

The Popular Gothic Novel
Lecture No. 58
Week 12: Accommodating the Gothic in Realism
Dicken's Realistic Gothic 'Bleak House' Women's Writing

Hello and welcome, to this concluding week of lectures. In this week 12 lecture, I am going to talk about, how the Gothic is accommodated in the realist narrative. I am going to give you a specific example in Dicken's Bleak House. I will also be discussing in general, about women's writing in relation to the Gothic mode.

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Realist Gothic



- “*Bleak House* was Dickens's ninth novel and, with its double narrative in which chapters are either told from the perspective of one of the characters, Esther Summerson, or else presented from the perspective of an omniscient narrator, it is arguably his most technically accomplished work. It is also the novel in which his use of Gothic imagery to heighten his attacks upon society's failings is at its most intense.”
- Greg Buzwell, 2014
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Dickens's *Bleak House* is a mature novel. It has a double narrative. There is an omniscient narrator and then there is, this first-person narrative of Esther Summerson. Now, these 2 narrative points of view are representations of Dicken's technical skill in capturing the realist mode. Further, it is also this novel *Bleak House*, in which Dicken's exploits the Gothic mode to highlight the failings in society.

In other words, Dickens' handling of the Gothic is used to ascertain the reality, ironically of, this kind of narrator. In other words, the Gothic is used to reinforce the realism of, Dickens'

fiction, and in particular, are the Gothic imagery points to the fractured lives in Dickens' society.

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Realist Gothic



- “The opening paragraphs of *Bleak House* describe London with surreal, nightmarish intensity. The streets are awash with mud – so much so that “it would not be wonderful to meet a Megalosaurus, forty feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill”; soot from the chimney-pots falls as a black rain; and everything from the London docks to the Essex marshes, the Kentish heights and the eyes and throats of Greenwich pensioners is cloaked in fog.”
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“The opening paragraphs of *Bleak House* describe London with surreal, nightmarish, intensity. The streets are awash with mud- so much so that, it would not be wonderful to meet a Megalosaurus, 40 feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn hill; soot from the chimney-pots falls as black rain; and everything from the London docks to the Essex marshes, the Kentish heights and the eyes and throats of Greenwich pensioners is cloaked in fog.”

This refers to the opening statements in Dickens' *Bleak House*. The description is surreal, as Buswell puts it. It is not just surreal, it is nightmarish. It is Gothic. Gothic in the sense, it is dark, full of horror, quiet horror, quiet desperation. In fact, the narrator, the omniscient narrator says that it will not be surprising to meet with a prehistoric, a primitive monster, such as a Megalosaurus; which would be huge, 40 feet long or so. And it would be trundling on the roads of this London space.

Again, this image of a primitive, prehistoric monster is befitting the gothic subtext of Dicken's realist novel *Bleak House*. And, one can see that visibility is very thin at that moment, in the novel. It is the soot seems to be like rain; the soot from the chimney pot, it is full of that grey matter, the dark matter; which makes it hard for the people to look at the world properly, to see the world clearly. Everything is covered in a blanket of mist,

everything from the docks to the marshes, to the eyes and throats of people. So, everything is blanketed, enveloped in fog.

When you read the second half of this passage. I am sure, you would be reminded of other novels, that we have read for this course. We would be reminded of ‘The Moonstone’, we would be reminded of ‘The Picture of Dorian Gray’, we would be reminded of ‘The Hound of Baskervilles’, because of specific references to marshes, to the docks and to how everything is enveloped in a suffocating atmosphere. So, these are classic terminology, a classic ambience that we meet within Gothic fiction.

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Realist Gothic



- “However, this obscuring of the landscape in and around London is as nothing in comparison with the ‘groping and floundering condition’ of the High Court of Chancery, where the seemingly interminable case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce drags slowly on. The literal fog outside the court mirrors the fog of stagnation generated by the processes of the law within.”
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Now, there are 2 different kinds of usage of the Gothic in this realist fiction. One is, the literal, there is fog in London for a greater part of the time. And, this fog is diminishing visibility. It makes everything covered in mist and soot. There are literal gloominess, bleakness and darkness. The other is the metaphorical condition of bleakness, a foggy state of mind; both of individuals and of the society itself.

Now, the word groping and floundering, trying to find out the idea of seeking helplessly; as if, one is in the dark, is the kind of emotion, the state of mind; that people, who visit the Court of Chancery, to get justice. Fear, that is their state of mind. The court of Chancery is this court of justice, where there are plenty of cases, hundreds and hundreds of cases. And everything drags on, the legal processes, are so slow, that everything seems interminable, unending. The cases are unendingly represented in court.

