conflicting versions of the 'truth' that the reader may deduce from what Nelly is boldly stating.

For most of this novel, Nelly lives in the Grange - be it with or without the Lintons - and her shifting allegiance to this family over the Earnshaws becomes clear. As she muses over the different paths of Hindley and Edgar, she 'could not see how they shouldn't both have taken

the same road... Hindley, with apparently the stronger head, has shown himself sadly the worse and weaker man' (185). This encapsulates Nelly's opinions towards those raised in the Heights and those in the Grange. The two groups of residents become ends of a moral spectrum, and Edgar and Hindley represent these two ends to Nelly. Edgar, the 'loyal and faithful soul' (185) has recovered from Catherine's death to be there for his daughter. Meanwhile, Hindley - 'devil daddy' (109) to his son, Hareton - implodes and gives in to hateful temptations and revenge. Whilst Hindley checks Heathcliff's bedroom door each night hoping to find it open so that he may exact his revenge (139), Edgar keeps his daughter Cathy from her uncle 'not because I disliked Mr Heathcliff', but because her uncle likes 'to wrong and ruin those he hates' (222). Nelly's portrayals of Hindley and Edgar - the second generation of patriarchs - could not be more different. In painting the residents of the Heights as corruptible and intrinsically evil, she upholds those who live in the Grange - including herself - as models of morality. Those outside of the Grange are positioned as immoral figures of conflict, threatening to upset the peace of this house. One need only look at the previous example in which Edgar hides his daughter away, fearing that she may discover that there are other people outside of her bubble, people who may 'corrupt' her. Nelly's preferential portrayals are rooted in a sense of morality, and this sense of morality reinforces the confidence with which she condemns others. Speaking on the issue of her bias, Graeme Tytler argues that she 'is generally confident as to how God will think or act, usually with respect to matters of interest to herself' (2007: 43), an argument that correctly establishes the importance of Nelly's piety. Tytler discusses this in relation to Nelly's assumption that the misfortune of Hindley is reward for his sins and the misfortune of Edgar is not, as the latter 'trusted God' (185). Nelly's role as the narrator is similar to Poe's narrators', given that the latter present themselves as the trustworthy parties, though Nelly's part is even more controlling. In her capacity, she moralises her story as she tells it,

positioning one side of this great feud as ultimately good and one as bad. One may see Nelly as a key source of conflict as she does this - by establishing a binary conceptualisation of morals between the two houses, her praise of those in the Grange further undermines those in Wuthering Heights. There is seemingly a conflict between those in the Grange and those in the Heights due to Nelly positioning the former as moral and the latter as immoral, and this conflict must be taken into account when attempting to understand who is guilty in this text.

The conflict in her stories stems from and emphasises the binaries that she highlights and creates, rarely acknowledging the complexities of characters like Heathcliff; he is demonised until the novel's end, supposedly even sneering in death (335). As he mourns Catherine's death, Nelly gives him no sympathy, and his desperate speech imploring his lover not to leave him is met with revulsion (169). Though the reader may sympathise with Heathcliff's loss, despite his complexities, Nelly continues to condemn him. This moment is key in that it highlights undeniably cold behaviour on Nelly's part and can allow one to question how objectively she is portraying Heathcliff. Marianne Thormählen insists that Nelly 'seems strangely unmoved by the sufferings' of Catherine and Heathcliff, despite her showing the capacity for love and warmth towards Hareton and Cathy Linton (1997: 184). Thormählen is right in saying that Nelly does not seem to care for Catherine and Heathcliff, though she is not 'unmoved', but rather moved to hatred. Hareton, however, is the one figure that has not been based in the Grange who has Nelly's sympathy, though this is arguably because she raised him initially. Again, one sees Nelly using her narratorial influence to portray one set of characters as corrupted and petulant, and another as misguided and used. On one level, just as Poe's narrators seek to blame the women of the texts, Nelly seeks to shift blame to certain characters - Catherine and Heathcliff primarily - whilst preserving the memory of

those such as Edgar. As Poe's narrators attempt to present themselves as both objective towards, and victims of, their circumstances, so does Nelly Dean. Whilst Poe's narrators have been more overtly evil and destructive in their stories, Nelly's culpability is an important issue that she does not give time to. One may see, in her treatment of certain figures, that she is a biased woman and her involvement in the relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine leads the latter to blame her housekeeper for the ultimate mess (125), with Nelly absolving herself of any wrongdoing.

One may see in Nelly not just the impressively powerful narrator, but also the housekeeper/servant, a role which is of great importance to Gothic literature. The conflict that Nelly creates is not just based in her newfound role as the storyteller, but is in fact evident in a great deal of her actions, stemming from her refusal to fit into the typical role of servant. From the first night of Heathcliff's stay at the Heights, she disobeys Mr Earnshaw's orders and 'put it on the landing of the stairs, hoping it might be gone on the morrow' (37), referring to Heathcliff. She gives advice, even when it is not wanted (128), and grapples with helping and then condemning Catherine and Heathcliff (164). Nelly is not a servant, certainly not a subservient one, and her internal conflict over her role within these events is clear. She helps Catherine and Heathcliff, despite her misgivings, but will then attack them for attempting to be together; Nelly is certainly guilty of neglecting her role as reliable servant, a point T.K. Meier makes well:

'This unwillingness to perform thoroughly the part of a servant while cast in the role of one makes Nelly not merely a catalyst but an agent in the destruction of Cathy and the fall of Edgar... [by] announcing Heathcliff as merely 'a person from Gimmerton', by not mentioning Cathy's illness to Edgar, not rousing the house on discovering Isabella's elopement, leaving the Grange open for Heathcliff's final

interview with Cathy, permitting his entry to view her corpse, mingling his and Edgar's hair in her locket, and burying Heathcliff as he had wished, she not only betrays her master's trust but also rejects the Christian orthodoxy she pretends to observe.' (2013: 310)

As matters develop, so does Nelly's position until she becomes the powerful housekeeper of the Grange, leading to her being the primary figure of authority and trust in the life of young Cathy Linton - Nelly's 'lamb' (193). The role of the housekeeper is an important one, given that this figure has the opportunity to control the house they serve, but is also important to Gothic literature concerning female persecution. Holly Blackford argues that the mistress of the house and the housekeeper are both persecuted by patriarchal figures (2005: 235), but both struggle for supremacy over the household itself in Gothic literature (236). In *Wuthering Heights*, Nelly and Catherine (Earnshaw) may not overtly struggle for dominance in the Grange, but their consistent conflicts and crumbling relationship are indicative of the struggle between the two that Blackford discusses. Take, for example, the two women's starkly different relationships with Isabella Linton. Nelly is the only one to whom Isabella confesses her misery in living at the Heights (138), whilst Catherine remains cruel to her (105). The conflict between these two influential female characters is indicative of issues for women, as I will discuss, but also highlights the importance of scrutinising Nelly's role. She presents herself as the trustworthy, reliable narrator - just as Poe's narrators do - but her involvement in the destruction of the Lintons and Earnshaws is undeniable. She and Lockwood have very obvious biases, and cause conflict in their world through their inability to stay detached from matters around them, further contributing to this conflict by then misrepresenting the events in which they have involved themselves. Nelly's importance to the families' fates and her bold actions in this text, coupled with her position as the oral historian of the area, show why there is a key conflict between her version of events and what one may discover through a close

reading of the text. She establishes herself as a moral voice, but her vendetta against Heathcliff and Catherine is clear - her role as narrator affords her a great deal of power, and can see a tension between her testimony and what I believe to be the actual truth.

Nelly and Catherine are, I would argue, embodiments of the two archetypal women in early Gothic literature. That of the submissive woman who accepts her role in the established patriarchy, and thrives in it (Nelly); and the woman who attempts to fight this established order, never hiding her 'passionate' nature, eventually being destroyed for this rebellion (Catherine). Nelly and Catherine are the two most important and powerful women in *Wuthering Heights*, not through money, but through influence. A great deal of Nelly's influence rests in her position as the storyteller, the figure who decides how those before her might be remembered. Catherine's charismatic power over people is what connects the two great houses, as well as the two men who attempt to gain her full devotion. These two classic Gothic figures struggle for dominance between themselves due to the situation they are placed in by the patriarchs - Edgar and Heathcliff - because, as Blackford argues, they are aware of the power they lack that a man would so easily have. Nelly, however, is what Nicole Plyler Fisk terms an 'honorary patriarch' due to her conservative, patriarchal reaction to Catherine's insistence that she 'is' Heathcliff (2006: 137). Nelly's role as narrator, housekeeper, and influential woman rests on her acceptance of sexist ideas towards female passion and confinement. This is the key conflict regarding women - that between the rebellious Catherine and the patriarchal Nelly. That Catherine dies while Nelly survives shows the power of the patriarchy and establishes male dominance as the accepted rule, meaning any movement against this causes conflict and brands the woman making this move as outsider or troublemaker.

There are characters, such as Nelly, Edgar, and Mr Earnshaw who all represent a domestic environment that is saturated with patriarchal villains who seek to control women. According to Nelly, Edgar had a great fear of Catherine being upset or unsettled by anyone (92), working to keep her as settled as possible so that she would not challenge the established order. Nelly is aghast at the thought of Cathy Linton being shown the Heights and having her family history revealed to her (215), and Mr Earnshaw is only comforted by his daughter Catherine when she acts submissive and takes on the 'typical' role of a woman (43). Each of these powerful characters reinforces the idea that a submissive domestic role is ideal for the two Catherine's. When Catherine Earnshaw goes against this, she is attacked as a figure of conflict, one who threatens to destabilise the patriarchal order. That she is able to hold power over both Edgar and Heathcliff until, and after, her death is remarkable considering the perception that these two powerful men should be the most 'important' figures in this text. As I have established in the previous chapter, Poe presents similar attacks on women who are deemed frighteningly powerful by the patriarchs of the texts. The domestic setting, for both Poe and Brontë, is poisonous - it traps and destroys the women that live within it, and the patriarchal figures bring them down for fear of losing their dominance. The key difference between *Wuthering Heights* and Poe's stories is that the two Catherine's are rebellious and 'unruly', whilst Poe's female figures are victims of paranoid delusions which paint them as treacherous challengers to the patriarchy. This domestic setting is key to the conflicts between men and women in these texts. The patriarchs establish environments in which their power should be absolute, and when women do not accept this (or in Poe's case are seen to not accept it despite the evidence that they are compliant) they are attacked. Conflict is unavoidable in these settings, and this highlights the strained, poisonous relationships that exist between Gothic men and women.

There are many, however, who would disagree with the perception of Catherine Earnshaw as bold and independent, instead seeing her as self-centred and controlling. Marianne Thormählen is particularly unforgiving towards Catherine, in a sentence that needs quoting in full to do justice to her words:

'It is this self-love [of Catherine's] that sets the disastrous train of events in motion.

