Power and Identity in Three Gothic Novels: *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, *Caleb Williams*, and *Melmoth the Wanderer*

A Dissertation Presented for
The Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Jerry Jennings Alexander
December, 2011

Copyright © 2011 by Jerry Jennings Alexander
All rights reserved

Dedication

For my partner,

Marc Fiori

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Dr. Nancy Goslee for her support and direction during my tenure in graduate school and for her guidance with this dissertation. I would also like to thank my dissertation committee members, Dr. Amy Billone, Dr. Jenny Macfie, and Dr. John Zomchick, for their dedication and assistance.

I am grateful to Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC, for providing me with a two-year leave of absence and financial support to pursue my doctoral degree. I would also like to thank the members of the Presbyterian College English Department for their encouragement and support.

Finally, I am grateful for the love and support of my family, especially my partner, Marc Fiori, and my friends, especially Lyn Isbell, whose own graduate studies served as an inspiration.

Abstract

This study examines the connection between power and identity in three Gothic novels, Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, and Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Following the identity theories of Erik Erikson, I argue that identity has biological, psychological, and social aspects that are subject to change over time. As individual agency—the ability to function as a person—depends on a relatively certain and stable sense of personal identity, Gothic villains—both individuals and institutions—gain and maintain their power by disempowering their victims. In order to do so, they work to compromise these victims' sense of personal identity, causing them to suffer identity crises that greatly reduce their ability to function. Employing various means—including threats of rape, destruction of reputation, imprisonment, forced exile, denial of freedom of thought, torture, and others—Gothic villains attempt to weaken their victims by placing them in situations that cause the fears that Erikson argues all people share to become paralyzing and debilitating states of anxiety, states in which the victims suffer from a temporary, or, in extreme cases, permanent loss of agency. These Gothic victims' paranoia, identity crises, and subsequent loss of agency underscore the importance of individuals' identity and constitute the horror that is at the heart of Gothic fiction.

Table of Contents

Chapter I: Introduction …………………………………………………………………… 1

Chapter II: *The Mysteries of Udolpho* ……………………………………………………28

Chapter III: *Caleb Williams* …………………………………………………………………80

Chapter IV: *Melmoth the Wanderer* ……………………………………………………..128

Chapter V: Conclusion ……………………………………………………………………..187

Works Cited ……………………………………………………………………………..205

Vita …………………………………………………………………………………………213

Chapter I

Power and Identity: An Introduction

When is power legitimate and when is it illegitimate? To what extent are people allowed to use their power without abusing it? In what ways do humans gain and maintain power? To what extent is power related to humans' sense of their identity? What comprises such a sense of identity? These were important questions that were being asked during the transitional period between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in England, a time when the old order, represented by a patriarchal hegemony, aristocratic rule, and church authority, was under threat by the continued fight for women's rights, democratic reform, and freedom of thought; and no other literature was better equipped to address these questions than the relatively new genre of the novel.

As Michael McKeon persuasively argues in *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740*, the novel emerges in the eighteenth century as a genre well-suited to engage questions of truth and virtue. Although truth during the middle ages rested largely in the authority of the ancients and the church, from the Renaissance forward, the new scientific method and the religious skepticism that such a method engendered brought such ancient authority into question. Likewise, the church, the wisdom of the ancients, and the aristocracy, who were most intimate with both, were by the eighteenth century no longer the sole voice of virtue: individuals who had no knowledge of Greek or Latin, who were not directly associated with the church, and who had no claims to aristocratic authority, could have just as strong a sense of virtue as anyone. As Samuel Richardson argued implicitly in *Pamela*, a poor serving girl could prove to have a much firmer sense of virtue than her aristocratic master; likewise, a vulnerable female like Clarissa

Harlowe (Richardson's *Clarissa*) could prove to be nearly saintly when compared to her nemesis, the corrupt and debauched aristocratic Lovelace. In Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, young Joseph, despite his humble origins and limited formal education, proves to be much better equipped to deal with the realities of his world than the classically trained Parson Adams, whose beloved copy of Aeschylus and his saddlebag full of his own unpublishable sermons, symbols of the ancients and the church, respectively, prove to be useless: Joseph's common sense and seemingly innate sense of right and wrong make him far more capable of surviving in the corrupt world of eighteenth-century England. Likewise, in Frances Burney's *Evelina*, though she is of aristocratic lineage, the eponymous heroine enters the public sphere uncertain of her parentage, vulnerable as a naïve female thrown into a world populated by corrupt "gentlemen" and vulgar middle-class relatives, yet she proves to be capable of maintaining her virtue and outwitting her opponents while negotiating the unknown using her own morals and intelligence as a guide.

Within this milieu of realist novels emerges a subgenre that more directly examines how power is connected to truth and virtue. The assumption that power does and should rest with those who know the truth and are most virtuous is brought into question once the lack of virtue of those individuals in power is exposed in the Gothic novel. From the Gothic novel's inception in Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, the authority of male aristocrats, represented by the villain Manfred, is brought into question. Even the legitimacy of his position as master of Otranto is questioned: he has usurped Otranto from its legitimate possessor, covering up such truth and showing an utter lack of virtue. Yet, for a while, due to his usurped position, he has power—over his feeble son, Conrad, whom he tries to force into a marriage against his will for political gain; over his wife, whom he threatens to divorce to marry his own deceased son's fiancé for the same political gain; and, most clearly, over his daughter, Mathilda, of whom he, as

her father, has complete ownership. If power should legitimately rest with the keepers of truth and virtue but the very source of such truth and virtue is questioned, then those in power, like Manfred and the ruling class that he represents, come under scrutiny as well.

Though Walpole and his followers all indirectly explored such issues, it was the Gothic novelists writing during the French Revolution and the subsequent English struggle for reform who most directly addressed questions of truth and virtue by questioning the legitimacy of the power that rested in the male aristocracy and the Christian church. To do so, these novelists began with an implicit understanding that an individual's power rests in a sense of his or her identity. As David Punter notes, Gothicists, more than the realist writers like Fielding, "question the boundaries on which individual identity depends" (*Literature* 64). What I will argue is that Gothic novels consistently illustrate that characters' identity is a complex combination of biological, psychological, and sociological factors. These factors shape a person's identity from the child's inception and continue to define his or her identity over time. It is this identity that provides the individual the ability to function as a person who is part of a larger social environment. When, however, any component of this complex web of identity is abruptly threatened, the individual experiences a paralyzing anxiety that renders him or her less powerful than before and thus less capable of acting. It is this phenomenon that constitutes the terror that pervades Gothic fiction.

The importance of identity, its formation, and its connection to individual agency is illustrated by the significant amount of attention twentieth-century theorists have devoted to the issue. For example, as Terry Eagleton argues in his influential study *Literary Theory*, both Jacques Lacan and his follower, Marxist/Lacanian Louis Althusser, theorize about identity and human agency. While their theories emphasize the significance of identity as a psychological and

sociological issue, developmental theorist and psychoanalyst Erik Erikson and his followers offer the most extensive and comprehensive analysis of what constitutes our current understanding of identity and what results when individuals find their identity threatened or compromised. It is Erikson's theories that offer the most satisfying approach to analysis of how identity is connected to power in Gothic fiction.

As these theories argue, a sense of identity is essential to power; thus, any attempt made by a person or an institution to threaten, fragment, or undermine an individual's identity will weaken that individual, empowering the one while disempowering the other. In European nations in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the heyday of English Gothic novels, a time in which questions of exactly who represented authority were being raised socially, politically, and artistically, a growing struggle arose between those in power, the old order, who were fighting to maintain that power, and those individuals who were questioning this authority and, in doing so, themselves attempting to gain and assert a greater sense of their own power. The power of both groups depended on their own and others' sense of who they were, or, in other words, on their identity.

In Lacanian theory, which Eagleton calls "a strikingly original attempt to 'rewrite' Freudianism in ways relevant to all those concerned with the question of the human subject . . . and its place in society" (*Literary Theory* 142), in the earliest stages of infancy, or the "imaginary" stage, we as humans are in "a condition in which we lack any defined center of self, in which what 'self' we have seems to pass into objects, and objects into it, in a ceaseless closed exchange" (142). During the next stage of development, however, the "mirror stage," the child sees in the mirror "a gratifyingly unified image of itself" and thus begins "the process of constructing a center of self" (143). The child identifies with this image, yet the image is merely

a mirror image of the actual child. As Eagleton continues, “As the child grows up, it will continue to make such imaginary identifications with objects, and this is how its ego will be built up. For Lacan, the ego is just this narcissistic process whereby we bolster up a fictive sense of unitary selfhood by finding something in the world with which we can identify” (143). This search for subjects with which we can identify is what Lacan means by “desire,” and “all desire springs from a lack, which it strives continually to fulfill” (145). Therefore, although any attempt to construct a firm sense of self, or ego, is an attempt “vainly to plug the gap at the very center of our being” (146), such an attempt is necessary because “In conscious life, we achieve some sense of ourselves as reasonably unified, coherent selves, and without this action would be impossible” (147). In other words, although Lacan argues that the ego may be simply a void, a continual misrecognition with objects, possessions, family, religion—any of those associations that give us a sense of who we are—such a sense of unitary selfhood is necessary if we are to function as individuals—if we are to have the power to continue to live our lives.

What Lacan calls “misrecognitions” of objects with which we identify and thus gain a sense of self are connected to the context in which we as individuals live. Marxist/Lacanian Louis Althusser, in “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” explores this connection of identity to the social system in which the individual lives and in doing so helps explain how issues of identity are connected to issues of power in those social systems. Althusser’s overriding question is one of how Ideological State Apparatuses (church, family, school, cultural forces, etc.), along with co-existing Repressive State Apparatuses (law, court, police, army, etc.), contribute to the reproduction of the means of production in a society. For Althusser, they do so by allowing individuals to recognize themselves as subjects, i.e. recognize their own identity and likewise have that identity recognized by both other subjects living within the same ideology and

by the ruling classes whom that ideology supports. For example, a mill owner hails, or recognizes, his employee as Bob, the foreman. Bob knows himself to be Bob, a mill foreman (though he had no choice in that name). His co-workers likewise know him as Bob, the mill foreman. What Bob and all others fail to recognize, or misrecognize, "the reality which is necessarily ignored (méconnue)" (Althusser 182), is that Bob is, in Marxist terms, merely aiding in "the reproduction of the relations of production" (183) in a capitalist system. This is not to say that Bob does not have an identity. He does, but he is allowed to see himself as he does and to be seen by others as he is only insofar as he plays his role within the ideological framework in which he lives but of which he is likely unconscious. As Eagleton interprets Althusser's theory, "We see ourselves as free, unified, autonomous, self-generating individuals; and unless we did so, we would be incapable of playing our parts in social life. For Althusser, what allows us to experience ourselves in this way is ideology" (*Literary Theory* 148).

From a Marxist point of view, this "ideology" consists of the forms of social consciousness (political, religious, ethical, aesthetic, etc.) that are part of the superstructure, built on the capitalist base. Very few individuals are consciously aware of this ideology and the extent to which it allows for the creation and perception of a sense of self, and thus the creation and perception of a sense of individual power, because a society's ideology is "that complex structure of social perception which ensures that the situation in which one social class has power over the others is either seen by most members of the society as 'natural', or not seen at all" (Eagleton *Marxism* 555). In other words, ideology allows us and encourages us, if unbeknownst to us, to feel a sense of who we are, to be empowered to act as a result of that feeling, and thus to be capable of participating in the economic base on which all society is built. As an individual, in essence, I am allowed to feel as if I am important, not just a Marxist cog in a

wheel, because that sense of importance is empowering: "I do not *feel* myself to be a mere function of a social structure which could get along without me, true though this appears when I *analyse* the situation, but as somebody with a significant relation to society and to the world at large, a relation which gives me enough sense of meaning and value to enable me to act purposefully" (Eagleton, *Literary Theory* 149). To express in what particular, tangible ways this ideology works, Eagleton goes on to explain in concrete terms what ideological actions constitute identity, many of which the Gothic novel explores: ideology "lends me a sense of coherent purpose and identity. Ideology in this sense may include the act of going to church, of casting a vote, of letting women pass first through doors" (149), in other words, those daily actions, freedoms, and associations that contribute to our sense of who we are.

Althusser thus rethinks Marx's theories in terms of Lacan's "imaginary" and "mirror" stages. The relation of each individual to his or her sense of identity is like the relation of the child to its image in the mirror:

> this image involves a *mis*recognition, since it idealizes the subject's real situation. The child is not actually as integrated as its image in the mirror suggests; I am not actually the coherent, autonomous, self-generating subject I know myself to be in the ideological sphere, but the 'decentered' function of several social determinants. Duly enthralled by the image of myself that I receive, I subject myself to it; and it is through this 'subjection' that I become a subject" (Eagleton, *Literary Theory* 150).

Both Lacan's and Althusser's theories emphasize the importance of identity and our need to explore its meaning, and their theories can serve as useful tools to understand both the importance of the sense of identity that individuals develop and why they must do so to function. Likewise, whether the power that individuals gain once they arrive at a sense of identity,

however mutable or fragile that sense may be, is real or misconceived, it is this identity that allows the individual to function, and it is the challenges to this identity that allow individuals and institutions—here the villains and corrupt institutions described in the classic Gothic novels—both to overpower their victims and accumulate power—often illegitimate power—for themselves.

As Althusser's theory reveals, identity is, however, complicated by being a product of both our individual psychological development and the world in which we live. As Harold D. Grotevant writes, "Identity is both made and determined. Determined by our parents, and furthered and elaborated by ourselves. But we shouldn't overlook the role of fortuitous circumstances that happen in spite of any of us: political climate, physical climate, social climate, death, illness, love, loss" (1-2). Erikson also analyzes the interplay between self and context in his theories of how identity is constructed. As Grotevant explains, "Erikson's conception of identity concerns the interplay between individual and context: A person can feel embedded in his or her context" (10), or, in Althusser's terms, "allowed" to feel embedded. Identity thus involves both our recognition of ourselves as individuals and others' recognition of us as individuals, though the two may be different: You may not see me as I see myself. In Erikson's work, "identity always involves mutuality between the individual and his or her world" and he argues that "A whole range of systems exists dealing with the fundamental way in which the inner experience of the individual can be linked to structures in the outside world" (Grotevant 11). Still, both the concept of ourselves that we develop individually and the concept of ourselves that others develop of us are both important, as Eagleton explains, simply to allow us to function. As Tobi L.G. Graafsma concludes in a similar argument,

> No one doubts the descriptive and experiential value of the concept of identity. Indeed, a sense of identity, as the relatively enduring, but not necessarily stable experience of oneself as a unique and coherent entity over time, is very important in many ways. The same applies to the second aspect of a sense of identity: the experience of a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others. (“Psychoanalysis” 22)

A recent study of Chilean political exiles, forced from their home country due to a 1973 military coup, as described by social psychologist Marcela Cornejo, will underscore the importance of identity for individuals’ ability to function as well as aid in an understanding of both the complexity of identity and its importance as an enduring if shifting concept over time. Cornejo concludes her paper by asserting that “Identity has an important historical dimension, and social history is pivotal in the construction of the self, in what people are” (344).