Therefore, this kind of emotion, the lengthy drawn-out processes of the legal world, is similar to the fog, one finds outside of it, on the marshy city streets of London. So, there is literal fog and then, there is this metaphorical fog. And, there is stagnation; both literal and metaphorical. And the processes of law, the judicial system are represented to indicate the general stagnation of the structure of society. So you can see, how the Gothic is interconnected with the realist mode in this particular fiction. You can see, how the Gothic is accommodated in this domestic fiction as well.

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Realist Gothic



- “Dickens uses this method of comparison throughout *Bleak House*: time and again one location, institution or character is compared with another. Just as the literal fog is contrasted with the mental obfuscation of the law courts so Chesney Wold, the traditional Gothic country mansion of the aristocratic Lord and Lady Dedlock, is compared with the Gothic London slum of Tom-All-Alone’s. Indeed, as Dickens shows, the desiccated nature of the former actually results in the creation of the latter. In a sense, as we will see, the traditional Gothic landscape serves to shape its modern Gothic counterpart.”
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Now, there are plenty of comparisons; that are set up by Dickens in Bleak House. There is one location being compared with another, one institution with another, one character against another. So, there are a lot of doublings, comparisons, duality in this particular fiction. Now, as we saw just now, how the literal fog on the London streets is compared to the metaphorical fog, or the fog of stagnation in the London courts, the Court of Chancery. That is one comparison, that we have just looked at.

The other interesting comparison is that of the country house with a London slum. The country house is called Chesney Wold and the London slum is called Tom-All-Alone's. Tom-All-Alone's is a symbolic name. Tom is alone. Tom is isolated and, Tom becomes representative of a particular section in society; the very poor, the poorest of the poor. And, what is gradually becoming clear in Dicken's Bleak House, is this point; which is, the desiccated nature, the degrade nature, the emptying out of Chesney Wold.

The Gothic house, is resulting in, is directly producing structures such as spaces, such as Tom-All-Alone's. So, Tom-All-Alone in London slum is inevitably connected to the degradation, the destruction of the country house logic. So, the traditional Gothic landscape is inevitably interlinked with the modern Gothic spaces. If only the traditional Gothic structures had been thriving. If only, the Chesney Wold was a very living thriving centre of a traditional society, then one would not get places; such as Tom-All-Alone's. That seems to be the message of Dickens' thriving art in his novel Bleak House.

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Realist Gothic



- "Sir Leicester Dedlock's stately home in Lincolnshire, Chesney Wold, is a traditional Gothic edifice. The labyrinthine passages inside the building are lined with gloomy portraits; the river which the building overlooks is stagnant, and there is even a hint of the supernatural in the form of the Ghost's Walk, the flagged pavement running outside the house upon which ghostly footsteps, if heard, are believed to herald disaster."
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You have a classic recipe, of the Gothic fiction. By now, you would be easily spotting all these attributes, these tropes that belong in the Gothic world. For example, the word labyrinthine, the maze-like passage, the confusing passage; that makes passers-by, people who traverse that get lost. Or get confused and that indicates a psychological confusion as well among others. Then again, the river, which does not flow with the stagnation, there is a sense of being held up.

Then further, we have the very word ghost, in that walk. The Ghost Walk is the name given to that pavement and footsteps are heard, apparently supernatural in tone. Because, once you hear those footsteps and then, it is believed that something terrible will happen. So, the classic ambience of the Gothic world is built into Chesney Wold.

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Realist Gothic



- “Chesney Wold is emblematic of the dead weight of the aristocracy, and the prevailing status quo that hinders any possibility of change. The stagnant river and the lengthy succession of portraits depicting the previous generations of Dedlocks reflect the resistance to progress of the occupants within. Chesney Wold's true Gothic significance resides not so much in its appearance as in its anachronistic quality, obsolescence and isolation from the modern world.”
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appearance as in its anachronistic quality, obsolescence and isolation from the modern world.”

The key Gothic structure of Chesney Wold in Dickens's novel represents several aspects of British society. It indicates that aristocracy is no longer relevant. It is no longer seems to be a key influencer, a key figure in society. Aristocracy, Aristocracy seems to be redundant. In fact, it is not just redundant, it seems to be a stumbling block. It seems to be an obstacle to better change, to any kind of modification in society. So, Chesney Wold is a dead weight. It is a blockage in the progress of society. So, that is one meaning of this Gothic world, one symbolic meaning.