Catherine dies half-way through the book, but not before she has indirectly killed her benefactors, the Linton parents; destroyed the lives of the two men who love her; brought ruin and misery on her sister-in-law; and left her small nephew helpless in his drunken father's hands when removing his nurse (whom Catherine selfishly wants for her own service).' (187)

Jamie S. Crouse portrays Catherine in a similarly harsh manner, focusing on the 'control' over Heathcliff and Edgar that she supposedly desperately craves, referring specifically to the scene in which she traps Heathcliff and Edgar in the Grange's kitchen (2008: 185-6). Catherine is an obviously complex character, and for each show of infuriating pettiness - 'she... snatched the cloth from my hand, and pinched me' (71) - there is an equal moment of clarity - such as her realisation that she must marry Edgar for a stable future, rather than Heathcliff as she desires (81). Catherine may create conflict by challenging the submissive female role, a progressive aspect of her character, but she also creates conflict through her brash nature and dependence on others. She does not cynically use Edgar and Heathcliff for her own gain, but rather understands that they both fulfill different parts of her soul. One need only refer back to her speech on the differences in her love for them both, in which hers for Edgar is like 'foliage' - pleasing but will change - and that for Heathcliff 'resembles the eternal rocks beneath - a source of little visible delight, but necessary' (82). Catherine challenges patriarchal ownership of women and control over their affections, and if one is to accept that she does not bow to sexist ideas of women being passive, then one must also

accept she cannot always be likeable and charming. She does a service to Gothic women by breaking the mould and acting as she wishes, a trait some may call selfish and 'headstrong' (66) when found in a woman. Those such as Crouse and Thormählen may argue that Catherine is the key figure of blame in *Wuthering Heights*, but in doing so they ignore the importance of the biased narrators previously mentioned. This brash heroine undoubtedly causes conflict, but does so because of how she attempts to challenge the male rule of the two houses. She is suppressed in many different ways, whether it be by her aggressive father or the more smothering Edgar. To any reader sympathetic towards the women and their struggle against male dominance, this conflict has a positive origin; but to the patriarchal characters, this only enrages them and Catherine's position as strong woman is used against her. This is informed by the context of *Wuthering Heights*, in which there was a strong focus on male heritage and dominance, something which Brontë - or Ellis Bell as she was known when the text was published - knew all too well. Lockwood finds her different names - Catherine Earnshaw, Heathcliff, Linton - written in her old room (19), and Catherine is all of these women. She is never tied to one patriarch, and her refusal to have an identity cemented by a man is what creates so much conflict and gains her so much criticism. This is what is at heart of Gothic literature - the search for one's identity, and often the struggles characters encounter during this as they are suppressed by those who would deem them outsiders. Catherine's crime is attempting to position herself independently of the whims of men, and by doing this she goes against the accepted wisdom of male dominance; the conflict that ensues simply highlights the constant persecution of women.

Catherine is a complex character who cannot be simply called victim or villain, partially because she is not overtly killed by the men in her life, as Poe's women are. She is a figure of great importance, and instead of being shunned by the narrator, she is placed

front-and-centre by Nelly Dean, in order to be portrayed as the source of the families' miseries. The two author's texts take different paths - Poe's narrators put themselves in the limelight, so that they may be seen as the supposed hero/victim under assault. Brontë's narrator Nelly instead focuses on Catherine, emphasising her pettiness, her attachment to Heathcliff, and her erratic nature so that she may be made a scapegoat for the events of the novel. In the latter case, one must return to Fisk's idea that Nelly reinforces the patriarchal rule of the novel, and one can see that Poe's stories and Brontë's novel both have narrators who attempt to establish and encourage male control over women. Catherine's accountability may be contentious, but the other women of these four texts are clearly victims of male whims. The fates of Poe and Brontë's women are in keeping with the isolation of and control over women in Gothic literature. Each Poe female character is murdered by their male companion, as discussed, but consider the fates of some of the key women in *Wuthering Heights* (all of which are in keeping with the Gothic tradition of women inevitably suffering at the hands of men). Hindley's wife Frances dies during childbirth; Isabella Linton is used by Heathcliff as a pawn in his scheme of revenge, eventually dying in exile; and Catherine also dies in childbirth, her mind having been all-but-lost. Olivia Moy argues that in early Gothic examples of women living confined lives, supposedly 'that what often seems like a prison actually serves as a safe haven for young women in a dangerous world' (2015: 379). This is absolutely not the case in these texts, where homes are made prisons and these women - no matter what they have done - fall victim to the scorn and neglect of men. In this sense, the women are not the agents of conflict in *Wuthering Heights*, rather it is the men who bastardise and poison the domestic ideal that was so pertinent in Victorian literature, as Emily Rena-Dozier has argued (760). The male figures entice these women with the lure of stability, only to lead them to their deaths through neglect. One may argue that Edgar is the exception to this, given his previously mentioned willingness and desire to keep Catherine

calm and happy. His silence during her times of 'gloom' (92), however, and the patronising way in which he 'ascribed [her moods] to an alteration in her constitution' (92-93) highlight the way in which Catherine becomes trapped. Unable to express her emotions without fear of judgement and silence, she is controlled by her husband, and though Edgar may not explicitly condemn her shows of emotion, he suppresses them subtly and attempts to dull Catherine's emotional personality. Conflict here is more subtle than it is in other cases, as women become gradually trapped in homes in which they are uncomfortable and unable to escape. The conflict is below the surface, contributing to increasing tensions which show themselves in arguments, petty actions or, eventually, death and one can see the importance of conflict here as it contributes to the key downfalls of characters.

Though these wives are doomed by the men they are tied to, there is still a dependence on women in this novel, one that runs throughout the story and only complicates the conflicts between men and women. The central male dependence on a woman is that of Heathcliff on Catherine. The first significant moment is when she returns from the Grange as a young girl now in contact with the Lintons, and Heathcliff pleads 'don't turn me out for those pitiful, silly friends of yours' (69). From hereon, each point of separation - culminating in her death and supposed abandonment of Heathcliff - emphasises how much he relies on her. An extremely powerful figure in the novel, Heathcliff is the scourge of the Heights and the Grange, yet is still reliant on Catherine, begging her to haunt him so he won't be alone (169). Of course, this reliance on Catherine turns poisonous, and as he lives tortured by her memory (and supposed ghost) - 'there is *one* who won't shrink from my company' (334) - he slips from reality, his dependence on his former love being what dooms him. The conflict between men and women is made more complex by this reliance on strong female figures, coupled with the abuse women are subjected to by patriarchs. In Poe's texts, the female figures are perceived

to have power over the men, and are punished for this. In Brontë's novel, the rebellious Catherines *do* have power over men, and are punished for it just the same as Poe's women. This is the key difference between Poe and Brontë - the accuracy of perceptions of female power and influence, as discussed - though, whether women are powerful or not they are handed the same punishments. Female characters in these texts are consigned to submissive, unhappy roles, and are then portrayed by narrators as the causes of conflict and misery. Morella, Madeline, the Catherines, and the wife in 'The Black Cat' are all victims to the delusions and rages of the men that control them. By fighting these men, or seeming to undermine them, the female figures are branded devious traitors and their attempts to be treated well are portrayed as acts of conflict, highlighting the bias against female figures.

Characters are inherently tethered to each other in each of the texts, and *Wuthering Heights* revels in mirroring its characters in their successors; there is a common, inescapable past shared by the residents of the Grange and the Heights. The past is something which cannot be ignored in this text, as I will show, and the idea that history will repeat itself is one central to the actions of these characters, particularly when one considers the parallels between so many different figures. This discussion comes to the idea of 'fate', and how conflict arises from characters being forced into roles and lives in which they do not wish to exist, as well as the idea that certain conflicts are not taken to the grave, but rather carried on. The characters of *Wuthering Heights* exist in three generations - it is the second and third that the reader knows the most about, and it is the third generation that includes Doubles of the second. Brontë's Irish heritage and the Celtic focus on family origins (Chitham 1987: 10) only strengthens the importance of characters' destinies being decided. Cathy Linton, named after her mother, begins her life as her mother's ends - much like Morella - and displays the same petulant personality (301), as well as the same ability to both captivate and infuriate those

around her (189). Hareton Earnshaw, although the son of Hindley, becomes the new Heathcliff - a boy shunned from the family, attacked by those 'above him', who has his life destroyed by the new patriarch. Heathcliff becomes Hindley, desperate to tear down the young boy who threatens his established supremacy within the family. And Linton Heathcliff, the new Edgar, attacks Hareton based on his snobbery, and is a weak figure whose power stems from his inheritance. Each character is doomed to become their predecessor and experience the same misery. The conflicts of the second generation are taken up by the third, and so the lives of these characters are attached to conflict, it is what makes them Doubles. Heathcliff bridges these generations, being the only Double who is also an Original, and facilitates the continuation of conflicts within the Heights and the Grange. Though it may be fate that makes these characters Doubles, Heathcliff plays a key role in encouraging conflict to continue, just as Nelly does as the narrator. What this shows is that conflict is a driving force that influences characters across decades and generations. The same conflicts that arose when Heathcliff arrived still have significance and influence as he dies. It is the conflicts between these characters that survive above all else - like the harsh landscape of the moors, these clashes are a staple of life for these families that is inherited and must be dealt with at every turn. These conflicts show the importance of inheritance in this novel, as well as the idea of the past transgressing on the present, as I have argued.

The key difference between Poe's Doubles and Brontë's is that Poe's exist very closely to their Originals, fighting them or continuing their legacy, whilst Brontë's exist detached from their Originals. Poe's Doubles come to life for revenge in 'The Black Cat' and 'Morella', or exist as a rival in 'Usher', and act as figures set out to undermine those who have attacked them or their Original. Brontë's Doubles occupy a very different role in her novel, never knowing of their nature as Doubles and instead being used by the villain Heathcliff for his

revenge. In Poe's short stories, the patriarchal villain is attacked by the Double as justice for his crimes, whereas in Brontë's text it is the patriarch Heathcliff who gains control of the Doubles and uses them to repeat the miseries of the previous generation. Heathcliff never allows them to know exactly what they are, and the only figure that can understand the repeating of history is Nelly, though even she does not understand the obvious similarities between Catherine and Cathy. This is evidenced by the change in perception of Cathy when Lockwood retakes the narrator role, calling her a 'little wretch' (302), an insult Nelly would have reserved for Catherine Earnshaw, but never Catherine Linton the 'angel' (198). One may even see conflict between Heathcliff and the Earnshaws' late son, who died as a boy (38). Heathcliff, the usurper and thief has stolen both the name and the inheritance of Hindley and Catherine's true brother, and is the Double of this son, again not knowing this. As Maja-Lisa von Sneidern has argued, Heathcliff has 'no designated place in the family other than "usurper"' (1995: 176), as he is given the dead son's name and forced to take his place. The Doubles do not choose their lives, but have them chosen for them and must tackle the conflict between their own identities and the ones that they have had thrust onto them. The only Doubles truly close to their Originals are Catherine and Heathcliff, who can be seen as each other's Doubles. Catherine insists that Heathcliff is 'more myself than I am' (81), and maintains that they fulfill each other. Without one, the other is left with an unrelenting emptiness, and the isolation of this setting is allowed to seep back in, reminding these two of their lonely existences. Heathcliff's reaction on hearing of Catherine's death is to beg her to 'not leave me in this abyss' (169); he is concerned first and foremost with not being left alone by her, the only person he truly connects with. What one sees here is the conflict that stems from each characters' existence as a Double - they experience internal conflict and fail to live peacefully as their identities are undermined by these roles as Doubles.