Most recent studies of identity refer consistently to the groundbreaking work of psychoanalyst and identity theorist Erik Erikson, who graduated from the Vienna Psychoanalytic Institute in 1933, moved to the United States when the Nazi party came to power in Germany, and worked as a psychotherapist in the US for the next few decades. Early in his work, Erikson coined the phrase “ego identity,” basing his concept of the development of identity in children on Sigmund Freud’s theories of psycho-sexual stages of development (*Childhood and Society*). Through later work with medical doctors, sociologists, and anthropologists, and in subsequent writing, Erikson developed a more complex notion of identity that has both a vertical and horizontal component (*Childhood and Society*, 1950; *Identity and the Life Cycle*, 1959; *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, 1968; *Life History and the Historical Moment*, 1975). Its verticality refers to the large number of factors that contribute to one’s sense of identity at any given time (age,

gender, socio-economic status, etc.) and its horizontality refers to how these factors change over time, or over the continuum of the life cycle.

Erikson categorized the vertical components of identity into three groups: the psychological, the biological, and the social. He writes in *Childhood and Society* that

> The human being, at all times, from the first kick *in utero* to the last breath, is organized into groupings of geographic and historical coherence: family, class, community, nation. A human being, thus, is at all times an organism, an ego, and a member of society and is involved in all three processes of organization. His body is exposed to pain and tension; his ego, to anxiety; and as a member of society, he is susceptible to the panic emanating from this group. (*Childhood* 36)

In the same work, he traces the term "ego" to its Freudian roots, calling it "an 'inner institution' evolved to safeguard that order within individuals on which all outer order depends. It is not "'the individual,' nor his individuality, although it is indispensable to it" (194). Like Freud, he locates the ego "Between the id and the superego. . . . Consistently balancing and warding off the extreme ways of the other two, the ego keeps tuned to the reality of the historical day, testing perceptions, selecting memories, governing action, and otherwise integrating the individual's capacities of orientation and planning," safeguarding itself by employing "defense mechanisms" (193).

In further moving toward an explanation of how identity allows the individual to function over time, Erikson argues that a person's "physiological and mental makeup" form "*the organization of experience in the individual ego*" (*Childhood* 35). Furthermore,

> This central process guards the coherence and the individuality of experience by gearing the individual for shocks threatening from sudden discontinuities in the organism as well

> as in the milieu; by enabling it to anticipate inner as well as outer dangers; and by integrating endowment and social opportunities. It thus ensures to the individual a sense of coherent individuation and identity: of being one's self, of being all right, and of being on the way to becoming what other people, at their kindest, take one to be. (*Childhood* 35)

In a later discussion of identity crises, the sudden rupture in the continuum of one's life, experienced specifically by soldiers in World War II who suffered a disruption in their lives and the shocks of war, Erikson notes that in the person with a sound sense of identity, "this sense of identity provides the ability to experience one's self as something that has continuity and sameness, and to act accordingly" (*Childhood* 42).

Kenneth Gergen also discusses the need to see the verticality and horizontality of identity. In a discussion of the self as structure and process, Gergen argues that the two are not mutually exclusive, but complementary ways of approaching the same subject (18-19). Thus there are structural components of identity but those components are constantly under pressure and thus in flux. Their ability to contribute to a healthy sense of self may vary from time to time and place to place, depending on the circumstances under which the individual finds himself or herself. Tobi Graafsma agrees that time and change are significant factors when considering identity. He notes that Erikson himself "did consider the maintenance of a sense of identity a lifelong task, given the facts of maturation and development" ("Psychoanalysis" 22). Hence the importance of "identity strategies" employed by Chilean exiles in Cornejo's study who

> are able to act upon their definition of themselves, their identity, based on a certain manoeuverability over the construction and reconstruction of their identity. In this sense, identity is viewed as a dynamic, ongoing mobilizing process that takes place along an

> individual's entire life cycle, and where interaction with others and the environment plays an essential role; the relationship between the individual and time is also crucial, as it supports a sentiment of continuity and defines a unit in time. (337)

Without such "identity strategies," or means of coping with change, in Erikson's view, a fear of change, normal in all humans, becomes exaggerated and results in anxiety. He paraphrases Franklin Roosevelt's well-known phrase to illustrate this point:

> We have nothing to fear but anxiety. For it is not the fear of a danger (which we might be well able to meet with judicious action), but the fear of the associated state of aimless anxiety which drives us into irrational *action*, irrational *flight*—or, indeed, irrational *denial* of danger. When threatened with such anxiety, we either magnify a danger which we have no reason to fear excessively—or we ignore a danger which we have every reason to fear. (*Childhood* 407)

Erikson goes on to list a number of fears, many faced by characters in Gothic fiction, which have their roots in childhood. Though children often suffer panic and anxiety as a result of these fears, the adult with a strong sense of identity learns to manage these fears. As several instances in Gothic novels will illustrate, when the individual's identity is compromised, he or she resorts to the irrational anxiety of childhood. As so many of these fears surface in Gothic fiction, it is worth including Erikson's list here in full:

1. *suddenness* in the changes around him
2. *intolerance of being manipulated* and coerced beyond the point at which outer control can be experienced as self-control
3. *intolerance of being interrupted* in a vital act
4. *fear of being impoverished*

5. *fear of losing autonomy*
6. *danger of being closed up*
7. *sense of being restrained*
8. *losing outer bounds* and boundaries . . . and orientation
9. fear of *being attacked from the rear*
10. *fear of being immobilized* and imprisoned, and yet, a fear *of not being guided*
11. fear of *being left out*
12. fear of *being raped* (*Childhood* 409-10)

The list reads like a compendium of fears experienced by characters in Gothic fiction. Implicitly understanding the power of such threats, villains in Gothic fiction take advantage of their victims' fears, and only by struggling to maintain a sense of identity do their victims survive such threats. As I will argue in the following analysis of three Gothic novels that all deal with issues of identity, such a sense of identity is essential to the characters' individual sense of power and the key to their survival in the power struggles in which they, as functioning individuals, will inevitably become involved. Individuals struggle to gain and maintain a strong sense of identity—both their own concept of themselves and others' concepts of them, or, in other words, their public reputation—in order to feel the sense of empowerment necessary to function as individuals and exist as a part of a social system.

Several critics focusing on Gothic fiction have recently employed the terms "identity," "self," "ego," "development," and related terms, but few explore in any depth the definitions of these terms, how or if they differ from each other, or how they are connected to recent identity theorists' concepts of identity. Though these terms are usually connected to discussions of the development of heroines in the female Gothic tradition, they can as readily be used to refer to the

growth and transitioning of any of the novels' characters. Recent references to concepts related to personal identity in studies of the Gothic include those made in 1993 by Robert Miles in *Gothic Writing 1750-1820: A Genealogy*. Miles writes that the Gothic is "disjunctive, fragmentary, and inchoate, but its repetitiousness indicates its fascination with questions 'stirring within the foundations of the self'" (1). Such a description can be of Gothic fiction itself and one of its principal subjects, the concept of "self." Miles also cites David Punter's seminal cultural study of Gothic fiction, *The Literature of Terror* (1980), in which Punter theorizes that the Gothic represents the late eighteenth century's "witnessing significant developments in the formation of the modern 'self' as traditional views of Romanticism share" (*Gothic Writing* 2). In *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (1995), Maggie Kilgour discusses issues of identity in Mary Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman* and William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, writing that "While the stories depict the isolation of individual identity, their narration has the effect of bridging that isolation as, through story telling, the characters influence each other and ultimately the reader" (84).

Recent historicist/feminist approaches to Gothic fiction also mention the importance of "self" in Gothic fiction, but again, few offer any extensive analysis of how this "self" is or is not the same as developmental theorists' current concept of identity. For example, in *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (1998), Diane Long Hoeveler points out that following Ellen Moers's *Literary Women* (1977) came a series of readings emphasizing psychological or sexual readings of the female "self" (xiv). Contrasting her own study with other earlier studies focused on psychoanalytic readings of male Gothic fiction, Hoeveler states that "My analysis—like the more recent one by Anne Williams in *Art of Darkness*—differs from theirs in subscribing to a view of the 'self' as shaped by postmodernist

assumptions, that is, that what we call the 'self' is a series of discursive, shifting postures. Like Williams, I do not privilege the humanistic notion of a 'unitary self'" (8-9). Hoeveler asserts that the female gothic in general recounts "a specifically female oedipal quest, a need to rewrite history from the vantage point of a beleaguered daughter intent on rescuing her mother—and by extension her future self—from the nightmare of the alienating and newly codifying and commodifying patriarchal family" (xvii). Ultimately these novels, in Hoeveler's feminist-historicist reading, recount "women's supposedly passive acceptance of their newly proscribed social and educational identities as wives and mothers of the bourgeoisie" (5). What Hoeveler's study shows, as Erikson's theory of identity stresses, is that identity is a combination of a biologically determined sex and complex social and historical factors that shift over the continuum of an individual's life.

In addition to such recent historicist and feminist approaches, critics engaged in psychoanalytic interpretations have also commented on the Gothic novel's engagement with questions of the creation of identity, or self. Kelly Hurley considers such issues in light of Julia Kristeva's *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (1980; Eng. trans. 1982). Hurley writes in her article "Abject and Grotesque" (2007) that

> Any phenomenon that 'disturbs identity, system, order' and that 'does not respect borders, positions, rules' (Kristeva 1982: 4) elicits queasiness and horror because it reminds one of traumatic infantile efforts to constitute oneself as an ego, or discrete subject, from out of an undifferentiated pre-Oedipal state, and of the fragile nature of an ego that remains threatened by and yet attracted to the possibility of dissolution. (138)

As Hoeveler's study and other historicist approaches emphasize the sociological components of identity, Hurley's stresses the importance of the psychological components. Taken collectively,

these studies touch on all three of Erikson's categories of factors influencing identity: the biological, psychological, and social.

In addition to issues of identity, the power and authority associated with Gothic villains has been the frequent focus of critics' comments on Gothic fiction. On these villains in general, Emma McEvoy writes that they are "figures of awe, imperious, a law unto themselves, a danger to young females (and males) around them" (24). They often "are in positions of power, acting from within the system, as it were (even when illegitimately and unjustly)" (24). Discussing Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (*Udolpho*) specifically, Maggie Kilgour sees the castle of Udolpho as representative of the authoritarian power and control exercised by its master, the villain Montoni. Furthermore, by way of connecting character, setting, and Radcliffe's mastery of the sublime in nature, Kilgour continues, "The castle's sublime rule over the natural world mirrors Montoni's authority over Emily within it" (119). Montoni's "vision of female maturity" in Kilgour's words, "is that of total acquiescence to male authority: in his terms, [Emily's] self-control means complete abdication of female control and will to male sublime power" (120). Such acquiescence creates in Emily the feudal version of what Hoeveler calls the "professionalized," passive female in bourgeois terms. What is additionally important in Kilgour's study is her acknowledgement that such issues of power are not limited to male villains but also, if only occasionally, determine relations between female characters. Indeed, the first character seriously to threaten the personal identity and thus the power of *Udolpho*'s protagonist is not the male villain, Montoni, but Emily's own aunt, Madame Cheron. As Kilgour asserts, "Like Mary Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe is concerned with the way in which female rivalry, rather than bonding, is the product of the separation of the sexes. Mme Cheron's only means of power is tormenting those women who are weaker than herself" (118). Thus, as Kilgour

illustrates, Gothic villains, all of whom work to compromise the identities of their victims, are not limited to males but also include females, like Emily's aunt in *Udolpho*, or, to point out an even more extreme example, the heroine in Charlotte Dacre's Gothic novel *Zafloya*, whose brutality exceeds that of even the cruelest male villains in Gothic fiction.

Although the importance of identity and struggles for power are prominent themes in Gothic fiction, few critics explore fully their implications for the importance of the genre as a whole. In fact, what I argue is that these novels illustrate consistently that individuals' identity formation is essential to their human development and thus their agency. That so many of the novels focus on protagonists and other characters who are in the adolescent stage of identity formation shows an interest in its process, the process that constitutes the formation of a relatively stable personal identity. Furthermore, by subjecting both adolescents and adult characters to threats of violence, rape, imprisonment, and other horrors, the novels explore with intensity what happens when individuals' personal identities are threatened: the anxiety, hysteria, paranoia, and paralysis that result from these harrowing situations are evidence of a loss of a stable identity, as it is this sense of identity that provides individuals with agency—the ability to function effectively in society. The classic villains in these novels are almost always individuals or institutions whose own sense of identity is being threatened by their victims, though no active participation on the part of the victim has to be present. The villains are almost always attempting to gain or maintain (often illegitimate) power and thus will fight against anyone who stands in their way. Their means of fighting is to threaten and subsequently weaken the strength of their victims' personal identity, thus weakening the victims' ability to function and increasing their likelihood of being defeated.

Several critics come close to such a connection between identity and power but again do so only in passing. David Punter, for example, in a recent essay on "The Uncanny" (2007), notes that "the Gothic was, in its heyday, frequently concerned with the hidden operations of the power and the subjection and victimization of the subject" (135). What my study will explore more fully is what constitutes that "power" and "subject" in terms of identity, specifically in light of important work done in the twentieth century by identity theorists. Eve Sedgwick's *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (1976; rev. 1986) opens the door for such an approach. First, she argues that in Gothic fiction, "It is the position of the self to be massively blocked off from something to which it ought normally to have access. This something can be its own past, the details of its family history; it can be the free air, when the self is pinned in a death-like sleep" (12). She continues, "In the Gothic view . . . individual identity, including sexual identity, is social and relational rather than original or private; it is established only *ex post facto*, by recognition" (142).

While Gothic novels can be interpreted as early explorations into what twentieth-century identity theorists will label identity formation and identity crises, it can be argued that these issues of identity extend far beyond the individual into political and societal concerns as well. Hoeveler's study stresses the importance of understanding how the female sense of identity in much female Gothic is an agenda for the creation of "professionalized gender," in other words, the submissive, proper bourgeois wife and mother, providing insight into how the politics of the emerging bourgeois family find their way into Gothic fiction, specifically in terms of the concept of identity of the individual female characters. Robert Miles also makes the connection between Gothic and the historical period in which it comes into being. His very definition of "Gothic" moves in such a direction: "What is 'Gothic'? My short answer is that the Gothic is a discursive

site, a carnivalesque mode for representations of the fragmented subject" (*Gothic Writing* 4). In further discussing the Gothic in Foucault's terms, Miles claims that it is misleading to view Gothic as escapist nostalgia. Instead, "Gothic discourse, on the contrary, is 'modern', and takes its shape and meaning from the particularities of contemporary discourse" (*Gothic Writing* 27). For Foucault, "the Gothic moment arises from the clash of incommensurate 'archives', where the one has lost its hold and the other only begins to assert its grip. This clash problematizes the discourses that traverse it so that, in the repeat of the old, we find the destabilization of the new" (*Gothic Writing* 27). Thus my interest in the identity of individual characters is likewise concerned with what connections these characters and their sense of personal identity have to the social issues about which the authors who created them were concerned. The late eighteenth century witnessed the continuation of a transition from an old feudal order into a modern, capitalist economy dominated by a relatively new bourgeoisie, a group whose identity was itself in the process of formation, insisting on being viewed as distinct from both the working classes and the aristocracy, whose wealth and power resided in land, not in the newly emerging capital. Likewise, these characters' identity formation and subsequent identity crises are emblematic of a sense of English national crisis associated with the French Revolution. The contrary views on the revolution voiced by Edmund Burke, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Thomas Paine are indicative of this crisis. Arguably, the most important questions asked by English men and women of the period were "Who are we?" and "Whom do we want to become"?

In Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (*Udolpho*) the protagonist, Emily St Aubert, is easily victimized by both her aunt, Madame Cheron/Montoni, and her aunt's husband, the novel's villain, Montoni, in large part because of Emily's status as a young female who has lost both parents and who has been removed from her home, a former safe haven, and,

ultimately, stripped of all that formerly provided her with a stable sense of who she was. William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (*Caleb*) traces the same process of identity formation in a young man, Caleb, and identity destruction by a person more powerful, Falkland, and the legal system that furthers Falkland's power over Caleb. That Godwin was writing an obviously political novel that explores questions of power, aristocracy, and the bourgeoisie only strengthens the connection of identity to power. Finally, one can note the same phenomenon among multiple characters in Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (*Melmoth*), providing enough evidence to draw a general conclusion: a relatively stable sense of personal identity is essential to agency. Relatively powerful men and women recognize this fact and use it as a means to overpower those who stand in their way or otherwise threaten their power. To address such a threat is to render the victim in all of these novels relatively powerless by destroying or diminishing those facets of their life that provide them with a sense of identity.

Several factors that help determine a person's identity, in this sense, cross gender lines. Such include ethnicity and religion; social status (a complex category that includes ethnicity and religion as well as family ties, economics, and gender); personal freedom (especially important during the 1790s in England, given that *habeas corpus* was suspended in 1794 in reaction to the chaos and paranoia spawned by the French Revolution's turns of events); families and communities that offer education, love, comfort, and support; and a sense of personal safety.
In examining power struggles, Gothic novelists focus on many different individuals and institutions that for a variety of reasons deem it necessary to gain and maintain power over others to thrive. In order to do so, they must overpower their critics and any other individuals who threaten their existence or success. Although they each employ diverse and often unique methods, their methods all share one thing in common: they attempt to weaken their opponents

by reducing them to non-beings, or, in other words, they undermine that which gives them a sense of identity. One of the most frequently used methods is to challenge the reputation of the individual through threats, real or imagined. In doing so, villains threaten that part of the characters' identity that is constituted by what others think of them. For female characters, these threats are often threats of rape, and in the cases involving oppressive fathers, even incestuous rape. Though important to the concept of identity for both males and females, virtue and reputation are particularly important to the female heroine in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fiction and only become more so as novels by writers like Radcliffe, in Diane Hoeveler's words, write works that promote "women's supposedly passive acceptance of their newly proscribed social and educational identities as wives and mothers of the bourgeoisie" (5). A woman's reputation becomes the single factor that can determine her success—i.e., her ability to attract an acceptable bourgeois husband—given that all other factors are determined in her favor. As such, the threat or perceived threat of rape frequently has a paralyzing effect on heroines of these novels, reducing them to powerless beings *vis a vis* would-be male rapists like Montoni.

Given the emphasis in the eighteenth and nineteenth century on the importance of a woman's virtue, such threats were real and meaningful. Should Emily St Aubert be raped or even have the rumor of such a violation emerge, her chances of securing a marriage with even the humble Valancort, the young man whom she loves, would be jeopardized. Such a threat is also suffered by the eldest Walberg daughter in *Melmoth* when her family is reduced to such poverty that her mother at one point thinks her daughter has turned to prostitution to make money to feed her family. Such threats of rape in Gothic fiction go back to the original Gothic novel proper, Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, in which the villain Manfred threatens his son's fiancé in order to

force her into a marriage that he thinks would shore up his tentative claim to the demesne of Otranto.

Often such threats of rape are preceded by a kind of mental and emotional torture endured by characters who are locked in eerie, frightening, and often life-threatening places, the classic Gothic attics, prisons, towers, and dungeons. In such settings, the individuals being threatened lose their sense of safety, their belief that they can survive, and thus a sense of themselves. Such emotional torture, however, is not reserved for female victims solely, but is employed against males as well. By separating their victims from society, oppressors make great strides in undermining these victims' sense of who they are. As people's families and the communities in which they live provide them with a strong sense of who they are, serving as environments that identify them as important individuals and with which they, in turn, themselves identify, in Erikson's terms, removing them from such comforting and supportive environments goes a long way in reducing them to a state of confusion and despair. Though Radcliffe is the only author in this study to employ the classic fortress as a prison for her heroine, in *Caleb*, Godwin will place Caleb in an equally impenetrable prison and force him for a time to live with a group of banditti, a group often employed in Gothic fiction as yet another example of outcasts whom certain forces in society have overpowered and reduced to near non-existence. Likewise, Maturin has many characters who are literally and figuratively imprisoned in asylums (Stanton) and ecclesiastical prisons (Monçada, Isidora).

If those being oppressed don't literally have their freedom taken away, they often have their freedom of thought threatened, through either a mental torture that is the equivalent of brainwashing or through religious intolerance and indoctrination. Though while being held captive by Montoni, Emily St Aubert is never allowed to think for herself or to act on her own

impulses, such thought control is most often employed in *Melmoth*. Mončada is the most evident victim of religious oppression when he is imprisoned by the Spanish Inquisition, as much for political as religious reasons. Such imprisonment both literally and figuratively forces Mončada to relinquish his freedom of thought and freedom of religion, both essential aspects of his individual identity. Likewise, the Wahlberg family, a family of German Protestants living in predominately and oppressively Catholic Spain, is shunned by society for not being Catholic. They are not allowed to live as themselves and succeed. Finally, in the same work, Adonijah, the Kabbalist Jew, is forced literally to live underground and is denied even basic citizenship.

As one's reputation, freedom, and religion contribute to one's identity, so too does one's social status, a social status that increasingly over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth century in Europe is based as much on one's wealth as on one's birth. Reducing their victims to a level of abject poverty, Gothic villains destroy these victims' sense of social status and thus an important sense of who they are. Jews in *Melmoth*, gypsies in *Udolpho*, and the banditti in *Caleb* all live on the fringes of society, in large part because of their religion or ethnicity but also because of their socio-economic status.

Finally, though *Caleb* focuses little on forced marriages, both *Udolpho* and *Melmoth* have as dominant themes the problem of women forced to marry against their will. Furthermore, once these women are married, such relationships are predicated on the male's ownership of their wives, reducing those wives to property, void of an identity separate from that of their husbands. Thus, by ruining or at least threatening their reputations, causing them to suffer extreme fear and guilt, imprisoning them, oppressing them, reducing them to poverty, and/or forcing them into relationships against their will, the Gothic villains in these three novels, and in other Gothic novels as well, learn how to overpower their victims by stripping away those aspects of their

lives that contribute to their individual sense of who they are, or, in other words, their individual identity, that sense of themselves that allows them to continue to hold on to the necessary power to function in society.

There is, however, an irony present in all three works. Despite being tortured and reduced to near non-beings by their oppressors, the victims in all three works do frequently overcome their tormentors (Caleb Williams and Maturin's Isidora are notable exceptions) and return to a somewhat normal life. Indeed, they often emerge from their captivity stronger as individuals than they were before being captured. It is as if they intentionally assert themselves in order to thwart the efforts of their oppressors. Perhaps unconsciously, perhaps consciously, they understand that in order to maintain their sense of who they are, and thus their independence and power, they must insist on maintaining even more forcefully those characteristics of themselves that their oppressors are attempting to destroy. Rejecting unwanted marriages, working to survive in their poverty, refusing to relinquish their beliefs, repeatedly escaping their imprisonment, and fighting to maintain their good names, most of the protagonists eventually emerge stronger than their oppressors, who remain empowered only if their victims allow themselves to be victimized. Though one could read such conclusions as idealized romance endings in which good always triumphs over evil, what such endings emphasize more forcefully is the need to fight against oppression, be it due to arbitrary abuses of power, religious oppression, aristocratic class, or gender inequality. Though Godwin's *Caleb* is the most overt example of "political Gothic" (Hindle), in their own subtle way, Ann Radcliffe, often labeled as a political conservative by critics, and Charles Maturin, a humble man of the cloth, were subversives as well, both knowing that only in the Gothic novel would they have the liberty and freedom to undermine and expose

the abuses of power that were so much a part of their eighteenth- and nineteenth-century societies.

Though it is arguable that the theme of identity formation and stability is not unique to Gothic novels—indeed much adolescent literature, many realist novels, and the sub-genre of *bildungsromans* in general are devoted directly to these important psychological processes—given the instability of the middle class, the threats to the primacy of the aristocracy and traditional patriarchal system, the increased focus on the position of women in families and society, and the general threats to governmental and political systems that were witnessed in late eighteenth-century England, one can understand why an interest in individual identity—and by extension gender, class, and political identity—are at the forefront in fiction emerging during this important transitional period, a period that witnessed a continued disintegration of what remained of a feudal past and a subsequent move toward the modern era.

Finally, a note on why I have chosen Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, and Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* to illustrate my claims about identity and power in Gothic fiction. Though one can trace the same themes in many Gothic novels from, and including, Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* through novels written in the 1780s, as Robert Miles claims in "Eighteenth-Century Gothic," "although several writers imitated Walpole—including Clara Reeve and Sophia Lee—Radcliffe was the first to invest the new subgenre of terror fiction with the feel of the classic" (11). In *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762-1800*, E.J. Clery makes a similar claim, calling *Udolpho* (1794) "The apogee of Gothic fiction" (116). Indeed, almost every recent book-length study of Gothic fiction acknowledges Radcliffe as solidifying the Gothic novel as a distinct genre more so than any other novelist. Additionally, the year 1794 was a seminal year for Gothic novels, witnessing the publication of both *Udolpho* and *Caleb*.

Several possible historical reasons may help explain the timing of both Radcliffe's and Godwin's novels. In part theirs are fictional reactions to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), an important defense of traditional values and institutions, and equally a response to the subsequent turn of events in France, including the rise and fall of Robespierre, the 1792 September Massacres, the 1793 Reign of Terror, and England's subsequent declaration of war against the new French republic. As Miles claims, "The importance of Burke's move was clearly understood by radicals such as William Godwin, whose anti-Gothic novel, *Caleb Williams* (1794) sets out to 'deconstruct' chivalry as instrumental to the state terror of reactionary Britain" ("Eighteenth-Century Gothic" 17). E.J. Clery also writes that "Godwin's warnings of the threat of self-mystifying tyranny at home were quickly reinforced by the turn of events" (169), noting that "In 1794, *habeas corpus* was suspended in Britain and a Committee of Secrecy established for the interrogation of suspected political activists detained under arbitrary arrest" (170). Clery also sees this interest in reflecting contemporary politics in the Gothic as extending beyond the novels of 1794 when she claims that "The best supernatural fiction of the Romantic period, works by James Hogg, Mary Shelley, and Charles Maturin, engage in complex ways with contemporary social realities" (173). Miles also links Maturin to Godwin and Radcliffe by claiming that "If critics were to pick out a terminal date for the close of the first phase of the Gothic, it would probably be 1820, the year in which Maturin's *Melmoth, the Wanderer* was published" (*Gothic Writing* 8).

Beyond the political affinities shared by these three works, collectively the three help to illustrate that my observations about identity formation and its connections to power transcend differences between "male" and "female" Gothic novels: identity is a source of agency for both males and females. Likewise, the issue transcends differences between the "explained

supernatural" found in *Udolpho*, the lack of any supernatural events in *Caleb*, and the outright inexplicable supernatural of *Melmoth*. Furthermore, issues of identity and power occur regardless of setting, including time—the past in *Melmoth*, the present in *Caleb*, and the not-so-remote or unidentified past in *Udolpho*—and place—Radcliffe's isolated Italian castle, Godwin's contemporary London, and Maturin's variety of Spanish, English, and island settings in *Melmoth*. What all of these factors call to attention is that despite the differences in these novels, they share a common theme related to identity formation, stability, and power—one that helps define them and unite them as Gothic fiction.

Chapter II

The Mysteries of Udolpho: Emily St. Aubert and the Female Heroine's Identity

The novels of Anne Radcliffe share with those of her fellow Gothicists stories of power struggles that explore issues of identity. Publishing her first novel, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, in the same year as the outbreak of revolution in France (1789) and *The Italian* (the last novel published during her lifetime), in 1796, the year after the Directory convened as the new French government and Napoleon Bonaparte began his Italian campaign, Anne Radcliffe wrote and published in the Gothic vein during what were among the most momentous events in European history, events that brought under serious question the legitimacy of the power traditionally held by aristocrats throughout European nations. If French revolutionaries could topple aristocratic authoritarianism because of its illegitimacy, novelists could begin questioning the legitimacy of power on more intimate levels, and Radcliffe's 1794 *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (*Udolpho*) most clearly does so. David Durant notes that in general, Radcliffe's novels "are written to and embody the response of a civilization which seemed to be facing anarchy. The French Revolution and the attendant radical movements in England threatened the form of government, the class structure, and the way of life of her country" (529), all factors that could and arguably did lead to a fragmentation of national identity, resulting in an anxiety that Radcliffe explores on an individual level in *Udolpho*. Despite its sixteenth-century setting, *Udolpho* has characters who are much more like late eighteenth-century characters in terms of their world views, the issues they struggle with, and their personal identities. Durant continues that specifically, Radcliffe's "major novels demonstrate an obsession with the single subject of the coming of age of the individual" (520). It is this "coming of age" that explores the formation

and challenges to the identity of the individual. Radcliffe's novel raises the question of and explores on a personal level what it means for a young woman to come of age—to struggle to establish an identity and overcome subsequent identity crises—in a time that brings into question who is in power and how they maintain and exercise that power over others.

Though lengthy, the novel can be summarized fairly succinctly. It opens in the year 1584 in France on the estate of the St Auberts, La Valée. Monsieur and Madame St Aubert have one daughter, Emily, and they seem the idyllic family until the untimely death of Madame St Aubert. In grief and poor health himself, M. St Aubert leaves La Valée with his daughter to travel to the south of France to recover his health. On their way south, they encounter a dashing young man whose personality is similar to that of St Aubert himself, Valancourt, who accompanies them on a large part of their adventure. Unfortunately, St Aubert's health continues to decline, and he dies, conveniently near the convent where his dead sister is interred, and St Aubert is buried beside her tomb. Before his death, St Aubert dictates that Emily burn his final papers without reading them. Emily returns alone to La Valée, and she does burn his papers, but not until her eyes scan some disturbing parts which, along with a miniature of a woman she has seen her father crying over, bring into question St Aubert's faithfulness to Madame St Aubert and into doubt the true identity of Emily's mother.

At her father's death, the dependent Emily falls under the guardianship of her father's sister, Madame Cheron, who insists that Emily leave La Valée and accompany her with her new husband, Montoni, to Venice and later to his castle, Udolpho. Here we learn that Montoni's sole purpose in marrying Madame Cheron was to obtain her estates to pay off his own gambling debts. Discovering that the now Madame Montoni is not as wealthy as he supposed, his next goal is to force her and Emily to sign over their estates to him.

What follows for Emily is a series of terrors as she thwarts the efforts of Montoni's numerous cohorts, all of whom want to take advantage of her. After her aunt's death, Emily is befriended by one of Montoni's political prisoners in the castle, a young man named Du Pont, who eventually helps her escape Udolpho. After their escape, Emily lands once again on the coast of southern France, very close to the convent where her father was buried. She is welcomed in by the Count de Villefort to Chateau le Blanc, where she learns the truth about the mysterious woman in the miniature she inherits from her father: the woman portrayed in the miniature was not St Aubert's mistress, but his sister, the Marchioness of Villeroi, who was murdered by her husband and his mistress, one Signora Laurentini, the original owner of Udolpho, who is now a "mad" nun, living in the convent where Emily's father is buried. Once this mystery is settled, Emily finds that Montoni has died of mysterious causes, Valancourt, whom Emily eventually marries, returns from Paris, and she inherits her own estates, those of Madame Cheron, and even Udolpho, which she chooses to give away. She and Valancourt return to La Valée to "live happily ever after."