Now the stagnant river, of course, is a clear indication, a symbolic indication that there is no change, there is stagnation and, you can connect this with the other mosses, marshes and blocks and sinking sand that we saw in the previous novels, that we read for this course. And the portraits, the portraits are a representation of the past, the portraits that we see in Chesney Wold are representations of the lineage of the Dedlocks and they seem to be resisting once again, any kind of change.

Now, we can connect this with Gothic curses. You can also connect this with this problematic gene being passed down by these ancestors, genes that corrupt, genes that somehow pass on vice. So, the weight of tradition seems to be a disturbing factor. A factor that prevents or blocks any modernity, any progression.

Now, Chesney Wold's most important Gothic element seems to be not just in its physical structure; but in the fact, that it is anachronistic. It seems to be a wastage from the past. It does not seem to belong to this time and age. It seems to be obsolete. It is not, as I said, not serving any function in the current society. It is no longer an economic centre. Country houses were economic centres. They were the economic poles of society previously, but they are no longer that. In fact, something else has replaced that economic centre and that is science and modernity and progression and trade.

Now, because of these factors, we realised that this kind of Gothic structures has become isolated from the modern world. Which is one of the reasons, why all these Gothic places, many of them are in faraway locales. They are marginal to the urban centres. They seem to be primitive, seem to be ancient, they seem to be prehistoric. So, these are some of the literary tropes, through which, the Gothic structure is set up in the novels.

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Realist Gothic



- “Tom-All-Alone’s, meanwhile, is a London slum that provides a modern Gothic equivalent to the moribund horrors of Chesney Wold. The main street past Tom-All-Alone’s is ‘a stagnant channel of mud’ lined with ‘crazy houses, shut up and silent’ (chapter 46). Tom-All-Alone’s provides a refuge, of sorts, for London’s poorest citizens, those on the extreme margins of society. Due to its insanitary conditions, however, it is also a breeding ground for crime and disease. In the illustration of Tom-All-Alone’s by Halbot Knight Browne, the buildings encroach on either side while the shadows potentially hide all manner of threats and horrors.”
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Now, Tom-All-Alone’s is a London space. It is not part of the traditional country house special accessory, in fact, it is a contrast to that. Now, we had looked at the horrors, the Gothic tropes of Chesney Wold. We have seen, how much in decline moribund means something, that is lacking vitality something, that is in decline. So, we have seen the declining state of Chesney Wold; which is portrayed to us through the Gothic lands.

Now, let us look at, how the London slump is portrayed. It is once again stagnant, just as the river outside Chesney Wold is stagnant. It is full of mud instead of waters, instead of that symbol of fertility, that symbol of lushness. And held in life, it is full of mud. It is very silent. There is no life to it. Now though, this is silent and stagnant, this space is also a heaven, a refuge for the very poor, the poorest of the poor and those who belong to the margins in society.

Though all those liminal beings find a space to survive in this London slum not only that even though it is a heaven, it is also a breeding ground. A breeding ground of not just disease but of all kinds of crime. So, crime and disease go hand in hand in this particular London slum. So, here we have a modern landscape of the Gothic. Disease and crime, are modern versions of the Gothic mode.

And, if you look at some of the illustrations; particularly the illustration of Halbot Knight Browne was known as face. He represented this slum for Dickens's novel and in his illustrations, you can see that the buildings on either side of this London slum seem to kind of crowd around. They seem to encroach on either side. It is as if, it is kind of suffocating old spaces. And, in the in those shadows, in those shadows of these edifices of the London slums. They have thrived lots of horrors.

While we read this, we are also reminded of the previous eastern scene, that we saw in The Picture of Dorian Gray where, people huddled together outside on the street, near the doors and there is horrible laughter, there is crude violence, then there are brawls. So, there is a connection running through all these works, in terms of the representation of the street Gothic, the slum Gothic.

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Realist Gothic



- “What links Chesney Wold to Tom-All-Along's is Chancery, and the labyrinthine legal complexities of the case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce. Tom-All-Along's is the main location whose fate is caught up in the interminable court case, a case that involves Sir Leicester and Lady Dedlock. The aristocratic Gothic edifice of Chesney Wold, and the squalid slum of Tom-All-Along's are connected by the political inertia and self-interest displayed by the interminable processes of the law – processes that the ruling elite have no desire to change because, of course, it suits their interests by maintaining the status quo.”
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Lady Dedlock. The aristocratic Gothic edifice Chesney Wold, and the squalid slum of Tom-All-Along's are connected by the political inertia and self-interest displayed by the interminable processes of the law, processes that the ruling elite has no desire to change because, of course, it suits their interests by maintaining the status quo.”