It is clear that the past is greatly significant in *Wuthering Heights*, as it is to Gothic literature as a whole. As I mentioned in the Poe chapter, Gothic literature focuses on the relationship between the past and present, particularly how the two states come into conflict as symbols of past and present clash. The two states are forced to coincide in Brontë's novel, and conflict arises when the past will not be forgotten and the present is not allowed to progress. The third generation of characters stagnate, being coerced into living lives and occupying roles that do not fit them, but rather fit Heathcliff's scheme for revenge. In Brontë's novel, the symbol of the past is primarily the ghost. It has been argued by Mélanie Joseph-Vilain that 'the ghosts that haunt the Gothic are, first and foremost, the ghosts of history' (2012: 64), and this is supported not just by the appearance of ghosts, but also references to haunting. The only ghost one sees is that of young Catherine, attempting to return to her original home - 'let me in' (25); but it is her constant presence that really haunts Heathcliff. After he begs her to haunt him, he frequently references the soul of Catherine that will not leave him in peace (28, 289, 323), she being the symbol of a past that he cannot and will not move on from. Heathcliff himself, however, is the strongest symbol of the past in this novel - he 'haunts' the Grange (151), a metaphorical ghost who symbolises the second generation that has been lost. This is reinforced by his mission to make history repeat itself, not allowing the new generation to move on and live different lives. The most defining moment is that in which Heathcliff stands in the Grange's library after Edgar's death. 'The same room into which he had been ushered, as a guest, eighteen years before: the same moon shone through the window; the same autumn landscape lay outside... Heathcliff advanced to the hearth. Time had little altered his person either' (286-7). In this passage, Nelly highlights the stagnation that has occurred within the novel, and through Heathcliff's work the past has been consistently brought back up, not allowing the present and its inhabitants to flourish independently. Though Catherine's spirit may haunt only Heathcliff, he in turn haunts the

other figures of the novel; he is the symbol of the past that won't be left behind, and in this sense is much like the Gothic vampire, as discussed in the previous chapter. One returns to Breifel's idea of the vampire which exists as a past figure haunting the present, a figure to which Heathcliff is even compared (330). He is both spectre and vampire, haunting the novel and draining the life from its inhabitants, all the while existing as a character rooted in a past which comes into conflict with a new present. Each of his actions is motivated by a love/hatred of someone from his childhood who is either dead or dying, and in being motivated by this connection to the past he is an archetypal Gothic figure of conflict. Heathcliff, a character on which *Wuthering Heights* is uniquely reliant, could not exist without conflict - it defines him, and his position is continuously as antagonist and outsider. Conflict drives him, and he drives the text. His fixation on the past shows a key similarity between him and Poe's protagonists, all of whom become plagued by their past actions and allow this fixation to ruin them. Heathcliff and these protagonists, haunted by ghosts - real or metaphorical - cannot escape what they have done, nor the conflicts that their actions have created.

Those such as John T Matthews, however, argue that the ghost in *Wuthering Heights* is representative of the repressed and unspoken (1993: 65). The ghost in this novel is largely a symbolic figure, one which I argue comes to represent Heathcliff's fear of being left alone. He clings to this figure of Catherine's spectre, the one that haunts him and is never definitively seen by anyone; her 'ghost' is constantly present to Heathcliff, and is his mind reminding him that he is alone. This repressed fear of isolation is one that is extremely key to Brontë's novel. The isolated setting of her text contributes to the dependence Catherine and Heathcliff have on each other, as Debra Goodlett has argued by discussing the lack of stimulation the two find in interactions with other people (1996: 319). The characters are tethered to these

isolated settings, these homes being intrinsically linked to their identities, and so they cannot escape the lonely moors. Each character is cut off, but none more so than Heathcliff and Catherine, because they share a common sense of being two Others in this unforgiving social setting. The support from each other allows the two characters to revel in their positions as outsiders, until Catherine is forced into the role of Edgar's companion. From hereon, she is torn between the two men, and Heathcliff makes it his mission to set himself even further apart from the other locals, his role as the Other (a role defined by conflict) becoming one in which he thrives. Catherine was Heathcliff's source of support, and so he cannot let her go, shunning and punishing the living that surround him to exact his 'revenge'. The figure of Catherine's ghost is what drives Heathcliff and spurs him on to establish himself as a transgressive, unyielding figure of conflict. The same impact of ghosts and the memory of female characters can be seen in Poe's short stories, in which each protagonist is plagued by a 'ghost' representative of their guilt. Whereas Catherine's ghost drives Heathcliff to carry on, the ghosts of Poe's texts tear down their killers. Both authors, however, do portray spectres with a great deal of power over the living - in each text, the 'ghost' is an oppressive, controlling figure to the patriarch who is keenly aware of their supposed presence, and in each work the ghost drives their 'victim' mad.

Heathcliff is a Double, a repressed individual, but in this text also plays the role of the classic Gothic monster. Rebecca Styler raises a key point on the Gothic in a study of Elizabeth Gaskell's story *The Crooked Branch*, one which can relate to Bronte's use of the same symbol. She argues that 'the tragedy of "The Crooked Branch" is that the family do not realise that they have created the monster which comes back to ravage them' (2010: 35). Styler argues that the family of this Gothic tale creates the monster that ultimately destroys them, a monster which they do not fully understand the capabilities of. The idea of the

crooked branch is one key to the Gothic as a whole, be it Frankenstein's monster, Mr Hyde, or Heathcliff - each figure is created, treated with neglect, and then returns to wreak havoc on its creator. The 'returning monster' is a figure rooted in conflict - their life is full of clashes and hatred, and their inevitable return to their creator is the climax of their lives. These archetypal figures cannot exist without conflict, and Heathcliff is just the same; without conflict and battles, he is not the same man, and so thrives in clashing with others. Heathcliff comes to the Heights as a simple beggar, but through the malice in this house he is made into the revenge-driven, diabolical man that comes to control this whole area. The crooked branch is indicative of two major ideas in *Wuthering Heights*, then. The culpability of those who have moulded others into hateful figures through their own actions; and the repression of the dark secret of families, in this case the 'gypsy boy' who was driven out. As I have argued, Heathcliff is the embodiment of the past in this novel, and as he returns to the Heights he reminds the families of their past evils, evils for which Heathcliff seeks justice. Nelly only fleetingly mentions the years spent happily in Heathcliff's absence, ensuring that these are not the focus. Instead, the reader is shown the two key narratives of this Gothic archetype - the creation of the monster, and the return of the monster. What one sees after Cathy Linton comes to live in the Heights, the loss of energy so apparent in Heathcliff (318), is his loss of purpose. One may argue that this loss of purpose occurred as Catherine died, but his mission was always to gain his revenge, albeit to capture her in the process. In her death, he found even more reason for his vengeance, and as he achieves this his story as the returned monster seeking revenge comes to a close, leaving him nothing to live for. The same figure can be seen in all of Poe's short stories, and one can see this in the previous discussion on ghosts. Each protagonist has created a supernatural monster through neglect and evil, and when this supernatural figure returns it is purely to enact revenge on the person who has wronged them. Morella, Madeline and the black cat all return for the sole purpose of revenge,

and though their 'crooked branch' narratives are not as elaborate, they have the same nature as Heathcliff's. Each character is created by conflict, causes conflict simply through their presence, and inevitably kills their creator, bringing their narrative to its natural close. This figure is key to Gothic's focus on the past, inheritance, and outsiders and what it is defined by is conflict - without conflict, Heathcliff, Hyde, and Poe's antagonists would not have the same influence on the genre. They must have conflict to survive, it is their purpose to transgress against society, highlighting the importance of conflict to the genre as it brings to the fore the issues surrounding class, the past, and women that are key.

Heathcliff then, as the reader knows him, is created in conflict - specifically he is moulded by the hatred and snobbery shown towards him by Hindley and Edgar. He is the central Other of this text, being vilified and persecuted for existing as an affront to the society into which he is thrust at a young age. As Ashley Craig Lancaster writes on *Frankenstein*, Shelley uses the monster 'as a way to reveal how human social acceptance has the power to determine the outcome of an individual's life' (2008: 134). Here, Lancaster has summarised the essence of these 'monsters', and Heathcliff is created in the same Gothic tradition, as the monster who is so dreadful because of how he has been treated by others. It is Hindley who treats Heathcliff as the usurper, and plans to oust his adopted brother for threatening his inheritance; as I have argued, Heathcliff is the Double of the dead son, and so his fate is sealed. As this figure, most of the conflict within the novel stems from his existence, as he is hated for who he is and who he has replaced, loathed for returning and reminding the others of the past, and is seen as an affront to society's values. Heathcliff spells doom for the feudal system that has stood in this location for centuries, threatening to usurp Hindley's place as heir. He does so in the most modern, anti-feudal way possible - by using capitalism to establish himself as a figure of importance through work rather than birth, a method which is

significant given the context of *Wuthering Heights* as contemporary Britain was moving to a more industrial, capitalist way of life. Punter and Byron make this point, stating that the emergence of capitalism led to greater isolation and changing social systems and roles (20) and introduced a new Gothic villain, the criminal (22), which Heathcliff is seen as. The movement away from an agricultural economy to one of industry allowed self-made men to create their own wealth and threaten the supremacy of established families. The Earnshaws and the Lintons are threatened by this shift in power and this is a key reason to why Heathcliff is so hated - he comes to symbolise the change in wealth and influence, and uses the changing economy against these established dynasties. Each gothic Other stands against society, and Heathcliff is no different - others attempt to repress him after creating him, but he inevitably returns, causing conflict and tearing down the lives of his enemies.