What is central to *Udolpho*, as it is to so many Gothic novels which have as protagonists young characters caught somewhere between the formative years of adolescence and adulthood, is the formation of these protagonists' identity and subsequent challenges to that identity. To come to the fullest understanding of Emily St Aubert's identity and the agency it affords her, it is necessary to examine both its vertical and horizontal components. Multiple components of Emily's identity exist at any given time—biological (sex, age), psychological (sensibility, ability to reason), and social (environment, relationships, gender)—but these components are subject to change over time. When any of these vertical factors is suddenly and unexpectedly altered (the loss of a loved one, for example) or there is any sudden, abrupt, or unnatural break in the

continuum of her life, Emily's identity is compromised. In Erikson's terms, she suffers an identity crisis, one often evidenced in a sense of anxiety, panic, or even paralysis. For the majority of *Udolpho*, the identity and agency of young Emily St Aubert is challenged and severely compromised by several individuals, most notably the Gothic villain, Montoni, whose claim to power, like that of his literary predecessor, Horace Walpole's Manfred, is questionable due to the fact that Signora Laurentini (aka the mad Sister Agnes) is the rightful owner of Udolpho.

Home and Exile

Given the attention Radcliffe places on Emily's Edenic home, La Valée, in the early and concluding chapters of *Udolpho*, analysis of the role place plays in the formation of Emily's identity and the anxiety subsequently caused when she is forcibly exiled from that home will serve as a starting point to unravel both an important dimension of Emily's sense of self and the subsequent rupture in the continuum of that sense. Discussing the importance of social context to personal identity, psychologist Harold Grotevant puts an emphasis on place. Identity for individuals is not just the way they feel, but the way they feel within an environment, like that of the home. Grotevant writes, "Here the starting point is not in 'feeling to be the same as I was' but in the way one can be identified as such by his or her environment" (11). He concludes, "identity always involves mutuality between the individual and his or her world" (11). David Punter makes such a claim for Radcliffe specifically: what connects Radcliffe's novels with those of Lewis and other Gothicists is that "they are essentially explorations of the relation between the individual and the environment, which is, of course, the subject with which other writers of Gothic like Godwin and Shelley were to be concerned from a more overtly political point of

view" (*Literature* 64). Intimately tied to this environment, or sense of place, are, of course, the associations we naturally make with homes: families, education, and, especially for the upper-middle-class female of the 18th century, security.

Since sociologists list food, clothing, and shelter as the basic requirements for human survival, a home is an important part of the survival of any individual. For women, historically, home has taken on dimensions that render it more than a mere shelter. As the principal managers of the home, women have frequently found power in their homes, and, indeed, their identity, power, and ability to survive depended on having a home. Even novels in the realist tradition have as an important concern the location and acquisition of a home. The novels of Jane Austen, to cite but one set of examples, end in marriage, but with that marriage comes a home. Perhaps none of her novels emphasizes this more forcefully than *Pride and Prejudice*, where the loss of the Bennet estate due to male-entailment only increases the need for each Bennet daughter to find a substitute for this home, Darcy's Pemberly being perhaps the most successful find. Radcliffe understands the importance of this place to the survival of her heroines, and Emily St. Aubert is no exception. The contrast between the sense of safety and happiness Emily feels at La Valée and the sense of dislocation and anxiety she feels elsewhere, especially in the terrifying fortress of Udolpho, underscores the importance of this home of choice in Emily's life.

Diane Hoeveler emphasizes that "home" is the first word of the novel, noting that the initial epigraph in the novel is taken from Thomson's *The Seasons*, 'Autumn':

> '----------------home is the resort
>
> Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
>
> Supporting and supported, polish'd friends
>
> And dear relations mingle into bliss.'

Indeed, the initial descriptions of La Valée paint an ideal picture, complete with "pastoral landscapes," "gay with luxuriant woods and vines," "majestic Pyrenees," and "the soft green of the pastures" (5). We are told within the first chapter that M. St Aubert, having early in life experienced an absence from La Valée, has "retired from the multitude 'more in pity than in anger,' to scenes of simpler nature, to the pure delights of literature, and to the exercise of domestic virtues" (5).

The novel also places this home within an important larger national identity. La Valée is in France, where the opening chapters remain, and the novel eventually returns Emily to the safety of this French setting after separating her from her home by removing her to Italy, representing the foreign and even dangerous for Emily. At one point on the first trip Emily takes away from La Valée with her father, the narrator emphasizes the importance of being French to M. St Aubert, who is forced to accept a place to stay from a cottager in Southern France: "St Aubert was himself a Frenchman; he, therefore, was not surprised at French courtesy; but, ill as he was, he felt the value of the offer enhanced by the manner which accompanied it" (65). Both St Aubert and his daughter feel most themselves within the known and stable context of their home and home country.

Maggie Kilgour draws a comparison between Emily's home and childhood and that of Rousseau's Emile, calling Emily "a feminised 'Emile'." She writes that

> Rousseau counsels that the child be raised in isolation, away from the corruption of society, to become secure in himself, so that when he enters the public sphere he will be able to withstand its evil influences. La Valée is for Emily such a world of isolation, her version of the Crusoesque island idealized by Rousseau. It is an Edenic world of innocence, and harmony between parents and child, humans and nature. (115)

As if to underscore that Emily begins to come to the fullest understanding of how important La Valée is to her only when she is being forced to leave to live with her new guardian, her aunt, the narrator provides several descriptions of Emily's growing awareness:

> 'How delightful is the sweet breath of these groves,' said she. 'This lovely scene!—How often shall I remember and regret it, when I am far away. Alas! what events may occur before I see it again! O, peaceful, happy shades!—scenes of my infant delights, of parental tenderness now lost for ever!—why must I leave ye!—In your retreats I should still find safety and repose. Sweet hours of my childhood—I am now to leave even your last memorials! No objects, that would revive your impressions, will remain for me!' (110)

And, just before Emily's departure, the narrator reflects,

> Those, who know, from experience, how much the heart becomes attached even to inanimate objects, to which it has long been accustomed, how unwillingly it resigns them; how with the ostentations of an old friend it meets them, after temporary absence, will understand the forlornness of Emily's feelings, of Emily shut out from the only home she had know from her infancy, and thrown upon a scene, and among persons, disagreeable for more qualities than their novelty. (114)

The opening of the very next paragraph stresses the importance of La Valée to Emily by contrasting its simplicity to the ostentatious estate that belongs to her aunt in Tholouse (Radcliffe's spelling). As she walks through her aunt's gardens on the morning of her arrival in Tholouse, "Her thoughts thus recalled to the surrounding objects, the straight walks, square parterres, and artificial fountains of the garden, could not fail, as she passed through it, to appear the worse, opposed to the negligent graces, and natural beauties of the grounds at La Valée, upon

which her recollection had been so intensely employed" (115). These passages not only emphasize the importance of place to Emily, but also illustrate how La Valée is a mirror of Emily herself: its natural landscape contrasts to the formal gardens of Madame Cheron just as Emily's own innocent, natural graces contrast with the artificiality of her more ostentatious, pompous aunt.

In a conservative reading of the importance of home, April London places *Udolpho* within the context of other eighteenth-century novels that emphasize the importance of property and home, citing Fielding's *Tom Jones* as an example, in which the final happiness and security of Tom and Sophia rest in their inheriting Squire Western's estate (35). London sees in property a stability and continuity of culture that was being threatened by an emerging mercantile economy whose wealth was based on moveable property, noting that "This landed disinterestedness defines itself against the emergent capitalist structure of the monied interest, identified with the instability of moveable goods, the hysteria of investment in a paper economy, and the self-seeking political faction" (38). For London, Radcliffe is a conservative who sees property, propriety, or the maintenance of virtue, as all connected to and all keys to stability (37). She finds further evidence for such a preference to land over money in the contrast between Emily's father, M. St Aubert, who values La Valée and its traditions, and his brother-in-law, M. Quesnel: "M. Quesnel, introduced in the first chapter as an antithetical type to St. Aubert, is in perpetual transit between country and city; 'unplaced,' he typifies the commercially oriented and therefore ethically bankrupt" (39). M. Quesnel's failure to understand the importance of place to identity leaves him incapable of understanding the St Auberts. When M. Quesnel becomes one of Emily's two legal guardians after her father's death, his lack of understanding of the importance

of La Valée will eventually result in his leasing it against Emily's will, contributing significantly to her suffering.

Perhaps a final comparison can be made between the Count de Villefort, the owner of Chateau-le-Blanc, the temporary sanctuary Emily finds herself in after escaping Udolpho, himself a surrogate father-figure for Emily who shares St Aubert's love of his country estate, and his wife, who loathes the chateau and prefers Paris, a city throughout the novel associated with dangers and debauchery. Maggie Kilgour points to at least two passages when the Count chides his wife for underestimating the value of the chateau (125). After the countess at one point exclaims, "'What a dismal place is this!'" (441), the count replies, "'this barbarous spot was inhabited by my ancestors'" (441). Though in centuries subsequent to the setting of Radcliffe's novels, people in general have become far more mobile, London is right that eighteenth-century communities were relatively stable, people still frequently tied to land as owners or workers. Though Radcliffe can be seen to champion this connection to land as an essential part of who her characters are, in M. Quesnel and the countess, she also recognizes the up and coming challenges to this tradition and how this cultural change can be potentially damaging to the identities of those traditionalists like the St Auberts. In her feminist/historicist reading of *Udolpho*, Diane Hoeveler also focuses on the importance of home to the female, albeit she distinguishes between the aristocratic landowners like Squire Western, whom London cites, and the newly emerging bourgeois family represented by St. Aubert's family. She agrees that "In many ways this novel, like the majority of female gothics, is concerned with the troubles attendant on finding a home" (87). Again, here as with so many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels by women, Udolpho displays "an anxiety about the displaced female" (88). I will later focus on Emily's

marriage to Valancourt and her return to La Valée and will again consider the importance of home to Emily's sense of identity and power.

Before this return occurs, however, Emily must be removed from La Valée, at first voluntarily as she accompanies her father on a vacation to restore his health, and later forcibly as she falls under the guardianship of her aunt, Madame Cheron, later Montoni. Until then, as London notes, La Valée has been Emily's only known world and has formed a large part of her sense of who she is (42). Afterward, as London continues, Emily "finds the boundaries between self and other constantly shifting, becoming indistinct, and occasionally, as in her first glimpse of Udolpho, suffering complete obliteration" (42). Though travel beyond the home with a father as a chaperone would arguably be a healthy way for Emily to further her development as an individual within a larger social context, unfortunately, St. Aubert's death early on their trip leaves Emily ward to her aunt, whose parenting skills fall far short of St. Aubert's. After her aunt marries the unscrupulous Montoni, Emily is forced to leave La Valée for what seems to be for good, becoming, in essence an exile against her will. As Kilgour states the case, "Emily's development is thus set up not as a natural transition but as an abrupt fall from a state of community into one of isolation" (117). This abrupt shift leaves Emily cut off from her past, confused about her present state, and uncertain about her future. Such a state compromises what James Marcia, echoing Erikson, calls a "sense of identity," which depends on "an individual's continuity with the past, a personally meaningful present, and a direction for the future" (70-71). This abrupt and unwanted change in environment disrupts the stable continuum of Emily's life, leading to uncertainty and anxiety.

Many evenings during her exile, first in Tholouse, Emily reflects on the loss of her home, the loss of her father and of Valancourt, whom she always connects to home and her longing to

return to what she knows and finds comfort in. On her first evening away from home, looking at the prospect from her aunt's garden, "Her heart pointed to her peaceful home—to the neighborhood where Valancourt was—where St Aubert had been" (115). Days after her arrival at Tholouse, she experiences the same feelings: "The pensive hour and scene, the evening light on the Garronne, that flowed at no great distance, and whose waves, as they passed toward La Valée, she often viewed with a sigh, —these united circumstances disposed her mind to tenderness, and her thoughts were with Valancourt" (118). Like many who are forced to leave that which provides them a stable sense of identity, Emily finds more comfort in reflection on her relatively stable past than in the uncertainty of her present and future.

Though her removal from La Valée to Tholouse is painful for Emily, being in France still and thus close to home does offer her some comfort. Her situation worsens, however, the further she is removed by time and distance from La Valée and her fiancée, Valancourt. Learning that Montoni is going to move Emily and her aunt to Italy, Emily laments the distance that will now separate her from Valancourt:

> How dreadful to her imagination, too, was the distance that would separate them—the Alps those tremendous barriers! would rise and whole countries extend between the regions where each must exist! To live in adjoining provinces, to live even in the same country, though without seeing him, was comparative happiness to the conviction of this dreadful length of distance. (143)

As Emily is led to Udolpho by Montoni, the first sight of the castle itself instills fear in Emily: "As the carriage wheels rolled heavily under the portcullis, Emily's heart sunk, and she seemed, as if she was going into her prison; the gloomy court, into which she passed, served to confirm the idea, and her imagination, ever awake to circumstance, suggested even more terrors, than her

reason could justify" (217), and, later after a brief respite in a neighboring cottage, when Emily is once again led to Udolpho by Montoni, she claims that "'Alas! . . . I am going again into my prison!'" (402). Among others, Mary Poovey considers the abrupt nature of this change in environment by comparing Udolpho to the home Emily has been forced to leave: "Udolpho is a sinister inverse of La Valée, an enclosure whose boundaries oppress rather than protect, a prison which shelters hatred rather than love, a bastille which excludes both law and moral nature itself" (319). April London makes a connection between the terrifying and strange castle and Emily's identity: "The castle is here personified as dark and monstrous in proportion to Emily's own less sure grasp of her selfhood" (42). The mere forced removal from her home would understandably invoke in Emily several of the normal fears that Erikson mentions most people share: "suddenness in change," "intolerance of being manipulated and coerced beyond the points at which outer control can be experienced as self-control," "fear of losing autonomy," and a "sense of being restrained" (*Childhood* 409-10). It is this fear of a loss of freedom that Donald Bruce sees as being at the heart of *Udolpho*, stressing that one of the novel's central themes is the love of liberty (303). Central to this liberty is the ability to exercise freedom of choice, and Emily sees her inability to choose her home over exile in Udolpho as a loss of her liberty and stability.

Marcela Cornejo's conclusions about recent Chilean political exiles mirror the conclusions readers can draw about Madame Montoni and Emily once they are exiled in Udolpho. The strange and unfamiliar environment is itself unsettling. Cornejo records that "Migration imposes on the individual a context that somehow forces breakup with his/her environment and usual behavior. This leads to a crisis situation where the strategies to deal with it become more evident" (334). This could explain Emily's strange wandering through Udolpho—to find her aunt but also to get her bearings. It is during these wanderings that Emily

experiences her most intense moments of anxiety in the novel. Her reaction to these anxieties is often a loss of control, a loss of her sense of self. Anne Williams notes that "In the darkness of Udolpho she [Emily] is even separated from herself, by being made to doubt her own reason, and in moments of crisis, by losing consciousness altogether (Emily faints ten times during the course of the narrative.)" (163). Cornejo also connects exiles' separation from home to other important aspects of their identity: loved ones and familiar objects:

> With regard to exile as a forced migration, it is possible to believe that its main objective is to violently break the personal history, the family and the social and cultural entourage. This sudden, violent rupture is primarily expressed as a loss of cultural roots, a complex state of emotional mourning and crisis; mourning for all the losses (relatives and friends as well as the professional, educational, and social situation) and crisis caused by this radical rift in life and the resulting unbalance. (335).