Now, this Gothic world of Chesney Wold is connected to the London Gothic slum of Tom-All-Along's and the connection is represented by the court case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce. So, you can see, how this traditional upper classes society is interminably linked to the working classes, the lowest of the low in society. And Greg Buswell points out that, there is no change brought upon, either by the court or by the ruling elite, the powerful. Because they do not want to change the status quo. It is safer to retain the status quo. And therefore, the Tom-All-Along is a place, that does not change and neither does the Gothic space of the country house of Chesney Wold.

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Contemporary Gothic and Women's Writing



- “Contemporary fiction is urgently seeking techniques for the aesthetic transformation of feminine anger. The rage that is now welling up is an emotion women have traditionally been taught to suppress. In her acute study of British women novelists, *A Literature of Their Own*, Elaine Showalter traces writers' persistent problems with the consequences of repressed anger. She insists on a woman's need for “confrontation with her own violence, rage, grief and sexuality” in order to free her productive energies”
- P.201
- DOMESTIC GOTHIC: THE IMAGERY OF ANGER, CHRISTINA STEAD'S "MAN WHO LOVED CHILDREN" Author(s): JOAN LIDOFF Source: *Studies in the Novel*, summer 1979, Vol. 11, No. 2 (summer 1979), pp. 201-215 Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/29531969>

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Now, we have seen how the Gothic is used to represent really viscerally the problematics in London society. And, the Gothic becomes a weapon in Dicken's hand to represent very realistically the fractures that crisscross his contemporary world. Now let us turn our attention to the kind of Gothic fiction that is being written in the twentieth and twenty-first century; especially by women. What we are interested in terms of the contemporary fiction is, how the Gothic becomes a represented and what are the purposes to which the Gothic is put to?

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Now, the point here is that there is anger on the part of women writers. There is feminine anger, and that anger is usually suppressed, because that is what, women are traditionally advised to. Now the Gothic is a mood that offers a channel to express this feminine anger. Now, the Gothic becomes a narrative tool, which helps the writer confront her own anger, violence, grief and sexuality. And therefore, it is very very helpful for her to make use of this particular subtext, this particular Gothic subtext, this particular Gothic mood to express her creativity, her productivity, her productive energies.

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Contemporary Gothic and Women's Writing



- “On this premise, Freud and the feminists, in spite of their many disagreements, agree. In keeping with the central insights of psychoanalytic thought, women writers today insist on waging the ongoing artistic struggle with form and feeling on their own grounds. All art strives to fashion a voice for experience; women are now determined that the voice and experience of their fiction and poetry be their own, and are rejecting the secondary cultural images that are not grounded in self definition.”
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Therefore, what is happening with women's writing, in general, is that they are constantly grappling with the nature of form, and how to use that form to express their emotions. And one of the fundamental ways through which this associated set of emotions, such as anger, resentment, the suppression, the oppression; that they have suffered is to kind of illustrate them, express them, artistically, creatively through a Gothic use of that kind of narrative form and structure.

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Contemporary Gothic and Women's Writing



- “Asserting that nurturance and empathy are not separated from aggressive qualities in an individual, they are discovering their own rage. The feeling now searching for expressive form, however, is not just the anger that was formerly denied to women as part of the normal spectrum or emotion but an anger frequently intensified into hostility by its long repression.”
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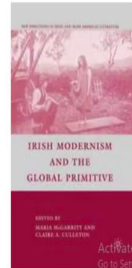
Now, there a range of emotions and Joan Lidoff points out that, while women are usually associated with nurturance and empathy and acknowledge those sets of emotions. They also realised that it is alright to possess this rage. And this rage it gets expressed through particular modes of writing and the Gothic easily comes to hand; when we try to kind of think how this anger is channelled.

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Domestic Gothic



- ***Domestic Gothic, the Global Primitive, and Gender Relations in Elizabeth Bowen's The Last September and The House in Paris***
- Editors
- Maria McGarrity
- Claire A. Culleton



Now let us look, at certain works, which belong to this category of domestic Gothic. This work is particularly interesting, and it would be great, if you could check this out, it is called domestic Gothic. The global primitive, and gender relations in Elizabeth Bowen's; The Last September and The House in Paris.