Heathcliff is of course the central 'villain' of this text, and though he may establish himself as the capitalist villain that threatens the established feudal system, he is still held up as a figure of supernatural evil. Even after he is dead, there are reported sightings of Heathcliff on the moors (336), establishing that he has come to be seen not as a man of social evil, but as a mystical figure whose power stems from a supernatural existence, reinforcing his status as a purely unsettling Other. The same can be said of Heathcliff's treatment due to his race, an issue consistently raised through the references to Heathcliff as 'dark' (5, 36, 93), a matter which Turki S. Althubaiti discusses. As Althubaiti argues, 'Heathcliff continues all his life to be seen as villain, demon, and nameless black man' (2015: 206) - he is the Other and is given no chance to prove otherwise in a fictional world in which the Slave Trade was of course still legal. From his first night in *Wuthering Heights*, he is seen as the usurper, the 'imp of Satan' (39), and a cuckoo, and is given no chance to prove himself as noble. One may argue that Heathcliff shows himself to be wicked as the novel unfolds, but as I have highlighted, this

novel is rooted in the influence certain figures have over others - evil begets evil. As Samantha Przybylowicz argues, 'villainy is ascribed to "otherness" and that which is not understood... villainy in the novel therefore stems, at least in part, from social condemnation of certain characters early on in the novel' (2013: 7). As Przybylowicz highlights, villainy is a concept that is tethered to a character's exclusion from society, and as Heathcliff is the most reviled character from the beginning, he is easily branded as a one-dimensional villain. The same concept of villainy can be found in 'Morella' and 'Usher', in which the women are vilified and scapegoated because they are not totally understood. The unsettling natures of Madeline and Morella are never prescribed to a certain aspect of their characters, and so their 'otherness' has the vague quality that Przybylowicz describes. These women, just like Heathcliff, are not totally understood, and so are punished and shunned, their true personalities being forgotten. As villain and Other, Heathcliff is of course a primary focus of conflict and clashes with other characters, whether it be on his race, his 'lower' origins, or his supposedly malicious personality. Nelly does not give due thought to the complexities of Heathcliff's character, whether it is early shows of willingness to change (58), or his undying devotion to Catherine, a devotion which always has its roots in the poignant scene after Mr Earnshaw's death (44). No matter what attacks Heathcliff's character is subjected to by others, his complex personality is there to see in the early stages of Nelly's narrative. Though, due to the influence of the housekeeper his legacy is one of simplistic evil and one-dimensional villainy. What *Wuthering Heights* shows above all else is the nature of Gothic conflicts and clashes as inescapable and inherited, and the importance of figures like Heathcliff whose influence is felt across the text. The novel could not exist in the same way, nor be as key to the Gothic genre, without the key conflicts within. Heathcliff as the Other, Cathy as the strong woman fighting patriarchs, Nelly and Lockwood conveying narratives that create binary moralities - all of these key aspects to the text create conflict and are

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highlighted to the reader by conflict, and one must acknowledge this concept's importance to Brontë's novel to understand the significance on conflict to Gothic literature as a genre.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1886)

In this final chapter I will be discussing Robert Louis Stevenson's novella *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, a text known widely - in academic discussions and popular culture - for its focus on binaries and conflicting influences. The two sides of Jekyll's psyche that the reader is shown are not the only strong personalities in this text though, as I will argue as I outline how the biases and opinions of the various characters in *Jekyll and Hyde* clash frequently. Stevenson's text utilises various narratorial voices, much like *Wuthering Heights* does, yet its key distinguishing quality is the overwhelming agreement between narrators, both in terms of their views and their accounts of what has happened. There is no lasting disagreement between these narrators, as there is in Bronte's novel, and *Jekyll and Hyde* forces the reader to read between the lines to hear the opinions of the figures who are not given a voice, as one must do with Poe's texts. The thread running through this chapter is the idea of the esoteric world, the isolated and self-sufficient society that Stevenson has created, a society that views any opinion that conflicts with the norm as an attack on its values. This is what is at the heart of conflict within this novella - transgression against the settled, unbending set of values of the upper-middle class men of Stevenson's London. Conflict is not just a violent act in this text, but also more subtle perceived movements against the doctors and lawyer of *Jekyll and Hyde*, as I will argue. What must be acknowledged is the gap between the publishing of *Wuthering Heights* and *Jekyll and Hyde*, given that there is roughly 40 years between the two. The establishment of detective fiction as an increasingly popular genre in Stevenson's time can be seen in even the full title of ***The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***, a title which establishes the narrative's tone of mystery and amateur detection. Utterson, unpacking the mystery of Hyde's existence, shifts the focus of this Gothic text from the clearly supernatural figure of the isolated, haunted

house, to the mysterious Other whose deformities and supposed evils must be studied as a detective may study a case. Hyde is hated and feared, just as characters are in Poe's texts and *Wuthering Heights*, but there is a significant shift towards gaining an understanding of his origins and his nature rather than simply shunning him without curiosity, inflected by the rise of detective fiction.

Stevenson's text is narrated primarily by an unnamed and unmentioned voice, one which conveys the events of the novella via the perspective of Mr Utterson. This voice, as is to be expected by its proximity to Utterson, is sympathetic with the 'somehow lovable' man (Stevenson 1999: 3), and keenly follows his search for the truth of Hyde's existence. The lives of the gentlemen in *Jekyll and Hyde* are extremely isolated, each man being surrounded by like-minded individuals, as Katherine Kearney Maynard argues (2000: 371). As such, none of these men greatly challenge each other on their ways of thinking or living, allowing this esoteric world to continue its sheltered existence. The narrative's attachment to Utterson leads the reader into this closed world, and never far from it, especially given that the only other narratorial voices are those of Enfield and Doctors Lanyon and Jekyll, similarly isolated individuals. This secluded quasi-society is one of the most important aspects of Stevenson's novella, be it in relation to narratorial issues, or even the absence of certain figures, as I will explore further down. What I wish to discuss here, however, is how this society is constructed to disregard and attack any voice or idea that conflicts with the accepted norm. In following Utterson closely, the narrator reflects the lawyer's sentiments, be it on Hyde's awful features, such as his 'displeasing smile' (12) or his affection for Jekyll, a man whose face bore 'every mark of capacity and kindness' (14), according to the narrator. The biases in this narration are similar to those that I have highlighted in the previous two chapters; the prejudice shown by the nameless narrator, by Lanyon, and by

Jekyll relates to that shown by Nelly, Lockwood, and all of Poe's narrators. In each of these texts, it appears that a biased narrator/narrators are essential, given their central roles in every story. In Poe's short stories, each narrator's bias leads him to position himself as the figure of 'good', denying their own failings and evils; and in *Wuthering Heights*, the biases of Lockwood and Nelly frame the entire narrative, given their negative feelings towards the other characters. In *Jekyll and Hyde*, the gentlemen's focus on preserving secrecy due to distrust of those outside their inner circles leads them to communicate through cryptic letters and wills, rather than addressing their issues and helping each other. In Poe's short stories there is a far more paranoid sense of bias, the narrators coming to view even their closest companions as enemies; *Wuthering Heights* is almost chaotic in its depiction of bonds and relationships which are never safe from harm or mistrust; and Stevenson's novella is a text focused on comradery, the 'enemy' being those who exist outside of the upper-middle class, male sphere. What is most striking is the way in which these prejudices, across all of the texts, lead to the biased characters viewing anyone supposedly outside of their circle as an enemy and a figure of conflict. The conflicts here show the snobbery and arrogance of these gentlemen as they stubbornly stick to their own ways of living and condemn anyone who is perceived to be an outsider. With each conflict in *Jekyll and Hyde*, the reader is shown the lack of care that the upper-middle class men have for anyone outside of their circle, and the clashes highlight their selfish focus on themselves in an era when industrialisation had created city slums filled with disease and crime and a working class population which had to endure these (Punter & Byron 2004: 39). Heathcliff's introduction to the Heights 'bred bad feeling in the house' (38) due to his position as an outsider; and the narrator of 'The Black Cat' begins his attacks on Pluto simply because 'I fancied that the cat avoided my presence' (183). In Stevenson's novella, Hyde is this figure of blame and he is the scapegoat within the

world of these London gentlemen, being hated and blamed by Utterson before they even meet (8).

Hyde is introduced by Utterson's walking companion, Enfield, a man who makes clear his feeling towards the 'gentleman' who he 'had taken a loathing to... at first sight' (5). He is referred to as a gentleman, a noun which establishes Hyde's appearance as a man with wealth and status, albeit one who does not act in a manner that pleases Enfield. As Jane Rago has highlighted, 'Hyde does not pass as a gentleman, he *is* a gentleman' (2006: 279), and this is what unsettles the other gentlemen of the story. This 'savage' figure (11) may not act in a 'gentlemanly' way, yet he is an upper-middle class member of the isolated world of Utterson and his peers, which leads these men to truly hate Hyde. He so conspicuously represents the darker side of this small society that these men have created for themselves, that any reminder of his existence stokes conflict. Enfield, in attacking Hyde for trampling a young girl, threatens to cause a scandal (5), a threat which holds great weight in Stevenson's novella. As Stephen D. Arata has argued, 'Enfield's "Story of the Door," though it begins with Hyde trampling a little girl... concludes with Enfield, the doctor, and the girl's father breakfasting with Hyde in his chambers [32]. Recognizing him as one of their own, the men literally encircle Hyde to protect him from harm' (1995: 239). Hyde, though there is 'something wrong with his appearance' (7), is given the respect due to a fellow gentleman. These men may loathe Hyde, yet they understand that to keep the established order of their exclusively male, upper-middle class society they must tackle this problem amongst themselves, dealing with Hyde behind closed doors rather than in the street. These men fear scandal, and so any and all conflict must be kept secret and dealt with internally, something which I explore further down. The conflicts only highlight Hyde's place as a gentleman, something the other men must deny and keep secret.

Earlier Gothic literature focused on issues around the aristocracy, as Louis Palmer has argued (2006: 123), and a century later, the focus had switched from aristocratic protagonists to upper-middle class figures. One may see *Wuthering Heights* as a key point in the transition between the aristocratic-focussed earlier Gothic texts and the later works (such as *Jekyll and Hyde*) which had moved to upper-middle class figures. The established families of North Yorkshire are threatened by Heathcliff's rise to power, showing the shift in discourse from inheritance to industry, and by the time of Stevenson's novella forty years later this shift has taken place and it is professionals such as doctors and solicitors who are the focus, as well as their reputations and careers. Gothic literature consistently places the higher classes at the centre of its stories, with the working class playing the 'supporting' role; the upper-middle class are propped up by the working class in Gothic literature, and the latter are disregarded by the former. This is clearly the case in *Jekyll and Hyde*, in which the central upper-middle class men only allow Hyde certain freedoms because of his wealth. Heathcliff, no less a 'monster' than Hyde, is not afforded the same patience, because he does not have the required station; the working-class play a key role in the stories of the higher classes, yet their masters never acknowledge this. Hyde is the figure of conflict to these men not simply because of his violence and his enraging hideousness, but because of the threat that he poses as a man with privilege who supposedly acts in a manner that doesn't befit a gentleman. His past is called 'disreputable' (22), an enlightening word as it highlights the narrator's focus on reputation and image, rather than a strict moral code which is important whether in public or private. Hyde creates conflict with his recklessness, and by associating so closely with Jekyll, a key peer of Utterson's. This association threatens these men, and Hyde's lifestyle and the attention it could warrant are what they fear the most - he

threatens to upset the established order that benefits the upper-middle class figures of these texts and the conflicts he creates highlight his role as a figure who upsets this hierarchy.