When Emily is temporarily removed by Montoni to a neighboring Tuscan cottage, Udolpho itself under siege by government authorities, Emily, relatively free and comfortable once again, is reminded of the safety and peace of her far-away home. The landscape around the cottage first reminds Emily of La Valée: "The scenes of La Valée, in the early morn of her life, when she was protected and beloved by parents equally loved, appeared in Emily's memory tenderly beautiful, like the prospect before her, and awakened mournful comparisons" (393). Likewise, in the relative safety and peace of the cottage, "Of her pleasant embowered chamber she now became fond, and began to experience in it those feelings of security, which we naturally attach to home" (394).

The novel not only explores the consequences of forced separation from home and its effects on Emily, but it also emphasizes how, for her, home is not just a place of sentimental

attachment, but a place of security. Her father, M. St Aubert, understood this fact too, when he arranged for Emily to inherit La Valée and made her swear never to sell the estate. When Emily finds that her uncle, M. Quesnel, who is in charge of many of her investments, is to let La Valée, she reflects on its significance to her and the promise she made to her father:

> The committing of what had been her father's villa to the power and caprice of strangers, and the depriving herself of a sure home, should any unhappy circumstances make her look back to her home as an asylum, were considerations that made her, even then, strongly oppose the measure. Her father, too, in his last hour, had received from her a solemn promise never to dispose of La Valée; and this she considered as in some degree violated if she suffered the place to be let. (186)

Later, as Emily accompanies the Montonis on a visit to her uncle's Italian estate, "suddenly remembering that her beloved La Valée, her only home, was no longer at her command, her tears flowed anew, and she feared that she had little pity to expect from a man who, like M. Quesnel, could dispose of it without deigning to consult with her, and could dismiss an aged and faithful servant, destitute of either support or asylum" (193). The safety and security that were united in home and father at La Valée are contrasted with the anxieties associated with every other strange place and unsupportive adult Emily meets during her exile.

Likewise, the novel's conclusion reflects both the importance of La Valée to Emily and the way in which its simplicity defines who she is. After the death of Montoni, Emily inherits her aunt's Tholouse estate, Udolpho, and, of course, La Valee. Furthermore, Valancourt inherits his brother's estate, Epourville, giving the couple the unexpected choice of numerous homes. Emily immediately gives Udolpho, which holds for her horrendous memories of her forced exile and

confinement there by Montoni, to another of his Italian relatives. One of the final passages in the novel reflects Emily and Valancourt's final choice regarding home:

> The estates, at Tholouse, were disposed of, and Emily purchased of Mons. Quesnel the ancient domain of her late father, where, having given Annette a marriage-portion, she settled her as the housekeeper, and Ludovico as the steward; but, since both Valancourt and herself preferred the pleasant and long-loved shades of La Valée to the magnificence of Epourville, they continued to reside there, passing, however, a few months of the year at the birth-place of St Aubert, in tender respect to his memory. (631)

Montoni's Power

Emily's forced exile is, of course, at the hands of the novel's villain, Montoni, who imprisons both Emily and her aunt in order to weaken them to the point that they will sign away their estates to him. Kilgour makes a connection between the castle and its ruler: "The castle's sublime rule over the natural world mirrors Montoni's total authority over Emily within it. Montoni is the human version of the sublimity of the mountains, whose impenetrability reveals to Emily her lack of power over her own fate and keeps her in the dark" (119). Passage after passage in the novel comments on Montoni's absolute power over all within the confines of Udolpho. Even before she is forced to leave Tholouse with the Montonis, Emily reflects that "The thought of being solely in his power, in a foreign land, was terrifying to her" (149). It is while in Tholouse that Montoni furthermore forces Emily to relinquish Valancourt by forbidding her to marry him. Emily's marriage to Valancourt would make La Valée unavailable to Montoni, who will work for the remaining part of his life to force Emily to relinquish all of her land to him, a topic that I will later explore in a discussion of Emily's disinheritance. Once he marries

Emily's aunt, Montoni does, of course, become one of Emily's legal guardians and thus has the legal authority to force her to travel with him to Udolpho, where Emily witnesses his rule over all: "He had, of course, many bitter enemies; but the rancour of their hatred proved the degree of his power; and as power was his chief aim, he gloried more in such hatred, than it was possible he could in being esteemed" (175). Even before they reach the fortress of Udolpho, Emily realizes that she and her aunt are "entirely in his power" (183). Once in Udolpho, of course, Emily is further weakened as Montoni becomes one "who had already exercised and usurped authority over her, and whose character she now regarded with a degree of terror, apparently justified by the fears of others" (228). Just as Emily's identity is shaped in part by others' views of her, her aunt and Montoni, among others, seeing her as weak and malleable, so too does Montoni's relative power rest in the fear he instills in others: he is powerful in part because others see him as such.

While subject to Montoni's control, Emily is victim to many threats. David Punter summarizes succinctly many of her fears: "It is a mark of Radcliffe's skill that the many and terrifying dangers which threaten Emily while at Udolpho are never clear. At one moment, it seems to be forced marriage, at another rape, at another the theft of her remaining estates, at another supernatural terrors, but none of these come to pass" (*Literature* 59). Though these "supernatural terrors" often prove to be the result of Emily's vivid imagination, they are real as she perceives them and thus are terrifying and often debilitating to her. One of he most memorable and oft cited moments of terror for Emily occurs when, at Udolpho, she lifts the veil from a mysterious "portrait" to find what she interprets to be a human corpse: "She paused again, and then, with a timid hand, lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall—perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture, and, before she could leave the chamber, she dropped senseless on the

floor" (236) in one of the many fainting spells she has over the course of the novel. Though the narrator, toward the conclusion of the novel, reveals to the reader that what Emily takes to be a corpse is actually a waxen figure, we never know if Emily ever discovers this truth once she escapes Udolpho, never to return there again. Thus, the image she sees remains a torturous memory to her for the remainder of the novel. In a similar scene, after Montoni imprisons Madame Montoni and refuses to let Emily comfort her, Emily goes on a desperate hunt to find her aunt. Misled to a chamber above the castle gates by the porter, who is secretly trying to aid Count Morano in abducting Emily from Udolpho, Emily comes across yet another strange chamber, this one containing an actual corpse. Seeing it, Emily is once again seized with fear: "The features, deformed by death, were ghastly and horrible, and more than one livid wound appeared in the face. Emily, bending over the body, gazed, for a moment, with an eager, frenzied eye; but, in the next, the lamp dropped from her hand, and she fell senseless at the foot of the couch" (330). Believing the corpse to be that of her aunt, Emily reaches one of her lowest points in the novel, thinking herself now bereft of yet another relative. Reflecting on "the dead form" (331), Emily's

> reason seemed to totter under the intolerable weight. She often fixed a wild and vacant look on Annette, and, when she spoke, either did not hear her, or answered from the purpose. Long fits of abstraction succeeded; Annette spoke repeatedly, but her voice seemed not to make any impression on the sense of the long agitated Emily, who sat fixed and silent, except that, now and then, she heaved a heavy sigh, but without tears. (331)

Though the corpse later turns out to be that of a man, for a significant time afterward, Emily continues to believe that it is the corpse of her aunt who she thinks has been tortured to death by Montoni. Due to her fear of Montoni, Emily connects all that she sees to his power and villainy.

Although at this point in the novel Emily's aunt is still alive, she is being starved to death, tortured emotionally by Montoni, and allowed to suffer a raging fever that goes untreated. Emily witnesses much of her aunt's suffering, which only serves to increase the difficulty of this period of exile for both her and her aunt. Granted, Emily never loves her aunt to the extent that she would like, her aunt's greed, pomposity, and foolish conduct being in so much conflict with her own level-headed, unassuming personality; nonetheless, by allowing the two to spend time with each other during their confinement in Udolpho, Montoni does allow them to offer some comfort to each other. It is during these periods that Emily witnesses her aunt's distress. Cornejo theorizes about the effect of torture or witnessing such torture on exiles in general: "individuals subjected to the effects of repression and torture will undoubtedly face their exile condition in a state of greater vulnerability and psychological sensitivity that will not only increase the risk of mental alterations, but also interfere significantly with the adaptation process of the exile and his/her family" (336). Thus Emily's already compromised identity due to her exile and imprisonment is further weakened by her witnessing the horrors Montoni is capable of inflicting on her aunt and the fear that he may eventually inflict similar torture on Emily herself.

When Montoni discovers that Madame Montoni has legally arranged to keep her estates in her own name after her marriage, he begins a series of tactics to force her to relinquish all that she owns to him. At one point he tells her, "'You shall be removed this night . . . to the east turret; there, perhaps, you may understand the danger of offending a man, who has unlimited power over you'" (288). Subsequent to this threat, Madame Montonni, under the supervision of

Emily, suffers what seems to be a stroke. Emily "saw her eyes rolling, and her features convulsed" (288). Throughout the following night, Emily "continued to watch Madame Montoni, the violence of whose convulsions was abating, till at length they ceased, and left her in a kind of stupor" (288). Even after such a fit, Montoni continues to torture Madame Montoni, accusing her even of trying to poison him and carrying her away to the east turret as he had threatened to do. The effect on Emily is powerful. When her aunt cries out, "'They are coming! . . . I hear their steps—they are at the door'" (298) and Montoni calls his men to "'execute your orders'" (298) by forcing Madame Montoni into the east turret, Emily once again "sunk, senseless" while her aunt is being removed.

Disinheritance

After Madame Montoni's death, Montoni employs a series of tactics to try to coerce Emily into signing over the estates that she inherited from both her father and her aunt. Prior to the clash between Emily and Montoni over these estates, as E.J. Clery points out, the novel "carefully and lengthily establishes the conditions which have made the former [Emily] vulnerable to disinheritance" (118). Diane Hoveler furthers this point, noting that both M. Quesnel and his sister, Madame Montoni, "used the law—papers, documents, signatures—to effectively disinherit and to tyrannize over Emily, and Radcliffe suggests that in an earlier, matriarchal-rural culture, such behavior would not have occurred" (88-89). It is in her removal from La Valée and her imprisonment in Udolpho with characters like the Montonis, both of whom, unlike St. Aubert, actively participate in the new economy of exchange, that Emily more easily falls victim to disinheritance.

The issue of Emily's property is complex. Given that the conditions of life in which the sixteenth-century characters in *Udolpho* function are more akin to those in Radcliffe's own eighteenth century, Emily has more control over her property as a French woman than the equivalent English woman would have had. It is this control that is part of her own economic power. Discussing this issue in historical terms, Kate Ellis points to the lengths to which Montoni has to go to secure both Emily's and her aunt's estates: "The need for such machinations suggests considerable economic power on the part of Radcliffian women" (123). Furthermore, the document Emily eventually is forced to sign turning her estates over to Montoni proves not to be legally binding, leading Ellis to conclude that "The legal system of Udolpho protected women to a degree that did not occur in England until half a century after the novel appeared" (123). Indeed, several of the male characters seem to recognize the illegality in the document that Emily eventually signs giving Montoni all of her inherited estates. During her escape from Udolpho with M. Du Pont and the servants Annette and Ludovico, Du Pont raises Emily's hopes that all is not lost:

> Du Pont now taught her to expect, that the estate, of which Montoni had attempted to defraud her, was not irrecoverably lost, and he again congratulated her on her escape from Montoni, who, he had not a doubt, meant to have detained her for life. The possibility of recovering her aunt's estates for Valancourt and herself lighted up a joy in Emily's heart, such as she had not known for many months. (433)

When the escapees reach Chateau le Blanc, the Count de Villefort concurs with Du Pont: "He had little doubt that the law would decide in her favour, and, advising her to apply to it, offered first to write to an advocate at Avignon, on whose opinion he thought he could rely" (466). These assurances are important to Emily as she connects so much of her identity to her former

home. Additionally, the assurance that even as a female she has some power that the law supports further helps to stabilize her condition.

Even before Madame Montoni's death, Montoni devises a plot to obtain La Valée. At first, neither he nor Madame Montoni offers Emily any explanation for why Montoni disapproves of Valancourt as Emily's fiancé. His preference for Count Morano, we later learn, is a vulgar attempt to "sell" Emily to Morano, who would, Montoni assumes, become the possessor of Emily's La Valée should the two become married and thus be willing to "pay" for Emily by turning the estate over to Montoni. After Morano sincerely falls for Emily, he explains Montoni's villainy in an attempt to get Emily to abandon Udolpho and return to Venice with him. Morano declares, "'You hear that Montoni is a villain . . . a villain who would have sold you to my love!'" (248), later claiming that "'Emily! the schemes of Montoni are insearchable, but, I warn you, they are terrible; he has no principle, when interest, or ambition leads'" (248). Emily, of course, has no desire to marry Count Morano; she has no feelings for him and an engagement to Valancourt, which, in her heart, she cannot be forced to break. She also knows that Montoni and her aunt have no legal power to force her to marry against her will; nonetheless, she knows that their powers of coercion are strong, and she fears her loss of choice: "Though she knew, that neither Morano's solicitations, nor Montoni's commands had lawful power to enforce her obedience, she regarded both with a superstitious dread, that they would finally prevail" (200). Still, in a cruel mind game in which he assumes or hopes that Emily doesn't understand the law, Montoni insists that Emily marry Morano because it is his "will" (207). The effect on Emily, who knows the law, is still profound: "Emily continued, for some time after Montoni had left her, in a state of despair, or rather of stupefaction; a consciousness of misery was all that remained in her mind" (207). It therefore remains a mystery to both Emily

and the novel's readers why, on the day settled for her wedding with Count Morano, insisted on hitherto by Montoni, Montoni suddenly decides to remove his entire family from Venice to Udolpho. Emily assumes, however, that it is a further attempt to force her to marry the Count: "her forced marriage with the count could there be solemnized with the secrecy, which was necessary to the honour of Montoni. The little spirit, which this reprieve had recalled, now began to fail, and, when Emily reached the shore, her mind had sunk into all its former depression" (213). Not until much later do we learn that Montoni has discovered that the Count is actually worth far less that Montoni assumed; Montoni therefore, chooses to "reserve" Emily for a wealthier suitor later. Unfortunately, the terror of any coerced marriage is enough to severely weaken and compromise Emily's agency.

After her aunt's death, Emily thinks for a moment that perhaps Montoni will lose interest in her and allow her to return to France. Emily "began to hope he meant to resign, now that her aunt was no more, the authority he had usurped over her; till she recollected, that the estates, which had occasioned so much contention, were now hers, and she then feared that Montoni was about to employ some stratagem for obtaining them, and that he would detain her his prisoner, till he succeeded" (358). As Emily reflects many times, La Valée is precious to her because of its meaning to her father, because it is a vital part of who she is, because it is a safe haven to return to, and, now that she is engaged to Valancourt, a means of gaining the husband she wants. Just after realizing that Montoni still wants her property, "For Valancourt's sake also she determined to preserve these estates, since they would afford that competency, by which she hoped to secure the comfort of their future lives" (358). Thus her future, her home, her safety, her marriage—much of that which will define her future identity—depends in this historical period on her maintaining her inherited estates.