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Domestic Gothic, the Global Primitive, and Gender Relations in Elizabeth Bowen's The Last September and The House in Paris



- "The representation of domestic space and its gendered formulations has become an important perspective through which to further our understanding of women writers in the interwar period and their relation to modernism. As Anglo-Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen persistently shows, it is necessary not only to contextualize domestic space historically, but to read it as a contested site in which men and women, young and old, redefine and conflict over definitions of national and cultural memory and identities."
- Phyllis Lassner
- Paula Derdiger
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read it as a contested site, in which men and women, young and old, redefine and conflict over definitions of national and cultural memory and identities.”

We understand that rage is one particular quality that the women possess but they do not just hang on to rage. There are other perspectives that emerge in the understanding of women writers, as they explore the period between the wars; the 2 World wars. And how that period and its expression connects with modernism. This particular Anglo-Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen argues that it is important to put everything in the context; the historical, social, cultural context.

And particularly she suggests that domestic space must be contextualized, domestic space is not ahistorical. It need not be looked at as something, which is unanchored. Domestic space according to Bowen belongs to a particular time and period and age. And the domestic space becomes a complex, spatial entity in which, there are conflicts between men and women. There are conflicts between older and younger folks. And it is a site, which is constantly negotiated. It is a site that is getting defined and redefined.

And, the domestic space is important because they are interlinked or connected to discussions of identity; and cultural and national meaning. Therefore, when one looks at the representation of domestic space in Gothic fiction or in Gothic plots in realist fiction, we need to really pay attention to what that domestic space means. What is the function of that domestic space? In that particular novel, what are its cultural meanings? What are its national meanings? What are its societal meaning? So, these are some of the areas, in which, we can explore.

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Domestic Gothic



- “For Bowen, these definitions are complicated by recognitions and denials of the place of those who are deemed ethnically, racially, and culturally Other. In turn, the presence of the Other creates an unsettling sense of instability and uncertainty about individual and national identity. Thus, regardless of how insular or stable, domestic space in Bowen’s writing is never merely private, but rather always generative of and invaded by the history and politics constituting the public sphere.”
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Now we have seen that domestic space can be complex, as we see, as we find in Elizabeth Bowen's writings. This complexity can be further complicated by our understanding that there are certain others, who do not belong to this domestic space of the nation. They are ethnically, racially and culturally alien to this space, but they are within the nation. Therefore, further ideas of instability and uncertainty emerge with regard to domestic space, with regard to the kind of identities about nationality, and about individual identity.

So, the domestic space is not just the space that we find in the home. The domestic space also makes sense, when we think about the nation itself as a domestic space. Therefore, concepts of insularity, isolationism, the ideas of privilege, the ideas of stability are proliferated in our discussions of this domestic space. And what is ultimately clear is that the domestic space is never private. The domestic space is always already public because a domestic space is crisscrossed by cultural, and historical traditions, and meanings, and influences.

So, there are different levels of domestic politics, when we look at Gothic fiction. So, Elizabeth Bowen, this Anglo-Irish writer is an interesting figure to checkout to see, how various meanings of the domestic Gothic are generated in her fiction.

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Domestic Gothic



- “This chapter focuses on the domestic spaces, so important throughout Bowen’s work, that encapsulate and reflect Bowen’s most central artistic concerns during the interwar period. We begin with the Big House in *The Last September* (1929) and then move to the urban middle-class homes depicted in *The House in Paris* (1935).”
- https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230617193_11



Now, this particular chapter, about *The Last September* and *The House in Paris*, is a particularly interesting read. Because “this chapter focuses on the domestic spaces. So important throughout Bowen's work, that encapsulates and reflect Bowen's most central artistic concerns during the interwar period. We begin with the Big House in *The Last September* in 1929, and then move on to the urban middle-class homes, homes depicted in ‘*The House in Paris*’.”

The very brief description, that you get of this chapter, will tell you here that, there is a range of domestic spaces, that are being discussed in this particular article, we have the big house. The big house refers to the country house; the economic and cultural centre. That big houses are traditionally in society and that gradually changes. And there is a proliferation of middle-class urban homes and those are represented really remarkably in *The House in Paris*.

So, why do the representations change? What are the meanings behind these houses? What does the urban middle-class home represent? So, these are some of the questions that you can ask. And what is the relationship between the middle-class urban home and the Gothic mode? So, do ask these questions, when you read these articles.