Of course, Hyde is not just hated by the doctors and lawyers of this text, he is also hated by the servants and working-class people that he encounters, those who must worry for their lives around Hyde rather than their reputations. The young, trampled girl mentioned above; Hyde's maid who finds 'odious joy' (18) in her employer's trouble with the police; and the maid-servant who witnesses Hyde brutally murdering Sir Danvers Carew (16) - all of these working-class figures have brushes with Hyde. In his interactions with Enfield, Hyde is shown to have an understanding of his actions, seeking to avoid scandal, yet when encountering the working class of Stevenson's novel Hyde is held with utter contempt. He is the same repulsive man that enrages Enfield with his presence, yet the servants have no need to excuse him nor his monstrous acts. They have none of the loyalty towards this supposed gentleman that his peers do, and with each 'act and thought centred on self' (46) he creates more conflict, conflict which is not tolerated by the working class as their anxiety is based in the threat that he poses them. Conversely, the unnamed narrator, as mentioned, shares Utterson's affections for Jekyll, preventing a strong narratorial condemnation of Jekyll or Hyde, rather provoking curiosity. Utterson styles himself the 'Mr Seek' to Mr Hyde (10), and treats the matter as a mystery to be solved, the narrative positioning the lawyer's friend as 'poor Harry Jekyll' (12), the victim and hostage of Edward Hyde who must be saved from disgrace. What one sees here is secondary conflict within the clashes that Hyde provokes. He poses a threat to the working class, yet he is not condemned for attacking the poorer members of society; Hyde's existence highlights the stark differences and conflicts between Stevenson's upper-middle and working classes. The conflicts that Hyde creates highlight the class issues within Stevenson's novella and show the reader the different perceptions of the

servants and the successful men; while one party fears for their reputations, the other fears for their lives, and conflict emphasises this.

The structure of multiple, connected narratorial voices is a key aspect of the novella, building to the final perspective of Henry Jekyll himself, who in his posthumous letter reveals the truth at the heart of this mystery. These different perspectives reveal information gradually, usually through letters and wills, as mentioned earlier. Here we see the previously discussed importance of the 'detective' figure, as the text's narrative unfolds through testimony, clues, and dramatic reveals as Utterson attempts to find the truth despite the private nature of his peers. Doctor Lanyon for one, who discovers the truth of Hyde's existence, withholds the truth from Utterson (23), remaining dedicated until his death to the code of secrecy that all of these gentlemen find so important. As Benjamin D. O'Dell argues, this obtuse nature was essential in the social context of the text - 'the gentleman recognized that the assurance of an upper-class identity necessarily entailed some form of privacy if not secrecy' (2012: 512). Julian Wolfreys has made the point that the context surrounding *Jekyll and Hyde* was one filled with anxieties concerning British identity being threatened by the consequences of the Empire and the 'Others' that this empire had created (103), explaining the insular nature of Stevenson's characters. The most startling revelations are not spoken to Utterson, nor revealed by the unnamed narrator - they are placed in writing by Lanyon, and then Jekyll. What this does is reinforce the previously discussed esoteric environment in this novella, and the secrecy of this world creates further conflict between these upper-middle class men and those they view as outsiders. Whilst the first half of Stevenson's novella sees matters from Utterson's perspective, the latter section is told through the eyes of the two doctors, establishing a reliance on these men to tell the truth of what has happened. One may see Jekyll and Lanyon as dishonest and finds the same reliance on Poe's narrators to tell the

reader the truth. Certainly, the way in which Jekyll argues that 'it was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty' (46) throws into question his ability to independently judge and recount his actions, given that he denies accountability despite allowing Hyde to roam free (48). These narratives, however, are to be believed, I would argue. Jekyll and Lanyon stay silent for fear of bringing themselves into disrepute while still alive, yet for both it would seem that death frees them from judgement and the act of writing confessions gives them a detachment from what they have done or witnessed, relating to Ed Piacentino's point that Poe's narrators rationalise their actions by seeing their past selves as someone else (see page 14 of this thesis). There are parallels one can draw between Poe's narrators and Dr. Jekyll - each sees themselves as partially absolved of their own pasts, particularly any wrongdoings, seemingly telling the truth but framing it in a way that flatters them. Each of these figures has done others wrong and created conflict in doing so, but now they see the conflict shifted so that it is between their present selves and the former, guilty self. Ronald R. Thomas makes this point very well, arguing that Stevenson's novella highlights 'the estrangement... of a writer from what he has written', going on to say 'the act of self-narration is revealed in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* to be a ritual act of self-estrangement rather than an act of self-discovery' (1986: 158). As Thomas states, when Jekyll writes his version of events, he simultaneously explains his actions whilst separating himself from them. Nelly Dean does not share the same absolving sentiment, speaking to Lockwood as if she has never been in the wrong, still arguing for Catherine and Heathcliff to be seen as the guilty figures. In each text, though, the key revelations are always told by the figure who is heavily involved in the past actions - the moment that matters begin to clear in *Jekyll and Hyde*, the titular doctor becomes the narrator, ensuring that he is the one who decides how matters will be seen. As Poe's stories and Brontë's novel do, Stevenson's novella stokes conflict between the 'truth' the reader is given, and the 'truth' certain facts point to. One may

see each text as a conflict in itself - each narrative is one filled with bias and conflicting evidence. The stories do not just depict conflicts, they become conflicts themselves and these conflicting narratives highlight the Gothic's frequent use of unreliable narrators and the importance of perceptions in these texts, as well as the disconnect many narrators feel between their current selves and their past actions.

Although the silence between these gentlemen is abandoned by Lanyon and Jekyll after death, O'Dell is still correct in his assessment - having a private life is a lynchpin of the personas of these gentlemen. The reputations of these men are what they cherish most due to their positions as professionals whose careers are at stake and are what they typically fear losing, so they must deal with matters privately, particularly in the case of Hyde. Secrecy is an aspect of Gothic literature that has remained central since its first works, and Stevenson's text follows this faithfully, establishing unspoken matters at the heart of the novella. The frequent fogs (15, 21) shroud London just as its upper-middle class inhabitants strive to shroud the truth of their private lives. Secrets and the unspoken are key to Poe and Stevenson's texts, in which it is the unspoken fears and unmentioned enemies that are the largest threat to protagonists' lives. Brontë's novel is markedly different, as the ill feelings and bad blood between characters are flaunted by Nelly Dean who wastes no time in sharing the local history with Lockwood, though the residents of the Heights are significantly silent on their pasts. Secrecy is at the heart of *Jekyll and Hyde*, and the ideas and figures that threaten to destabilise this world are not explicitly discussed, allowing those such as Hyde to run amok unmolested and free. Conflict in *Jekyll and Hyde* is something that is suppressed and dealt with quietly, setting it apart from Brontë's novel and linking it to the silent murders of Poe's texts. These texts portray conflict differently in this sense, and in Stevenson's novella conflict is dealt with in the same secretive attitude with which all other

matters are dealt. One may see these hidden conflicts as reflective of Poe and Stevenson's contexts - the urban settings of 'The Black Cat' and *Jekyll and Hyde* as well as the previously mentioned focus on individual merit that stems from American individualism and capitalist ideas of being 'self-made' mean that conflicts cannot be dealt with in the open as they are in the isolated setting of *Wuthering Heights*. Despite the isolation of 'Morella' and 'Usher', Poe's narratives still handle conflicts quietly as informed by the individualistic nature of contemporary America, whereas Stevenson's context of an increasingly populated London means that *Jekyll and Hyde*'s conflicts cannot be dealt with openly for fear of condemnation.

It is specifically the powerful men of *Jekyll and Hyde* who choose to keep matters silent while they live, and the servants of the novella - those who often are privy to the most information - are denied their voice in this text. Marta Bryk has discussed at length 'the underprivileged of nineteenth-century English society, whose voices were marginalized or excluded from the body of Victorian fiction' (2004: 205), and those voices are silenced here. The language used by the anonymous narrator when Utterson arrives at Jekyll's house is very telling, portraying the scared servants as 'huddled together like a flock of sheep' (28), after which Utterson derides them by asking "are you all here?... very irregular, very unseemly: your master would be far from pleased" (28). The belittling of servants in this scene, mingled with the portrayal of them as helpless and silent, further establishes the previously mentioned conflict between the higher and lower classes in *Jekyll and Hyde*. Once again, the novella's overwhelming bias for the upper-middle class gentlemen is clear, and the secret lives of these men emphasise how little they think of their own servants, never considering that these working-class figures might have a great part to play in this mystery. Silence is key to Stevenson's characters, yet it is not always a voluntary silence one sees in this novella,

emphasising the gulf between the privileged narrators and their deprived servants. One may see in Nelly Dean's testimony the importance of giving servants a voice, whether one agrees with them or not. There is clearly conflict between the perspectives of the servants and the masters, and this conflict is successfully suppressed by Stevenson's narrators who dictate the narrative and give only their view on matters. Here one sees how even the suppression of conflict can say a great deal about these texts in terms of class tensions and patriarchal dominance.