The Importance of Reputation

Emily never willingly relinquishes her estates, which her father had so cherished and the importance of which for Emily's sense of self and power he impressed upon her. However, because of the threat of rape by several of Montoni's cohorts, and even fears of incestuous rape on Montoni's own part (he is technically her uncle upon marriage to her aunt), Montoni is eventually successful in coercing her into signing them over to him. Several critics make a connection between property and person in Udolpho, emphasizing how females are more vulnerable to having both violated. E. J. Clery points out that Emily "is forced to sign away her property to her wicked uncle not because of any inability to suffer with fortitude, but because in a castle overrun with drunken mercenaries and Venetian courtesans she can no longer safeguard her privacy, and by extension her person, without his protection" (119). Hoeveler draws a similar conclusion when she claims that Radcliffe "manages to create a fictional world where disinheritance is figured as the equivalent of incestuous rape. And if neither threat actually materializes, the reader vicariously experiences both as if they did through the vivid imaginative fantasies of each of the heroines" (2). Montoni clearly understands the importance of both chastity and property to Emily's power: without property, she is wholly dependent on Montoni or a future husband for sustenance, and without her chastity, the procurement of that future husband would be severely threatened. In attempts to coerce Emily to relinquish to him her estates, Montoni knows that threats of rape will be powerful weapons to be used against Emily because he implicitly understands the importance of chastity and reputation to young women. Fear of being raped is itself listed by Erikson as one of the fears that all people are subject to (*Childhood* 410). For women in the eighteenth century, however, the fear is exacerbated by the

resulting loss of chastity and the social implications of such a loss. Kenneth Gergen writes that in general, “one’s ideas of self are significantly affected by what he imagines others think of him” (41), underscoring an important social dimension of identity that Erikson too recognized: reputation. And historically, a woman’s ability to secure a husband, her surest means of financial stability and security from the threat of other men, depended on that reputation. Thus, for Emily, protection of her person from Montoni and other ruffians at Udolpho outweighs even the protection of her property. Both the law and Montoni’s lack of moral center give Montoni and other men at Udolpho the ability to use their power to threaten Emily’s virtue and thus her reputation. Poovey writes of Montoni’s power over Emily that “The Italian has the power to tyrannize her helpless virtue because his position is protected by law and, more importantly, because his energy is a purely aggressive force, immune to the socializing reciprocity of sensibility” (322).

Emily’s reputation becomes an issue early in the novel as soon as her father dies and she becomes the ward of her aunt. Emily has, by this point, become attracted to Valancourt, who has implicitly had her father’s approval, though Valancourt does not propose to Emily until he meets her in Tholouse. Madame Cheron, catching the two talking in her garden, questions Emily about the inappropriate nature of such clandestine meetings between a young unmarried woman and a man. In the following dialogue, Emily works to ensure her aunt of her reputation:

> ‘Well then,’ said she, ’promise me that you will neither see this young man, nor write to him without my consent.’—‘Dear, madam,’ replied Emily, ’can you suppose I would do either, unknown to you!’ ‘I don’t know what to suppose; there is no knowing how young women will act. It is difficult to place any confidence in them, for they have seldom sense enough to wish for the respect of the world.’

> 'Alas, madam! said Emily, 'I am anxious for my own respect; my father taught me the value of that; he said that if I deserved my own esteem, that of the world would follow of course.' (120-21)

Not only does Emily's virtue and concern for her reputation prevent her from any inappropriate conduct while unmarried, but she even fears what a clandestine marriage with Valancourt would do to her and his reputation: she reflects on "her repugnance to a clandestine marriage, her fear of emerging on the world with embarrassments, such as might ultimately involve the object of her affection in misery and repentance" (147).

Once away from Valancourt, who has sworn as her fiancé to be Emily's "lawful protector" (149), Emily is subject to a number of threats from men associated with Montoni, the most powerful of whom is Count Morano. Later, thwarted in his efforts to obtain Emily from Montoni, Count Morano attempts to abduct Emily by secretly entering her bedchamber. Wary of her reputation, Emily points out to him that such conduct is not the way to win a virtuous woman's heart (251). It is here that Morano emphasizes to Emily that even though she is Montoni's prisoner, she can't expect Montoni's protection, even in his role as uncle / surrogate father. In a sarcastic exclamation, Morano tells Emily "'his *protection*! Emily, why will you suffer yourself to be thus deluded? I have already told you what you have to expect of his *protection*'" (249).

The need to maintain her virtue can be seen both as a limitation placed on her by patriarchy and as her surest means of surviving in that patriarchal structure. Several critics characterize chastity as Emily's control over potential sexual impulses, and there are moments when she seems strangely attracted even to Montoni. Count Morano picks up on the sexual tension that often exists between Emily and Montoni, who, after all, shows no interest at all in

his own wife, Emily's aunt, after their marriage. He tells Emily, "'It is preposterous—it cannot be.—Yet you tremble—you grow pale! It is! It is so; —you—you—love Montoni!'" (251). The fact is that Emily is still in love with Valancourt, but even the rumor of anything inappropriate between her and Montoni, especially after her aunt's death, is enough to threaten her reputation. Diane Hoeveler discusses specifically one scene in Venice when Emily is seated between Morano and Montoni in the confines of a gondola. She notes that Emily "is not simply reduced to an object of exchange between two men who are themselves in a homosocial scenario. The quasi-pornographic threat in this and the rape chase scene concerns the fear that a woman's fate in this society is to be sexually used by numerous men in a polygamous fashion" (100). If Western culture depends on monogamy, polygamy, the forbidden, becomes a male fantasy which, being forbidden, is even more enticing. The danger for Emily is, of course, determined by the double standard by which men and women in the eighteenth century are judged when it comes to sex outside of matrimony: at the end of the novel, for example, Valancourt can be forgiven for his Parisian indiscretions, committed during Emily's confinement in Udolpho, but, the text implies, to give in to any libidinal impulse before marriage would yield Emily no better than one of Montoni's mistresses, the dead marchioness, Emily's aunt, or the mad nun, Laurentini, the adulterer / murderer of St Aubert's late sister, the Marchioness de Villeroi, none of whom would be acceptable as, to use Hoeveler's term, "professionalized bourgeois wives."

The contrast between Emily, the successful heroine who is rewarded for her forbearance with a home and family in the end of the novel, with the other, more impulsive women who followed their sexual passions, only to be led to destruction through death or madness, emphasizes the importance of reputation to eighteenth-century women. In comparing Emily to Laurentini, for example, Mary Poovey notes the dangers for a woman in the eighteenth century

to give in to a passion for sex, regardless of how strong, and she connects the female's need to control such passions to her identity: "Abandoning the 'controls,' those moral feelings internalized as 'principles,' catapults a woman into the anarchy of sexual desire and tears from her the last remnants of her social power, even her identity" (322). Indeed, in an early conversation with Sister Agnes (formerly Signora Laurentini), Agnes tells Emily, "'You are young—you are innocent! I mean you are yet innocent of any great crime!—But you have passions in your heart, —scorpions; they sleep now—beware how you awaken them!—they will sting you, even unto death!'" (541). Later, in her deathbed confession, Agnes furthers this theme, warning Emily to "'beware of the first indulgence of the passions; beware of the first'" (607), concluding her speech to Emily by encouraging her to "'Remember, sister, that the passions are the seeds of vices as well of virtues, from which either may spring, accordingly as they are nurtured. Unhappy they who have never been taught the art to govern them!'" (608). And finally, Diane Hoeveler notes that in telling Emily the story of the dead marchioness, Emily's aunt, the servants Annette, early in the novel, and Dorothee, later, are informing Emily that "the destiny of women who allow their passions to dominate them is to suffer at the hands of more powerful men who embody the world of the patriarchal tyrant" (101). These examples of women, like Emily's own aunt, who follow their passions without regard to their reputations and are subsequently punished for their actions, serve to remind Emily of the threat she is under with Montoni and other unscrupulous men.

When Udolpho is under attack and Emily is sent to a Tuscan cottage by Montoni, she also suffers at one point from the perceived threat of rape from the two men who conduct her to the cottage. She greatly fears that rather than threatening her with rape himself, Montoni has hired the conductors, Ugo and Bertrand, to do his dirty work for him (380). Ugo and Bertrand, in

the end, offer no harm to Emily, but not all of Montoni's men are so kind. Eventually, after returning to Udolpho, Emily is chased around dark chambers and through dark galleries by so many men that she has to solicit the protection of the servant Ludovico, who has worked tirelessly over the course of the novel to secure the protection of Madame Montoni's maid, Annette (409). Clearly, identity, here dependent on virtue and reputation, or, to paraphrase Erikson, what others think of her, is clearly linked to her power as an individual.

Emily eventually has to agree with Count Morano's claim that though Montoni may pose no direct threat to Emily, other men in the castle may. Given that after Madame Montoni's death, Montoni lives openly with several prostitutes as mistresses, whom he brings to Udolpho from Venice, Emily feels that she is under further threat. When she does finally sign over her estates to Montoni, however, she is once again tricked by him; he has no desire to let he leave Udolpho. Having her property and her person ensures his entire power over her. While feminist readings like those of Emma Clery and Mary Poovey connect Emily's chastity to her property as both are key to her future success, Anne Williams goes even farther, and like Emily, stresses that reputation may even outweigh the importance of property for the female. Speaking of Emily, Williams writes that "Sometimes she fears for her life, the end of her existence in nature. And she fears the loss of her chastity (the 'fate worse than death'), which would be equally fatal to her social identity" (164). In the end, Valancourt, whom Emily marries, has enough property to support them both, making Emily's property less important in terms of economics. However, as the novel strongly implies, the loss of her chastity before marriage would be much more detrimental to Emily's position in society as others' opinion of her constitutes such an important part of her identity and thus her future power to marry the man she chooses.

Though the emphasis in *Udolpho* is on the heroine's reputation as part of her social identity, she is not completely alone: the reputations of both her father and her future husband are important, both for their own identities and as they are a reflection of Emily. The mystery of exactly who is in the miniature Emily finds with her father's final papers after his death and that she later wears around her neck brings into question St Aubert's "saintly" life. Is the portrait that of a woman with whom St. Aubert has had an earlier sexual liaison? Is she even potentially Emily's mother, making Emily an illegitimate child? And, what is Emily to make of Valancourt's reputation as a dissipated youth in Paris, as the Count de Villefort reports of him? Showing how issues of virtue—wholly absent in Montoni and thus causing even his cohort Morano to refer to him as a "villain"—are not exclusively limited to the identity of females, in the second plot of *Udolpho*, Radcliffe exposes the importance of reputation to the identity and power of two important males in Emily's life—Valancourt and St Aubert. Not only is their behavior indicative of who they are, but rumors or hints at their indiscretions threaten Emily's own stable identity as she is intimately connected to them both: what affects them also affects those to whom they are related. Though it is eventually revealed that the miniature is not of any mistress of St Aubert's but, instead, of his beloved murdered sister, the late Marchioness de Villeroi, and Valancourt is able to prove through his act of generosity to a stranger that his momentary escape into debauchery has not seriously or permanently affected his character, for a while the reputation of these two men, who serve as bookends, as it were, of Emily's life, come under serious question and, as result, leave Emily temporarily unsure of who she is—what the truth of her past is or what her future will hold.

Emily immediately notes a change in Valancourt when she first sees him at Chateau le Blanc. He seems to have lost the innocence that she and her father previously admired him for,

that innocence which caused her father to several times declare that "that young man has never been to Paris." Not yet knowing what he means exactly, Emily herself hears Valancourt declare, "'I am unworthy of you'" (472). For a time, claims made about Valancourt by Count de Villefort determine his reputation for Emily. The count tells Emily, "'I think him not worthy of your favour'" (474), explaining to Emily that Valancourt, while in Paris, "'had formed an acquaintance with a set of men, a disgrace to their species, who live by plunder and pass their lives in continual debauchery'" (475), continuing that Valancourt "'appears to have a taste for every vicious pleasure'" (476). Emily handles well claims of Valancourt's gambling and imprisonment in debtor's prison, but the loss of his chastity is too much for her to take. The count reports that when Valancourt was released from prison, he moved in with "'a well-known Parisian Countess, with whom he continued to reside, when I left Paris'" (476). To this, Emily faints and afterwards breaks off her engagement with Valancourt. Only after it is revealed that the count has based his conclusions about Valancourt on rumors spread by the very men he claimed had no virtue is Emily reconciled to Valancourt.

Parents and Their Children's Identity

Emily's goal in marriage is to extend the continuum of her life by establishing her own family, in part to replace the family she lost with her father and mother's death and the loss of La Valée. The marriage to Valancourt in the end of the novel, which many critics see as a simple return to her original existence, with Valancourt as a surrogate father to replace St Aubert, reasserts the importance of family for the female heroine. And, essential to her concept of family is her concept of the father, the patriarch of the family—for Emily, St Aubert. His influence on the development of her identity cannot be underestimated. If St Aubert's reputation influences

Emily's identity, so too does his early influence on her as a father, an influence she carries with her throughout her harrowing ordeals over the course of the novel. Her connection to her father was close, and evidence of this bond can be seen in her frequent memories of St Aubert, in her constant search for surrogate father figures, and in her increasing application of St Aubert's lessons while negotiating the evils of the world into which she is thrown.

The importance of family should never be underestimated when trying to understand the formation of a child's identity. Even before birth, both genetically and psychologically, the parents are the strongest early influence on the development of a child's identity. As social psychologist Leo Rangell explains, "Each parent, and the pair as a unit, directs his/her mental attitudes toward the unborn baby from their first awareness of conception, even before that, at its anticipation . . . . Both the genetic and these unconscious psychological contributions of the parents assure and bring about generational continuity" (31). The same can be said for the child's development during adolescence. Psychologists stress the importance of the closeness between a parent and child, often in terms of the safety the child feels and the education he or she receives as a result of good parenting. Ruthellen Josselson discusses this concept as related to the life cycle, stating that

> there has been a great deal of confusion in regard to adolescence. Because of the primacy of the separation-individuation concept, attachments, especially attachment to parents, have been regarded as failures of the separation-individuation process. In fact, however, attachments to parents persist throughout life. Separation-individuation revises attachment, but does not obliterate or supersede it, and the evidence is clear that the healthiest adolescents maintain strong attachments to their parents throughout adolescence and beyond, using their attachment as a secure base to which they return

from exploration and, beyond this, enriching their lives through a persisting sense of affection and warmth. (92)

Josselson even speculates that this is especially true for females as “Women’s sense of self [especially] is organized around the ability to make and maintain relationships” (83), a characteristic that helps explain why Emily St Aubert is so especially close to her father, later to surrogate parent figures, and finally to her betrothed and later husband, Valancourt. In her chapter titled “Gothic Fiction’s Family Romances,” Anne Williams goes so far as to say that “Gothic is ultimately a family story—dealing with the problems associated with patriarchy and the woman as ‘other’” (22). David Durant’s reading of Udolpho stresses the closeness of Emily to her first family, her subsequent confusion as a result of being removed from that family, naturally by the death of her parents and unnaturally by being separated from her aunt by Montoni, and, finally, the establishment of her own family through marriage. He writes of this middle period, “The pattern contrasts a safe, hierarchical, reasonable, loving world of the family with a chaotic, irrational, and perverse world of the isolated” (520).