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Women and Domestic Space



- **Women and Domestic Space in Contemporary Gothic Narratives: The House as Subject**
- Ng, Andrew Hock Soon. *Women and Domestic Space in Contemporary Gothic Narratives: The House as Subject*
- New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015
- <https://academic.oup.com/cww/article/11/1/126/2447392>



Now, let us look at another work. It is titled “Women and Domestic Space in Contemporary Gothic Narratives: The House as Subject”. Now this is by Andrew Hock Soon, and it is a fascinating work and it is a recent work, that I would like you to check out if possible.

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Women and Gothic



- “At the heart of many gothic narratives sits a house, a trope that has remained consistent from its literary beginnings. The title of a work so often cited as the first fully formed gothic novel, Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), signposts the centrality of a family house within these fictions. Whereas a century of gothic writing continued to use the crumbling ancestral castle as a site for terror and horror, later work embraced a variety of domestic settings: from Emily Brontë’s remote moorland farmhouse to Stephen King’s contemporary reimaginings in North America.”
- <https://academic.oup.com/cww/article/11/1/126/2447392>



“At the heart of many Gothic narratives sits a house, a trope that has remained consistent from its literary beginnings. The title of a work so often cited as the first fully-formed Gothic novel, Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto*, which came out in 1764, signposts the centrality of a family house within these fictions. Whereas, a century of Gothic writing continued to use the crumbling ancestral castle as a site for terror and horror, later work

embraced a variety of domestic settings; from Emily Bronte's remote moorland farmhouse to Stephen King's contemporary reimaginings in North America.”

So, this is a fantastic way, to sum up, some of the key tropes, particularly the most important trope in Gothic fiction, and you know it already it is a house; a domestic structure and this domestic structure with its Gothic connotations have remained consistent throughout its literary travels across time and regions and nations. Now, *The Castle of Otranto*, of course, begins this tradition, and what is indicated by this recurrence or consistency of representing a family house is the notion that the family is key to the meaning of this particular work.

So, the family identity is something which is explored through the space it occupies in a structured manner. And we understand that there are plenty of crumbling ancestral Gothic places, houses, and the fictions; that we have read and the fictions, Gothic fictions that exist. And the terror, the terror that occupy the walls of these Gothic places, Gothic houses, regardless of the fact, whether it is crumbling or not is an indication that the anxieties and complexities, the family experiences is represented through all these various manifestations of horror and terror, that we come across in these settings.

And the specifics can be from Emily Bronte's, *Wuthering Heights*. This remote farmhouse that we have come across, where Heathcliff and Catherine, express their hostilities, resentments and happiness to the contemporary work of Stephen King in which he reimagines urban settings in a Gothic mode. So, regardless of the changes in time, one thing is clear, the house and its presences- be it living beings or spiritual hauntings. So, these are representations of the problematics that we come across in society.

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Women and Gothic



- “In addition, the domestic space is frequently a place of containment and entrapment, especially for a female subject. Andrew Hock Soon Ng directs his focus on this recurrent theme in his scholarly work, *Women and Domestic Space in Contemporary Gothic Narratives: The House as Subject*. This would be a worthy examination in itself except that Ng makes a simple change of perspective that shines new light on the study of gothic narratives.”
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Now we understand that the house is Gothic primarily because it is a place where people feel trapped, literally, metaphorically, particularly, the sense of entrapment is associated with a female identity, a female figure. Be it Radcliff's women or Bronte's women. So it is the women usually who are found to be victims, who are found to be incarcerated, who are found to be locked up in these domestic spaces. And there is a great irony in that because domestic spaces are supposed to be spaces that protect, respect, treat women as ‘angels’, but the reverse seems to be the case with Gothic fiction.

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Domestic Gothic



- “Even though the variety of approaches risks becoming a “theory salad,” and Ng himself notes that some theoretical discourses are decontextualized, his emphasis on phenomenology inflected by psychoanalysis is plotted clearly and forensically. Psychoanalytical theory has long been successfully applied to gothic narratives, and Ng maintains this trajectory. His chosen theoretical application collapses the binaries between self and other and allows for a subject/space dialectical relationship.”
- <https://academic.oup.com/cww/article/11/1/126/2447392>



Thank you for opting for this course. I hope you make this course exciting by connecting a lot of other texts to the ones that I have chosen for you for this particular 12-week course. Thank you for watching. I will see you around.