At this point, it has become obvious that the specific term 'gentlemen' holds great importance, rather than simply all members of the upper-middle class in this text. Indeed, Stevenson has created a 'world peopled almost exclusively by upper-middle class professional men' according to Stephen D. Arata (239), and one would be forgiven for presuming that the only women living in this version of London were put there to serve men. *Jekyll and Hyde* portrays women as working-class and passive, stifling the female figures of the novel, totally neglecting their worth and importance and dismissing female perspectives as those of outsiders to the male world created. For instance, at each of the critical moments of Hyde's narrative, the key witness or victim of each of his evils is a woman, something which Charles Campbell has highlighted when discussing the subtle, yet significant, presence of women in this novella (2014: 310). I mentioned each of these female figures above, speaking in terms of class conflict, and though this previous point remains relevant one must acknowledge the fact that most of the working-class people that Hyde comes into contact with are women. The issue arises when one truly reads into the reactions of these working-class figures. Take the young girl who witnesses the murder of Sir Danvers Carew, who 'was romantically given' (15) and never had 'felt more at peace with all men or thought more kindly of the world' (15). The girl, portrayed as a simple romantic, faints when she

witnesses the murder of Sir Danvers (16), not something definitively indicative of weakness but certainly representative of the passive nature of Stevenson's numerous working women. Women such as Jekyll's housemaid who 'broke into hysterical whimpering' (28), and the cook who 'ran forward as if to take [Utterson] in her arms' (28) when the cowering servants are joined by the lawyer. These women are all frozen in terror by their brushes with Hyde, even though Jekyll's servants have not actually witnessed anything. This issue isn't just tethered to class though, as even Poole and Bradshaw join Utterson in breaking into Jekyll's laboratory (32) and searching it for clues (33). Instead, these women are indicative of the passive role expected of them in such a male-dominated world as Stevenson's London. As with Hyde, the portrayal of these women is controlled by the gentlemen who narrate the novella, the figures who have no interest in portraying these working-class women as anything more than frightened wrecks. By upholding some of these women as symbols of simple innocence, the narrators contrast them with the uncouth, unemotional Hyde. The women, whose characters are not developed as well as the men's, are used for the anti-Hyde narrative that is created. Once again, as I have highlighted in Poe and Brontë's texts, there is a conflict between what women are, and what the men in power want them to be. Women such as Hyde's maid, the most forthright of the women in this novella - though that is not a tough competition - are vilified because they do not conform to what is expected of them. In each author's narratives, there are always vilified women who are judged for being too headstrong or improper, and the passive portrayals of working-class female figures emphasises this conflict in *Jekyll and Hyde*. There is no consideration for the true nature and feelings of these women, they are used by the narrators to create a narrative that fits their upper-middle class perceptions. The suppression of female perspectives is indicative of class and gender issues in the novel. One must see through the narratives and notice the significant absence of women and conflicts between them and men - the total lack of any

female voice highlights tensions between female characters and the gentlemen who have created a totally masculine world in which they can thrive without fear of judgement from 'outsiders', so long as these female Others are suppressed.

The issue of women as passive victims and witnesses returns to the similar discussion in the other chapters of this study, regarding the victim/villain question hanging over Poe and Brontë's female characters. Poe and Brontë portray their women as far more powerful and controlling than Stevenson does, and in *Jekyll and Hyde* it is masculine relationships and arguments that are front-and-centre, never those between men and women. Women are far more passive in *Jekyll and Hyde*, certainly, yet they are not considered totally blameless. The maid in Hyde's service is introduced as a woman with 'an evil face, smoothed by hypocrisy; but her manners were excellent' (17); here, one sees everything that this novella focuses on - what can be gathered from a person's appearance, and the standard of their behaviour. This maid, though innocent of any proven wrongdoing, is condemned immediately by the anonymous narrator because of whose service she is in, and though she appears to have the same small amount of influence and power as every other servant, it is she who is painted as 'evil' and a 'hypocrite'. The only show of active involvement by women is the condemnation of Hyde in front of Enfield, in which 'they were as wild as harpies' and supposedly had to be kept from harming Hyde (5), dismissing their understandable anger as a fit of female hysteria. Hyde creates conflict not just in his threats to destabilise class constructs, but more immediately in the way that he appears to terrorise and horrify working-class women (52), yet this consequence of his nature as a figure of conflict is neglected by the narrators, too focused on their own issues with Hyde. I have argued that *Wuthering Heights* is far more complex in its portrayal of female characters than Poe's stories, and it would seem that Stevenson's novella shares more with the short stories of

Poe than Brontë's novel. Though marginalised, ignored, and even attacked, the women of *Jekyll and Hyde* still are inexplicably scorned and receive a share of the blame. This novella does little to challenge female stereotypes, portraying them as either victims or manipulative, a point which Charles Campbell phrases very well:

The men of the novel are the city incorporated as lawyers, doctors, scientists, and sadists; they are associated with fog, lights and interiors. The women are the city as sexuality, innocence, sentiment, and victims; they are associated with street life, the outside of buildings and doors. They share the window image of Stevenson's inspiring dreams. Thus women are of great significance in the novel but are hidden deeper than Utterson, or the casual reader, is willing to search. (316)

Campbell's argument draws one back to the discussion of Gothic domestic issues, and as Julian Wolfreys has argued, Victorian Gothic literature portrays 'the upper-middle class family under threat at home' (2008: 100). Stevenson's gentlemen in their settled domestic atmospheres take the place of the contemporary upper-middle class family, and replace the Gothic female figure trapped in the dangerous home. So much of the action of Stevenson's novella takes place in the private homes of these gentlemen, and there is great importance in how often Jekyll denies entry to his home (12, 25), as the home occupies its usual position of significance in Gothic literature, as Allan Pritchard argues (1991: 434). Hyde's access to Jekyll's home is a matter of some judgement (13), as the house in this novel is the sanctum of its owner - the foundation of the private lives which these men strive to lead would seem to be a home in which secrets stay, and only true friends are allowed. Though Stevenson does little to challenge sexist dominance over female characters, his emphasis on the male reliance of domestic stability challenges the idea that Gothic women are those that rely most on the 'haven' of a safe home. These men live as bachelors, not one of them mentioning a wife or even a love interest - the focus on male relations in this text seeps into ideas on the

home, and as Pritchard argues the home regains its place as one of the cornerstones of Gothic literature. The home of Jekyll is largely a safe space, however only for these men, and as highlighted in the previous discussion of fearful female servants women in this novella can find threats - the Other - in their home. There is still an inherent focus on the dangers women face in their homes, whilst men are usually the causes of this danger. In each text in this study, women are trapped in domestic settings by men, and are attacked by the patriarchs. The frequent implications that women must serve roles within domestic spheres create worlds in which strong women are unable to avoid conflict and are inherently become Others, as I have argued in the previous chapters. Conflict is caused by the controlling men who force women into sexist roles, then blame these women for acting out; the conflicts highlight male control over women and the harsh environments into which these female figures are forced.

The male world in which these figures live excludes women, or consigns them to roles as servants, as I have outlined, yet the absence of women creates a strong implication of homosexual relationships. One need only look to Enfield, the 'well-known man about town' (3); the intriguing midnight meeting between Hyde and Lanyon, with reference to 'my hand ready on my weapon' (39); and Utterson's frequent remarks to how 'large, firm... and comely' (47) Jekyll's hands are. The implied romance and infatuation of the relationships between these men frames the absence of women very differently, and though this novella portrays a society in which masculine identity is the only identity, it in fact leads one to question the latent sexual urges within these identities. What I believe is the most important effect of these implications, however, is the threat to reputations, previously established as a cornerstone of male upper-middle class identity in this novella. Once again, one can see the importance of secrecy and the conflict within each male figure, as they grapple with latent

homosexual feelings in an era in which homosexuality was still a widely condemned crime. To these men, the world is full of threats, and this is why they isolate themselves; they see conflict stemming from others who would condemn their class, their lifestyles, and even their sexualities. This is what is key to conflict in *Jekyll and Hyde* - there is a ubiquitous fear among the main men that their lives will be scrutinised and criticised, and so they exist cut off from the rest of the world, seeing any intrusion into their circle as an act of conflict and something that must be quashed. Homosexual implications are simply another reason for the upper-middle class men of this novel to fear losing their reputations and freedom, and to attack all 'outsiders' for fear of having their lives challenged/destroyed. Jekyll's written account of events highlights his own focus on reputation, as he senses the inevitable judgement of his lifestyle (48) and compares the public opinion towards himself and his alter-ego Hyde (51). Whether one takes Jekyll's fear of public condemnation literally, or sees it as a representation of his anxiety towards being revealed as a homosexual, the undercurrent of implied homosexual relationships stresses once again the conflict between private lives and public personas for these gentlemen and this conflict highlights the fragility of identities in this novella. With no women to supposedly undermine masculine identity, the identities of the upper-middle class men in this novella come to depend on male companionship, which threatens to create scandal with its implications.

What this discussion around sexuality highlights is the importance of characters' identities and how they and others perceive them - anything they feel undermines their identities is attacked, being seen as conflicting to their self-perceptions and a danger to their psychological strength. Certainly, identity in *Jekyll and Hyde* is a concept that requires a level of scrutiny, given Henry Jekyll's belief that Edward Hyde is a separate entity, one which is purely evil, as opposed to all other people who are a mixture of good and evil (45). Hyde,

the 'child of Hell' in which 'nothing lived...but fear and hatred' (52), is presented as a figure of undiluted hatred and anger; his cruel nature is undeniable, yet this nature is presented as separate to Jekyll's own personality. There are some who see these two figures as the two halves of a whole mind, arguing that a person's identity - or at least Jekyll's - is dual-natured. Anne Stiles has discussed at length the contemporary idea of brain hemispheres and their perceived roles and contents - the two containing different halves of contrasting binaries, such as good/evil, masculine/feminine - and the idea that Jekyll's experiment gave 'each hemisphere an independent and unchecked life of its own' (2006: 885). The theory of binaries lends itself to conflict comfortably, allowing one to assume each mind - not just Jekyll's - contains a battle between two perfectly contrasting ends of varying spectrums. However, this theory also assumes the psychology of a person to be fairly tidy - split between two internal, conflicting influences, whether they come from separate hemispheres or not - and sees a person as two conflicting halves that make a whole. Jekyll and Hyde, however, cannot be seen as two halves. If Hyde is purely evil, then Jekyll must be purely good - something he is not, given his enjoyment in letting Hyde free and his own admission of his 'bad' side. Rather than seeing the pair as two sides of the same coin, one must see their relationship for the complex partnership that it is. Jekyll deems his potion one which 'shook the very fortress of identity' (43), an interesting choice of words as it implies that his identity is a strong, reliable structure, something which it evidently is not. Jekyll's use of the word 'fortress' explains his denial of the fact that Hyde is an intrinsic part of him - the doctor sees his Self as impenetrable, and is sure of its generally 'good' nature, so any part of it so vile as Hyde must be seen as a foreign entity. The conflict between the two in fact highlights the fragmented nature of Jekyll - he is repulsed by a part of his own conscience, and is faced with a part of his own being that he thought could not exist within him, feeling he must shun it, give it its own identity, and see it as an independent evil. The internal conflict here

represents the fragility of male Gothic egos/identities and highlights the importance of conflict as it shows the reader the true nature of the male Gothic mind. Just as Catherine Earnshaw's various changes of name highlight the varying sides of her personality, the name Hyde is attached to the darkest part of Jekyll and this section of his psyche is seen as separate to the rest of Jekyll's mind. As Fred Botting has discussed in *Gothic Romanced*, 'the monsters made by those [social] systems reflect back on wider, more monstrous formations' (2008: 15), and it is the monster within Gothic characters that forces these figures and their societies to acknowledge and think on their own 'monstrous' aspects.