The memories Emily cherishes of her father and the number of times people and items remind her of him are strong indicators of his influence on her. Immediately after Emily returns to La Valée from burying her father, she retreats to the fishing-house where memories of both her father and mother flood over her (96). The next day, as she works up enough nerve to enter her father’s library, she even thinks she sees him: “To this infirm state of her nerves may be attributed what she imagined, when, her eyes glancing a second time on the arm-chair, which stood in an obscure part of the closet, the countenance of her dead father appeared there” (99). Kilgour discusses the importance of this father figure by noting that “Emily’s typical defence against an unpleasant present is to remember an ideal past, to want to retreat into a cloistered

private world of the family. Immediately after St. Aubert's death she thinks of entering the convent in which he is buried, as a way of staying close to him and of recreating in the convent the sheltered domestic life to which she is accustomed" (135). Until her own future family begins to fill the void that St Aubert has left, "memory holds Emily together as a unified person, identical through time and through drastic changes in circumstances and place" (Kilgour 135). Though I would argue that Emily never remains "identical" over the course of the novel, as Kilgour claims, I can agree more fully with her claim that "The complete discrepancy between the stages of her life, her sense that she has lost everything, causes her to retreat into nostalgic memories of a romantic past as protection from and compensation for a gothic present" (135). And, of course, as her father was the last parent she was to know, Emily's memories of him take center stage in her retreat into a more comforting past. Indeed, Hoeveler asserts that if Emily becomes the perfect, professionalized bourgeois female and wife, St Aubert is the model of the idealized bourgeois husband and father (89), later noting his lasting influence on Emily by recognizing that more and more over the course of the novel, Emily models herself after the feminized father and later the feminized Valancourt (91).

Emily also attaches herself to a number of subsequent males, all of whom she sees as surrogate father figures but all of whom, in one way or another, fail to make up for the loss of St. Aubert. In both Venice and Udolpho, she even misses the "protection" of Montoni, who, as her uncle-in-law, should be her protector but who is never really interested in protecting her at all (178). Even a series of servants or cottagers serve from time to time as father figures, notably La Voisin, the cottager in whose house St Aubert dies. Though no elitist, Emily recognizes the inferiority in rank of La Voisin to her own father; still, she makes a point to revisit him upon subsequent returns to the environs of Chateau le Blanc.

The most obvious father figure, however, is the Count de Villefort, to whom Emily turns for advice about her estates and about Valancourt himself. About the Count, "she felt much of the respectful love and admiration of a daughter" (530). Emily later claims that "the Count, sometimes, withdrew him in a manner so delicate and benevolent, that Emily, while she observed him, almost fancied she beheld her late father" (610). In at least two ways, however, the Count falls far short of St Aubert: in discrediting the reputation of Valancourt and thus threatening Emily's future safety and happiness and in promoting the advances of his friend, Du Pont. At one point, disregarding Emily's constant claims of not feeling anything other than friendship for Du Pont, the Count "ventured, in the earnestness of his wish to promote what he considered to be the happiness of two persons, whom he so much esteemed, gently to remonstrate with her, on thus suffering an ill-placed affection to poison the happiness of her most valuable years" (600). What hinges on her choice of marriage to the man she really loves is the future happiness of many more "valuable years," but the Count, whose own sad marriage should inform him of this truth, insists on promoting the interests of a man Emily does not love.

In addition to supplying the security of home that fostered Emily's early identity development, St Aubert is a principal influence on Emily through her education, and much critical attention has been paid to how this education provides Emily the strength to face her challenges and helps shape the person she is. Erikson theorizes about such education as "training" in much the same way critics analyze the type of education St Aubert provides for Emily. In a discussion of the difference between humans and other species, where animals survive with inborn instincts, Erikson asserts that "man survives only where traditional child training provides him with a conscience which will guide him without crushing him and which is firm and flexible enough to fit the vicissitudes of his historical era" (*Childhood* 95). As Emily's

mother dies within the first chapter of the novel, critics are left with only the subsequent "training" provided by St Aubert with which to evaluate Emily's education. Hoeveler recognizes that after Madame St Aubert's death, "The training and education of Emily, the only surviving child of this estimable couple, are left solely to the father" (89). In her discussion of the Rousseauesque nature of life at La Valée, Kilgour claims that "Radcliffe rather flagrantly redeems Rousseau through revision; he is magically transformed from a transgressive individual and notoriously irresponsible father into the paternal setter of limits" (115). Included in this education are the traditional academic subjects that shape Emily's talents, tastes, and morals. We are told early on that at La Valée, St Aubert's "library occupied the west side of the chateau, and was enriched by a collection of the best books in the ancient and modern languages" (6). In addition, "Adjoining the library was a green-house, stored with scarce and beautiful plants" (6). These two loves of St Aubert—books and nature—help form Emily's own tastes, as can be seen in a description of her own room: "Adjoining the eastern side of the green-house, looking towards the plains of Languedoc, was a room, which Emily called hers, and which contained her books, her drawings, her musical instruments, with some favorite birds and plants" (7). The family's love of nature and reading come together in many telling scenes, such as one beneath St Aubert's favorite plane tree, where he "loved to read, and to converse with Madame St Aubert; or to play with his children, resigning himself to the influence of those sweet affections, which are ever attendant on simplicity and nature" (8).

When educating his daughter, St Aubert "taught her Latin and English, chiefly that she might understand the sublimity of their best poets" (9). Indeed, Emily carries with her some of her favorite books when she travels with her father, when she leaves La Valée, and even when the Montonis travel to Udolpho. If Emily St Aubert values anything next to the people she loves

and the sublimity of the natural world, it is the poetry beloved of her father and Valancourt. We later find out that in addition to French (her native language), Latin, and English, Emily is fluent in Italian, both in conversation and in reading Petrarch and other Italian authors. One of the results of St Aubert's focus on literature and nature is Emily's ability to perceive the world in a very late eighteenth-century Burkean sense, appreciating the sublimity of that which is natural, rugged, and untamed. Indeed, *Udolpho* is known for its lengthy descriptions of the Pyrenees, Alps, and Apennine scenery through which Emily travels over the course of the novel. As she travels to Udolpho with the Montonis, having recently crossed the Alps on their way from France to Italy, Emily notes that in the Apennines, "Wild and romantic as were these scenes, their character had far less of the sublime, than had those of the Alps, which guard the entrance of Italy. Emily was often elevated, but seldom felt those emotions of indescribable awe, which she had so continually experienced, in her passage over the Alps" (215). Her understanding of the sublime in Burke's terms also affects the way she reads other spaces, such as architecture. Regarding even the formidable castle of Udolpho, "She often paused to examine the gothic magnificence of Udolpho, its proud irregularity, its lofty towers and battlements, its high-arched casements, and its slender watch-towers, perched upon the corners of turrets" (232). Emily is not immune to her environment. Her education allows her to be perceptive to and interpret her world better than other characters in the novel. In addition, as will be the case with Godwin's character Caleb Williams, her education is one of the aspects of her identity that even the most powerful and notorious of villains can not take from her.

What most critics come to conclude is that though Emily is naturally gifted with "feminine" sensibility, enhanced by her father, who himself is a sensitive, feeling man, what she lacks and what St Aubert stresses is her need for a balance of this sensibility with the more

stereotypically “masculine” ability to reason and think logically. An early passage describing St Aubert’s ideas on sensibility and reason illustrates his devotion to fostering both in Emily:

> As she advanced in youth, this sensibility gave a pensive tone to her spirits, and a softness to her manner, which added grace to beauty, and rendered her a very interesting object to persons of a congenial disposition. But St Aubert had too much good sense to prefer a charm to a virtue; and had penetration enough to see, that this charm was too dangerous to its possessor to be allowed the character of a blessing. He endeavored, therefore, to strengthen her mind; to enure her to habits of self-command; to teach her to reject the first impulse of her feelings, and to look, with cool examination, upon the disappointments he sometimes threw in her way. (8-9)

We see this issue arise first when St Aubert tries to help his daughter moderate her grief over the death of her mother and later as he makes a last attempt at instructing Emily from his death bed. As with his attempt to instill in Emily a balance between sensitivity, or sensibility, and reason, or self-control, we again see the emphasis placed on such a balance between grief and self-control. He tells Emily as she grieves for the loss of her mother that “‘All excess is vicious; even that sorrow, which is amiable in its origin, becomes a selfish and unjust passion, if indulged at the expense of our duties—by our duties I mean what we owe to ourselves, as well as to others’” (23). Nonetheless, St Aubert recognizes in Emily’s love for and grief over her mother a kind of human sympathy that is likewise necessary for virtue: “for whatever may be the evils resulting from a too susceptible heart, nothing can be hoped from an insensible one; that, on the other hand, is all vice—vice, of which the deformity is not softened, or the effect consoled for, by any semblance or possibility of good” (23). On his death bed, St. Aubert once again takes an opportunity of stressing to Emily the lessons of self-control and moderation that he has taught

her, admonishing her to "'Beware, my love, I conjure you, of that self-delusion, which has been fatal to the peace of so many persons; beware of priding yourself on the gracefulness of sensibility; if you yield to this vanity, your happiness is lost forever. Always remember how much more valuable is the strength of fortitude, than the grace of sensibility'" (79). Emily shortly thereafter has to recall her father's lessons as she grieves for his death.

While St Aubert stresses to Emily the need to check her sensibility with self-control, she does learn to use her sensibility as a means of discovery and survival. Hoeveler sees evidence of this sensibility in another of Emily's talents to which her early education contributes: her talent in music. Hoeveler writes,

> Like all of Radcliffe's heroines, Emily St. Aubert plays a musical instrument and is particularly sensitive to music. She *feels* music and understands that the ability both to produce and to appreciate music indicates a sympathetic and sensitive soul. But in the final analysis, Emily learns that music provides the key to understanding her identity; music is the epistemology that unravels and reveals the characters and identities of Valancourt and Signora Laurentini (aka the mad nun Sister Agnes). For the female gothic heroine, music is the subjective and feminine equivalent of reason and objective data; music does not lie. (87).

Other critics, however, give less credit to Emily's sensibility and more to the rational lessons taught by her father, stressing their value on Emily's journey. Anne Williams, for example, claims that "What Emily bears with her during her journey of trials are the principles inculcated by her father's education, the seeds of 'rational happiness'" (164). What ultimately this rationality is intended to check are the superstitious flights of fancy that lead Emily to assume that supernatural events are occurring when there are none and, more importantly, for her

reputation, indulgence in any passions that might cause her to act in any way other than that which is socially acceptable for a female of her time. Mary Poovey analyzes what happens to Emily when she fails to use reason to control her sensibility. She asserts that with sensibility but without the "external governance" of a father figure like St Aubert, once exiled from La Valée, Emily is subject to "the tyranny of others" and the heart's "own excess" in places "where there is no moral protector" (318-19). She further argues that sensibility is not only useless against an unfeeling man like Montoni, but it even allows him to exercise his power over Emily, claiming that once Emily comes under Montoni's control, "Radcliffe delivers her second, and most telling, critique of sensibility: this is the viper its assumptions have allowed—the masculine passion of unregulated, individualistic, avaricious desire" (323).

In the end, it is the balance between sense and sensibility that helps define Emily's identity as she learns to remain faithful to her sensitive side (she continues to enjoy music and is touched by Valancourt's generosity) while learning the value of self-control and reason. Hoeveler sees the need to balance the two as being a general part of late eighteenth-century ideology: the need for "rational" men to be "feminized" by sensibility, as Valancourt and St Aubert are but Montoni and his cohorts are not, and the need for "sensitive" women to be "masculinized" by reason and control, as Emily is but Madame Cheron and Laurentini are not. Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century culture attempted to combine in both men and women the "best stereotyped qualities of both sexes" (90), leading Hoeveler to conclude that, as a part of this culture, "Emily seeks to make herself a 'manly woman,' much as her father and Valancourt make themselves 'womenly men'" (91). She further draws a comparison between the type of woman Radcliffe seems to advocate with the creation of Emily St Aubert and the ideal woman Wollstonecraft argues for in *Vindications*—"a manly woman" (89).

Often Emily illustrates that although she may from time to time suffer from flights of fancy, in large part, she has learned her father's lessons well, proving herself to be able to withstand the terrors she faces at Udolpho, exercise more self-control than Valancourt, and think more rationally than Count de Villefort. Even her aunt, though she would never seriously admit it, recognizes Emily's intelligence and wisdom and is even jealous of the contrast between herself and her niece. When Emily insists that she can not stop loving Valancourt and begin loving Morano, her aunt tells her, "'I cannot boast of a learned education, niece, such as your father thought proper to give you, and, therefore, do not pretend to understand all these fine speeches about happiness. I must be contented to understand only common sense, and happy would it have been for you and your father, if that had been included in his education'" (195). The speech is ironic, of course, given the disastrous union Madame Cheron makes with Montoni, especially if contrasted with Emily's eventual happiness once married to Valancourt. Emily again proves herself capable of more self-control than her aunt when Montoni is torturing her. Emily recommends that Madame Montoni act with prudence when dealing with Montoni in order to avoid his wrath: "'It is to avoid that violence, that prudence is necessary,'" she advises her aunt (267). With such prudence, Emily finds herself far better at handling the wrath of Montoni than does her aunt, Montoni's wife.

Further instances of the effects of St Aubert's education abound. If Emily is superior in her understanding to her aunt, so is she to her uncle, M. Quesnel, who insists on letting La Valée against her wishes. He may be able to pull rank when it comes to age and gender, but even he recognizes that when it comes to reason, he is no match for Emily:

> She opposed his turbulence and indignation only by the mild dignity of a superior mind; but the gentle firmness of her conduct served to exasperate still more his resentment,

> since it compelled him to feel his own inferiority, and, when he left her, he declared, that, if she persisted in her folly, both himself and Montoni would abandon her to the contempt of the world. (204)

Emily shows herself to be the superior of other males in the novel as well. As discussed earlier, Emily resists the temptations to draw too many conclusions about Valancourt based only on the hearsay that causes the Count immediately to dismiss Valancourt as unworthy of Emily. Furthermore, she proves to exercise more calm and self-control than Valancourt himself when he is in a panic over the Count's preference for Du Pont as a future husband for Emily. She tells Valancourt at one point, "'For heaven's sake be reasonable—be composed. Monsieur Du Pont is not your rival, nor is the Count his advocate. You have no rival; nor, except yourself, an enemy. My heart is wrung with anguish, which must increase while your frantic behavior shews me, more than ever, that you are no longer the Valancourt I have been accustomed to love'" (486). Later that night, she reflects on both Valancourt's desperation and the Count's advice to her, knowing that she must rely only on the "precepts, which she had received from her deceased father, on the subject of self-command, to enable her to act, with prudence and dignity, on this the most severe occasion of her life" (488).