Initially, Hyde's main use to Jekyll is a 'thick cloak' (45) which the doctor can put on in order to escape any recognition, the 'disguise' (46) that allows Jekyll to shirk his social responsibilities for a brief time and engage in acts which he would otherwise be unable to partake. Hyde fulfills Jekyll's yearning to escape the contemporary social constraints that accompany his position, as Iker Nabaskues states - 'Jekyll's life is a source of fears and moral reproach, on the contrary Hyde's is completely free of moral sense' (2014: 1180). As Jekyll becomes Hyde, he 'spring[s] headlong into the sea of liberty' (46), an enlightening choice of words as it conveys the freedom Jekyll felt as well as the rather jovial manner in which he enjoyed himself, through the image of 'springing' and his comparison of his actions to those of a carefree schoolboy (46). The doctor's immediate enjoyment of his newfound 'liberty' is obvious, and though he attempts to pin the blame on Hyde as he speaks of being 'aghast' (46) at his actions, Jekyll's culpability and his willingness to let matters continue is clear. Hyde is able to live free of reputation, scandal and judgement, yet when Jekyll considers his actions in the guise of Hyde he speaks of Hyde as a real, accountable person. The conflict within Jekyll is clear, as he struggles with the existential crisis Hyde's emergence has caused him, now unsure of who he is and what he is responsible for - once Hyde

emerges, Jekyll's entire mind is one conflict and is never at peace again. Jekyll later speaks of his relationship to his alter-ego, as he had 'more than a father's interest, and Hyde had more than a son's indifference' (48), and acknowledges that he has 'indulged' his own 'appetites' through Hyde (48). As he speaks of culpability and guilt, Jekyll cannot distance himself from Hyde's actions fast enough, but as he discusses the philosophical nature of his own soul he is willing to accept the role that Hyde has played in Jekyll's own desires. This complication of their relationship contributes to the conflict between the two as well, as Jekyll refuses to definitively acknowledge what Hyde is to him and what he is to Hyde, and so their partnership is fraught with uncertainty and frequent cases of shifting the blame onto each other. Jekyll sees his grapples with Hyde impacting on 'the balance of my nature' (48), and the two - as I have stated above - exist in a struggle for power, stemming from the initial freedom Jekyll gives Hyde.

What this bond between Jekyll and Hyde leads one onto is the separation of good and evil, something which Jekyll is originally striving for and frustrated by. He speaks of man existing as 'not truly one, but truly two' (42) and yearns for the separation of the 'unjust' and 'just' halves of his own unconscious, seeing their combination in one mind as a 'struggle' that would be resolved by a physical separation of the two parties (43). Here, one sees the development in Gothic literature even from Brontë to Stevenson. There is a clear development from Heathcliff the 'uncultured', lower class Other who threatens those 'above' him, to the figure of Hyde, who shows the fallibility of the upper-middle class gentleman. The theory of degeneration, based on the arguments of Bénédict Morel's *Treatise on Degeneration of the Human Species* (1857) and Cesare Lombroso's *The Criminal Man* (1876), has a clear influence on Stevenson's novella. The theory that one can see the 'evil' in a person through their physical appearance, as Lombroso argued in *The Criminal Man*

(1911: 27), is undoubtedly important to the depictions of the 'ape-like' 'dwarf' Edward Hyde. Stevenson's writing explicitly shows his opinion on the nature of one's conscience, speaking of binaries and picturing the mind as a split between two internal influences. I have argued that the mind in *Jekyll and Hyde* is a far more complex entity than it is being given credit for, and its very nature is fragmented. Kimberly Macellaro makes an interesting point on this topic, arguing that 'the Jekyll/Hyde dilemma, then, narrates the instability of the proper masculine subject, whose normative identity depends on a chain of binary oppositions (light/dark, civilized/wild, rational/mad, masculine/feminine)' (2015: 50). The binary-focused thinking of Stevenson's gentlemen is what ultimately positions Hyde as the figure who creates conflict, as each man projects their own fears of degeneration onto Hyde and sees him as an opponent to their very way of living. Jekyll is upheld by his peers as the model of a gentleman, whilst Hyde represents the depravity and sin that these men could fall into, creating a false binary which positions Hyde as inherently immoral and Jekyll as unerringly decent, creating conflict between Hyde and those who see him as evil. This monochrome way of thinking about morality leads the novella and its characters to see Jekyll as the gentleman and Hyde as the beast, giving no thought to an ethical or emotional middle-ground between these two conflicting opposites. As Utterson strives to understand Hyde, the former 'unearths' much of the latter's past, 'his vile life', 'his strange associates', and 'the hatred that seemed to have surrounded his career (22). As I've previously argued, reputation is everything in this text, and so Utterson attacks Hyde's reputation and references a past ripe for scandal in order to position him as an unsavoury character. The gentlemen in this novella must see themselves and their way of life as 'right', so they champion Hyde as a symbol of evil, in order to place themselves as his opposites and the opponents of his evil ways, this conflict showing their fears of becoming immoral and 'lesser'.

It is clear that the upper-middle class men of this novel are invested in their senses of morality and must feel that they are 'better' than others, hence why there is such a focus on reputations and scandal. Speaking on the concept of 'the white man's burden' in Gothic literature, Glennis Byron raises an interesting point on the vices and morality of the upper-middle class. "The white man's burden" was based primarily upon a sense of moral superiority, but strict policing of bourgeois morality needed to uphold this sense of superiority resulted in numerous psychic pressures and problems' (2006: 137). As Byron states, the supposed 'superiority' of the white upper-middle class man was based in a very strict moral code which had to be consistently adhered to. As Hyde, the gentleman acting like the 'savage', abandons this moral code, he goes against what supposedly makes men of his position superior. Hyde's liberated lifestyle conflicts with the rigid sense of ethics that is so important to the bourgeoisie of Gothic texts, particularly *Jekyll and Hyde*, and the message one can take from Stevenson's novella is that indulging in 'uncivilised' vices will destroy the upper-middle class man, as it does Jekyll. Again, one sees a psychological conflict in this novella, but not just in Jekyll. As argued in the section on the homosexual implications of male relationships, these men live lives in which they are very secret, and there is a suggestion that their lifestyles do not match the moral codes of men in their positions. The rigid morality that Byron discusses, stemming from both class and race, leaves little room for difference, and one can see internal conflict in each of Stevenson's gentlemen which highlights their focus on morality and being seen to live by these moral codes.

This fear of losing the white man's supposed superiority is one that informed contemporary concerns regarding degeneration. Stevenson's novella is a text that taps into Victorian anxieties according to Irving S. Saposnik (1971: 715), and certain contemporaries of Stevenson feared that degeneration might spread to the aristocratic and upper-middle

classes. Edward Hyde is the symbol of degeneration, the man with wealth who basks in his own 'vicarious depravity', as Jekyll puts it (46), giving up any devotion to morals or etiquette. As stated earlier, Hyde is so feared and hated by the upper-middle class gentlemen of the novella because, to them, he is the prime example of the respectable man who has given in to his vices and desires. Hyde creates conflict because his very existence acknowledges that each of these wealthy men has the potential to become angry and violent, something which they would rather think is impossible. As Hyde is given more time to be free and indulge himself, he grows in stature and strength (48, 52), and this is what is most feared by Jekyll and his peers - the Hydes of society becoming dominant. Each narrator refers to Hyde as a beast - his 'ape-like fury (16)', his dying screech like one of 'mere animal terror' (33), and his place as the 'creature' that hides within Jekyll (52). Hyde is positioned by each narrator as animalistic above all else, in order to dehumanise him and attempt to ensure that he will not be recognised as a complex human being, instead seeing him as a simple beast who only knows hatred, similar to Nelly's treatment of Heathcliff. Hyde is hated and belittled by each narrator, particularly because he creates conflict and works against their upper-middle class society, but also because he threatens to upset the boundaries between these men and their working class servants, or between these men and animals. Hyde is perceived as the bridge between these groups, and so must be destroyed because he threatens to undermine the purity and superiority supposedly possessed by these upper-middle class men. David Punter discusses the same issue of the animalistic subconscious, placing *Jekyll and Hyde* within the 'decadent Gothic' subgenre, which is 'concerned in one way or another with the problem of degeneration, and thus the essence of the human' (1996: 1). As Punter expands, literature in this category asks how much 'can one lose...and still remain "a man"?' (1). This issue plagues Jekyll, as he feels that he is 'slowly losing hold of my original self' (48) as Hyde grows in power, and it is this that his peers fear

so much. Binaries such as man/animal, particularly psychological ones, are very significant to *Jekyll and Hyde*, as each character is never given the chance to sit between two conflicting sides. They must be righteous or terrible, passive or aggressive, and the powerful men of this novella stoke conflict themselves by only seeing matters as binaries, conflict which significantly highlights concerns regarding fears of losing their 'human' qualities. This binary thinking is what makes conflict so important and so present - by positioning people and concepts as at war with each other, the text and its characters force one to pick sides in these conflicts.

As one discusses ideas of superiority and the classic Gothic struggle between supposed civility and apparent savagery, one must acknowledge Hyde's role as both the Other and the Double - the latter of which I have argued is the archetypal Other. Different to both Poe and Brontë's Doubles, Hyde is the Double that exists within his Original and returns to Otto Rank's assertion that killing one's Double is a suicidal act. Though Hyde does not reflect Jekyll's physical features - quite the opposite, he is repulsive whereas Jekyll is handsome - he is what Rank calls the 'bad, culpable ego', the physical manifestation of the dark side of a person's psyche. *Jekyll and Hyde* is a psychological allegory, then, telling a tale of one's psychic 'immoral' side coming to life as a separate physical manifestation of vice and pure evil, threatening to upset the balance of the person's mind. Whereas Poe's Doubles either follow on from their Originals, or exist separately physically, Stevenson's Double Hyde is tethered to his Original Jekyll. Whereas Brontë's Doubles are placed into their roles by others, and exist often having never met their Originals, Hyde is only Jekyll's Double, and cannot exist as anything else, nor live separately from the doctor. Jekyll comes to fear Hyde's very presence, 'it was the horror of being Hyde that racked' him (52) - each appearance by Hyde is an indication of his growing power - as well as his Double's growing

stature, physically and mentally (48). The relationship between them moves from liberated enjoyment, to judgement, finally to hatred as Jekyll shudders at 'the thought of the brute that slept within me' (52). As John Herdman argues, what unsettles Jekyll so much is that his Double is becoming the dominant figure in their shared mind, usurping the doctor (1990: 136). As with Poe and Brontë's Doubles, Hyde of course creates conflict and threatens to usurp his Original, but his threat carries a different weight. The Doubles of 'Morella', 'Usher', 'The Black Cat', and *Wuthering Heights* all exist to the terror of specific people and for specific reasons, coming to life for justice - as Poe's do - or being made for revenge - as Brontë's are. Hyde, however, comes to symbolise a total affront to the society into which he is 'born', and his presence is so offensive to the upper-middle and working classes that he is unable to escape conflict. Though Hyde may be Jekyll's Double and the antithesis of this proud, great man, he is roundly condemned by all he meets, setting him aside from the other Doubles discussed in this study. The Double is a figure defined by conflict - it can only exist as an antagonist and a figure whose presence is offensive to 'normal' society; conflict, then, is key to one of the Gothic's archetypal figures and the concept's importance to the genre is clear in a reading of the influence and importance of the Double.

John Herdman also argues, though, that Hyde 'is an expression of pure Id, of savage instinctual life, of self unrestrained by any socialisation' (135-6), an interpretation of Hyde's role that I disagree with. Hyde is not simple and rabid, as I have argued above, and his role as Jekyll's Double and Other is far more complex than the doctor and his peers would have the reader believe. These upper-middle class gentlemen have the monopoly over Hyde's depiction, and though he murders Sir Danvers Carew - an obviously heinous act - it is his other actions which set him apart as the despised Other. Jekyll avoids specific cases of evil, stating that 'into the details of the infamy at which I thus connived... I have no design of

entering' (46), and whilst I will not state that Hyde is innocent, I would argue that his position as Other and figure of conflict stems from his freedom and the threat that he poses to the previously mentioned relationship between the status of a gentleman and the strict moral code that must be adhered to by anyone wishing to be a part of this faction. Hyde is the Id to Jekyll's Ego, yet this Id and its desires are so repressed that a meeting with Hyde is an unsettling, enraging matter to each gentleman. To meet Hyde and to talk of his existence is to acknowledge a gentleman's baser urges, something that cannot be done in repressed London of Stevenson's novella. As I have strived to put forward, Hyde's position as a hated source of conflict stems not from a strong moral compass found within his enemies, but rather from the threats he poses to the established order and the scandals that could so easily follow him. It's not just what Hyde does that makes him the main source of conflict, but also what he represents.

Conclusion

The texts in this study have been shown to be filled with, and driven by, characters who live in disharmony. Conflict infects their lives, and as I have argued, these characters are Gothic because of their reliance on conflict. Poe's short stories, filled with dread and paranoia, portray a subtle, surreptitious conflict which grows more panicked and poisonous in the mind of the protagonists and gradually descends into vengeful chaos. Brontë's novel is built on conflicts which are loud, open, and cannot be ignored. Her characters find it impossible to settle and live in harmony, ensuring that there is a constant tension around the two major houses, one which has bursts of violent conflict, bursts which have increasingly detrimental effects. And Stevenson's novella details conflicts which threaten an entire established quasi-society, one which reacts very aggressively and uncomfortably towards intruders. Conflicts in *Jekyll and Hyde* are not as subtle as Poe's, but rather subtle in the manner that they are only spoken of in certain circles and situations, ensuring that their effects are felt primarily by the male members of this upper-middle class society. The conflict in each text is different, yet one can see these conflicts as the driving force of each text, unifying them as Gothic works driven by disharmony. Due to the establishment of binaries in each text, each character and concept must either be a force for good or an antagonist. Each character and perspective is deemed to be 'against' something or someone, meaning that conflict is inevitable in each narrative and ultimately defines the plots. The murderous paranoia of Poe's protagonists, Heathcliff's relentless vengeful mission, and the campaign to rid the world of Hyde are all conflicts that define their texts. Without these major clashes, the works would not be what they are and these conflicts define Gothic literature in the nineteenth

century as industrial progress and shifts in economic and social dynamics created greater anxieties, positioning Gothic villains as threats closer to home.

What is most important to each text is its narrator, and one may even see that the issues surrounding women, repression, and Doubles can all be traced back to narrators. The biases of each narrator are clear, each of them attempting to convince the reader - and themselves - of their own innocence and their enemies' guilt. There is a great deal to be said on the issue of blame, as I have established, and when conflicts inevitably rise, each narrator is quick to shift blame, whether that be subtly as Poe's narrators do, or more conspicuously as Brontë and Stevenson's do. The importance of guilt, and perceptions of guilt, cannot be understated, as each narrative has within it a central scapegoat. Morella, Madeline Usher, the black cat, Heathcliff, and Edward Hyde are all singled out by the narrators as the most destructive, poisonous influences of their respective texts. The biased outlook of the narrators informs their decisions to blame these characters, as one sees in the demonisation of these figures, all of whom are portrayed as unsettling sources of conflict. The narrators do not deny the conflict that they have been a part of, but always frame these conflicts as the responsibility of others, be it women who seek to undermine patriarchal dominance, or supernatural figures whose presence is an affront to civilised society. These Gothic texts must have an Other within them, and so the narrators position themselves as the antithesis of the Other - the civilised victim, fighting against a supernatural, intruding figure. By upholding these binaries, the narrators create conflict, implying that anyone who does not agree with them is the unsettling outsider. When one looks at the paranoid delusions of Poe's narrators; the pious judgement of Nelly Dean; and the snobbery of *Jekyll and Hyde's* nameless narrator, it is clear to see that these narrators have strong opinions. The strong senses of morality in *Wuthering Heights* and *Jekyll and Hyde*, as well as the unforgiving

paranoia of Poe's short stories, create environments in which the scapegoats cannot escape judgement, eventually being worn down by those that judge them. Each narrator, across every text, has a key role to play in the story they are telling, and this is why they cause so much conflict. Here, there is no such thing as an impartial narrator, and the stories recounted to the reader are recalled often by the most guilty people in them. Because of this, there will always be conflict between what the reader is told and what they can come to understand through a close reading of the text. The narrators are the troublesome, conflict-creating figures of their own stories largely, and though they may scapegoat others, it is clear to see that the central conflicts of each tale would not exist without the narrators.

As I have argued, it is women who are predominantly the scapegoats and victims of these texts, though their misery is more subtle than that of Heathcliff and Hyde. Catherine Earnshaw is a classic example - the boisterous woman who is disliked because she is so bold, and is therefore forced into and entrapped by a stereotypical role, one in which she is trapped until she is forced into the middle of a conflict between two men at odds with each other. Catherine is a figure who has been blamed for others' downfalls, much as Poe's women are, and though the conflict in her life kills her, she is never seen as a true victim. Women are treated like this throughout each of these texts - they are harmed by men, physically and emotionally, and totally disregarded. The conflict between men and women is relentless, though its presence may be subtle at times. When one looks at the mistreatment of each woman, they build a picture across these texts that shows one the extent to which women are dragged into conflict, blamed for it, and then often killed by it. As this study has set out to show, women are consistently the victims in each of these Gothic texts, and spend most of their time trapped. The scapegoating of women and their roles as victims of male dominance are what create so much conflict between men and women in these works as the

patriarchs fear their supremacy as 'rational' men being challenged by emotional and/or supernatural female figures. Women, trapped by the situations and worlds men have forced them into, are unable to be independent or more than a caricature without fighting the patriarchs who dominate them. When women react to suppression, they are immediately branded as traitors and the conflicts which have been subtly present come to the surface. The most important driving figure of these male/female conflicts is always the patriarch, a staple of Gothic literature and one who is - or has influence over - the narrator of their story. These narrators use their positions of power and the establishment of binary moralities to create Others. They portray and cultivate worlds in which they are dominant and their way of living is supposedly 'right', meaning anyone who disagrees with their lifestyle is branded Other, a fate which befalls each of the main female characters as they attempt to escape persecution. As I stated in the Poe chapter, this study sees each relationship between a man and a woman as a conflict. Each is a struggle for dominance, a conflict that ranges from the subtle establishing of power between Utterson and the servants, to the burying alive of Madeline to stop her from 'controlling' her brother. I would argue there is no other way to see male/female Gothic relationships than as conflicts, varying in size and intensity, but sharing the central struggle for power.

The desire for control is a key aspect of each text in this thesis, as I have established particularly in the sections on male/female relationships. One finds that many characters attempt to control their own emotions and pasts, looking to repress the ever-changing Other - the figure whose presence is both physical and spiritual, varying across each text. One sees in all texts a tangible 'Other' - or, at the very least, a figure who is consigned to this role. Yet, there is also the Other within central characters, most notably Hyde within Jekyll; each internal Other is repressed because they conflict with the conscious mind that sees

itself as civilised. Psychology is key to this study's discussion of conflict, given the unstable, irrational personalities present in these narratives. There are frequent moments of insanity, and the internal impulses - the Id - that drive characters come to the surface, causing conflict. The impulses of Poe's protagonists, Heathcliff, and Hyde are all abhorrent to those around them, and one sees in them the conflicts between Id and Ego as the two struggle for dominance. What brings these Gothic texts together is their focus on the powerful, dominating Id that is totally indulged by the 'villains' of *Wuthering Heights* and *Jekyll and Hyde*, and by the protagonists of Poe's short stories. Internal psychological conflicts are some of the most important in Gothic literature, and as characters struggle with their identities and impulses, they create conflicts with those around them. Conflicts of identity are not always internal, of course, and the important figure of the Double highlights this. Existing to undermine the Original figure that they are tethered to, these Doubles are seen as usurpers, and the conflict they create is one that is based once again in the fear of being undermined. Across this thesis, it has been argued that what the central men of each text fear is that which threatens to undermine their identities as rational and in control. This is why powerful women who challenge male dominance and Doubles who act as usurpers are so vociferously attacked - because they are supposedly there to attack the central patriarchs who feel more and more undermined as their narratives develop. Ids, Doubles, and Others are all positioned negatively within binary conceptualisations of morality in these works, and so they are inherently concepts/figures of conflict, existing as affronts to 'decent' society that must be repressed. Characters cannot see themselves as good without arguing that someone else is bad, and so morality is unable to exist without fears of the 'darker' side of the psyche, the Other lurking in the shadows. Conflict between 'good' and 'evil' drives these Gothic texts, and these binary concepts are at the genre's core.

What this study has set out to do is to argue for the importance of seeing conflict as the key literary characteristic for Gothic literature. Conflict is ubiquitous in this genre, informing every relationship and every interaction, and should be acknowledged for its importance to this body of literature. The Gothic of the nineteenth-century developed and changed alongside the industrial revolution and the increasing focus on individual merit, as well as increasing anxieties regarding the strength of one's identity; this, however, did not detract from the genre's reliance on conflict, but rather strengthened it. The Other was no longer distant, but could be living in London or any other bustling city. It could be a capitalist villain, or a monster created through science - Gothic conflicts were pictured in modern society, and their importance only grew. Each of the texts discussed in this study is filled with conflicts and clashing characters, and their importance to the genre is partially due to this. They epitomise Gothic literature's reliance on conflict, and its nature as a genre built on anger and counterculture figures. Conflict is not just another part of this genre to be discussed in relation to class, or gender, or race - Gothic literature *is* conflict, that is what defines the genre. Without binaries and disagreements, the Gothic would not exist, and that is evident in the writings of Poe, Brontë and Stevenson, all of whom have created characters and worlds that thrive in conflict.

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