Though Emily's mother dies only a short time before her father does, her relationship with her mother and her mother's influence on the development of Emily's identity is even more complicated than that of her father. Indeed, throughout a majority of the novel, between Emily's reading her father's papers after his death and her discovery of the miniature which she wears thereafter, who exactly her mother is remains a mystery. Emily has some question about whether the mother she knew was in fact her biological mother or whether the woman pictured in the miniature, who bears a striking resemblance to Emily, was in fact her mother. She could

potentially be the illegitimate daughter of an affair between her father and a mysterious, unidentified woman. Hoeveler stresses the importance for Emily to unravel this mystery as her mother plays such an important role in Emily's own identity. Pointing out that the miniature of, as we come to find out, the Marchionesse de Villeroi, Emily's aunt, is like a mirrored reflection of Emily, Hoeveler argues that "The portrait, in short, functions as a mirror. Emily learns to 'read,' that is understand the portrait when she learns to accurately determine her own identity and destiny" (91). Eve Sedgwick also discusses the importance of Emily's understanding her past, including who her true mother is: "The belated establishment of identity, coming after the accumulation of the various inscriptions of character, occurs only with the retracing or recognition of pairs of marked countenances that are ocularly (never just metaphorically or imaginatively) confronted and compared to each other" (157). Other critics such as Horrocks and Williams also stress the need for Emily to know the true identity of her mother as it affects her future happiness. Uncertainty about the truth of the past can lead only to a crippling doubt that threatens her future.

As a result of her mother's death, and perhaps also due to the lingering question of her mother's identity, Emily will migrate toward various females in the novel as surrogate mother figures. Ellis notes that soon after St Aubert's death, in the monastery where Emily seeks comfort, a "good abbess takes over as Emily's good mother while her relationship to her original one is under a cloud of uncertainty" (121). On several occasions, as she returns to the convent, the abbess takes on the role of mother to Emily. Shortly after Emily's father's death, "the maternal kindness of the abbess, and the gentle attention of the nuns did all, that was possible, towards soothing her spirits and restoring her health" (86). It is to the same abbess that Emily repairs after her ordeals at Udolpho are concluded and she must decide whether or not

Valancourt is worthy of her love: “She was pleased to find herself once more in the tranquil retirement of the convent, where she experienced a renewal of all the maternal kindness of the abbess, and of the sisterly attentions of the nuns” (533). When Emily finds that she has been left under the guardianship of her aunt, Madame Cheron becomes another mother figure, granted more the “wicked stepmother” figure. Still, as Madame Cheron is the only female that Emily has to cling to in terms of family, when the two are captives in Udolpho, Emily searches ceaselessly for her, putting herself at risk and facing numerous horrors during the process, even after Madame Cheron has confiscated Emily’s property, forbad her engagement to her betrothed, Valancourt, and, in general, shown Emily none of the affection a loving aunt/mother would normally show.

At question also in the novel’s conclusion is Emily’s ability to establish an identity separate from that of her biological mother or other surrogate mothers. Alison Milbank summarizes the debate: “Critics also played with the ambiguities in the mother/daughter relation, and the girl’s difficulty of achieving individuation and her own separate sense of identity” (155). Among the most important of such readings is Claire Kahane’s Freudian interpretation of *Udolpho* in “The Gothic Mirror.” Early in her discussion of Emily’s relationship with her mother, Kahane argues that while males can more easily differentiate themselves from their mothers because of their sex, for females the establishment of an identity separate from that of the mother is more difficult (337). She then goes on to discuss two potential surrogate mother figures whom Emily rejects, the first being, Laurentini, the later mad Sister Agnes, because Laurentini “mirrors Emily’s own potential for transgression and madness” (339). Here we are to recall the importance for Emily not to give way to her passions as Laurentini has done; Emily does indeed prove herself above such temptation in her rejection and escape from all of the

aggressive men she has thus far encountered. The second such potential motherly "precursor" (Kahane 339) is her dead aunt, the late Marchioness. Emily also and importantly rejects such identification because once it is known that the Marchioness was her father's sister (and Emily is still under the assumption that she may have been her father's lover), doing so would make Emily the product of an incestuous relationship. Identification with either female would create an identity that is unacceptable for Emily. In Kahane's view, the confusion over who Emily's mother is results in her failure to "acknowledge" that "fearsome figure in the mirror" (341) (the mother), whom Lacan would say she "misrecognizes" as herself. For Kahane, this figure represents potential "female desire and aggressivity"; she is "thus excluding a vital aspect of self" and "she is left on the margin of both identity and society" (340). What stands as strong evidence against such a reading of Emily's identity is her happiness at the novel's conclusion, which I will later analyze.

Alternate readings stress that although individuation from the parents occurs for both males and females, the process need not be the same psychologically for both sexes, as Emily's case illustrates. Kilgour best summarizes such readings: "In its circular form, the novel might be read also as suggesting a pattern for female development and experience which feminist critics have claimed is an alternative to the traditional male teleological narrative. The discovery of female identity emerges in continuity with the mother rather than an oepidal rupture with the father" (139). Such a reading better explains Emily's eventual stable identity at the novel's close, her strength relative to most every other character in the novel, including her husband, Valancourt, and her sense of purpose in life. The narrator's final reflection on Emily's position at the novel's close deserves examination as evidence of the stable identity that emerges once Emily overcomes the identity crises that she experiences in exile:

> O! how joyful it is to tell of happiness such as that of Valancourt and Emily; to relate, that, after suffering under the oppression of the vicious and the disdain of the weak, they were, at length, restored to each other—to the beloved landscapes of their native country,—to the securest felicity of this life, that of aspiring to moral and labouring for intellectual improvement—to the pleasures of enlightened society, and to the exercise of the benevolence, which had always animated their hearts; while the bowers of La Valée became, once more, the retreat of goodness, wisdom, and domestic blessedness. (632)

Important here is Emily's successful negotiation of all of her trials and her success in overcoming the identity crises that followed. She has regained her sense of place at La Valée, the trust and faith of her husband, and a purpose in life: to continue her intellectual and moral pursuits, one of them being a devotion to benevolence. As such, at the close of the novel, she has established the firmest personal identity that we have yet seen in her life with a relative assurance of a stable sense of continuity in her future.

The Return to La Valée

As issues related to Emily's mother have been the focus of much debate in criticism on *Udolpho*, so has the novel's conclusion with its return to La Valée. Having Emily, after undergoing so many trials, marry the man we expected her to marry all along and return to the home we expected her to inherit can be explained in many ways. It would be easy to dismiss the conclusion as a simple "easy-way-out," a way to satisfy—and trick, given the complications of the plot—our expectations by bringing the protagonist back to the place she would have remained in had her "Gothic quest" not intervened. Such a reading would acknowledge that some of the greatest novels have "unsatisfactory," or, at least, predictable if clumsy endings.

Another simplistic analysis would reveal that Radcliffe was intent on writing a comedy, in the technical sense, all along, as her novels always are, complete with the rather clichéd marriage and "happy-ever-after" ending. Most of the best comedies, after all, regardless of genre, have harrowing sections in which the characters are subject to trials and tribulations before the final happy resolution. One need cite only a few to illustrate: Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which ends in a triple marriage and a "fairy-tale" reconciliation, has at its core its own "Gothic" journey with the characters fighting, experiencing nightmarish dreams, identity confusion, and fear. Frances Burney's *Evelina* takes its eponymous heroine through questions of legitimacy, threats of rape, and a multitude of other harrowing situations only to have her marry the man of her dreams, Lord Orville. Such readings, however, ignore the multiple implications inherent in any such conclusion, and, more importantly, they fail to offer any significant insight into what is the central focus of this study: what these works reveal about the importance of identity to people's power.

Connected to the novel's conclusion, of course, is the happy marriage, and one half of that marriage is the groom. After the Count de Villefort reports to Emily what he has heard of Valancourt's behavior in Paris, Valancourt's suitability as a husband is subject to question, by both Emily and the reader. The question becomes, "Can Emily trust Valancourt to be the faithful husband that is the equivalent of the faithful wife that she is destined to be?" I earlier addressed the extent to which Valancourt's reputation potentially has an impact on Emily's reputation, but also at stake here is how that reputation affects Emily's ability to trust Valancourt as a husband. If she is to identify herself as the wife of Valancourt, can she trust him to remain as loyal to her as she plans on being to him? Given that both of Emily's aunts—the Marchioness de Villeroi and

Madame Montoni—had husbands who were adulterers and played roles in their wives' deaths, the question is one that Emily has examples to inform.

Since trust is such an important part of individual identity, Emily's ability to trust Valancourt, given the rumors that she has heard of him, is essential to her sense of identity and thus her future happiness. Essentially, as a husband, Valancourt needs to be as trustworthy as was her father, St Aubert. Erickson comments on the need for both early establishment of trust and its later consequences for the individual. To him, trust "forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity which will later combine a sense of being 'all right,' of being oneself, and of becoming what other people trust one will become" (*Childhood* 249). Thus, Emily needs to be able to trust Valancourt for the fulfillment of her father's wishes for her, for her reputation as a married bourgeois woman, for her own happiness, and for her sense of who she is.

If Emily is to become the "masculine" female, in the sense that she learns to control her emotions and balance reason with sensibility, Valancourt, in addition to becoming trustworthy, or, perhaps as a means of becoming trustworthy, must become, as St Aubert was, the feminized male. Hoeveler notes that Valancourt is shot twice in the novel, first by St Aubert himself and later by the estate gardener in Tholouse. These incidents symbolically feminize Valancourt and will allow him to control the libidinous passions to which he succumbed in Paris (94). Additionally, given the sensitive Valancourt that we witness make sacrifices for Emily and St Aubert, other peasants on their journey through southern France, and, most meaningfully for Emily, Theresa, the faithful La Valée servant who is dismissed by M. Quesnel when he lets the chateau and who is subsequently given a cottage and subsidy by Valancourt, such feminization is no great stretch, as Valancourt shows many stereotypical feminine qualities early in the novel. In this reading, then, Emily's emotional control and Valancourt's ability to show his emotions

contribute to their sense of individual identity and make them both more trustworthy partners and thus able to contribute to each other's sense of identity.

Other issues related to the novel's conclusion, so frequently criticized as being one of the novel's greatest weaknesses, must be considered in terms of Emily's identity and the power that it affords her. Clearly, the most important factors for Emily are her return to La Valée, her property and fortune secured, and her marriage to Valancourt, her reputation intact. Although such a return is seen as regressive by many critics, there is a potential psychological benefit to Emily. Given that her leaving La Valée after the death of her father—and she postpones going away with Madame Cheron as long as she can—is not of her choosing, Emily is, during the central sections of the novel, comparable to an exile. Cornejo's study of actual political exiles and the importance of home to them offers insight here. Not only does the final return home work to restore an exile's sense of identity, but just the thought of such a return helps offer a kind of mythic identity continuity that itself gives the exile strength during the period of exile. Cornejo records that

> The myth of return served the purpose of restoring the feeling of identiary continuity that had been hurt by exile. Having had their lives suspended in time (especially early on during exile) and affected in their continuity by the exile rupture, thinking of a possible return gave exiles the possibility of having continuity, even if only a mythical one, and dreaming of the moment when the return would become a reality. Everything was put in a distant future represented by the return, which gave them the possibility to live in the present time, recovering continuity and the permanence of their self in time. (342)

Like these exiles, Emily St Aubert dreams of her return to La Valée throughout her adventures. Indeed, such visions and hopes serve to give her purpose and the chance at a future. April

London agrees that the return to La Valée is beneficial to Emily as her "property" is connected to the sense of "propriety" that Emily has used to control her actions all along (43). In a similar sense, David Durant sees the return to La Valée as a kind of reward for Emily's trials: "The family provides a traditional world as the providential reward for the heroine's goodness" (525). Given that Emily and Valancourt reject the estate his brother gives him in favor of returning to her home, Emily's power and influence in their marriage is greater than some are willing to acknowledge. Kate Ellis draws attention to the fact that St Aubert forbad Emily from selling La Valée and even insisted that upon marriage, she arrange for it to legally remain hers (117), finally claiming, "These arrangements would be called by anthropologists matrilineal and matrilocal: the husband joins his wife's kin group rather than her joining his" (124). Furthermore, if one agrees with Hoeveler's assessment of the final "feminized" Valancourt that Emily marries as "damaged goods after his disastrous foray in Paris " (20), who is lucky to have Emily forgive him and marry him, she has as much power in their relationship as he.

Narrative and Identity

One final issue related to identity emerges in *Udolpho* and will become an even more prominent feature of *Caleb Williams*: that is the ability for the protagonists to determine and "narrate" their own lives. If we consider identity as a continuum, our lives constitute a narrative. Our ability to control our own narrative is empowering, while having that ability thwarted—in Emily's case by the villains she encounters—creates a sense of rupture in the continuum that compromises our identities. This sense of narrative is similar to Erikson's claim for the need for "knowing where one is going" (*Identity: Youth and Crisis* 165) and is discussed in theoretical

terms by Cornejo. Having exiles tell of their experiences to psychologists, Cornejo concludes that

> In the biographical approach, the concept of identity is supported by two main characteristics: first, as the outcome of the individual's entire biographic experience, which means that this is both the result and the actor of a history with personal, familiar and social elements. Second, life story is the preferred tool to ascertain the nature of identity, as this is considered to be a narrative construct that will be unveiled through narration. (336-37)

Not only is the ability to control one's own narrative important as it indicates control over one's own life, but for characters in *Udolpho*, the ability to share that narrative with others both offers comfort and provides an ability to make sense of the narrative itself. Having been shocked by the vision of a corpse hidden by the veil in Udolpho, Emily reflects, "When her spirits had recovered their tone, she considered, whether she should mention what she had seen to Madame Montoni, and various and important motives urged her to do so, among which the least was the hope of the relief, which an overburdened mind finds in speaking of the subject of its interest" (236). Even after her harrowing adventures are over and she is located safely at Chateau le Blanc, Emily relates her story to both the Count de Villefort and Valancourt, despite the fact that doing so causes so many painful memories to be revisited. Perhaps the character who takes fullest advantage of the benefits of narrating her own story is the loquacious servant, Annette, who declares that regardless of her circumstances, she must be allowed to talk. In a humorous response to the narrative Ludivico relates about his abduction from Chateau le Blanc by pirates, Annette comments on his captivity: "'Well, but they let you talk . . . they did not gag you after they got you away from the chateau, so I don't see what reason there was to be so very weary of

living; to say nothing about the chance you had of seeing me again'" (595). To Annette, the future—seeing her again—is dependent on Ludovico's ability to "talk" through his present, creating a continuum of experience.

Several critics also comment on Emily's ability to construct the narrative that is her own life—a power that she controls with the aid of her father until his death and, especially if we recognize Emily's power in her marriage to Valancourt, she will continue to be able to do after their return to La Valée. Ingrid Horrocks contends that "If both *Caleb Williams* and *Udolpho* deal with externally imposed oppression, both also focus on the psychology of the oppressed, and on the limitations imposed on such disenfranchised figures' abilities to author their own narratives" (34). Diane Hoeveler likewise concludes her discussion of *Udolpho* with a similar claim: "Power . . . resides ultimately in the ability to tell one's own narrative and by doing so to shape one's own destiny" (101). She further emphasizes the power associated with such narration:

> If power in the late eighteenth-century England is no longer simply a matter of class, then one can negotiate individually and privately for one's status and claims. The female gothic heroine is she who learns to tell the tale and thereby seize the more dominant power of narrative and discourse as it circulates freely in a rapidly changing and unstable social system. (101)

Thus, the very instability of society that vibrates below the surface of all Gothic fiction affords, at least for the growing number of middle class, the ability to control the narrative of their lives to a greater extent and control the identity that they form and nurture. This fact will be more evident in *Caleb*, who literally narrates in first person the story of his own life, and even in

Melmoth, which is a collection of a series of narratives, told by people who feel compelled to tell their stories, as if they understand implicitly the power of such narration.

Given the conclusion to *Udolpho*, Emily St Aubert is once again afforded a relatively stable sense of identity and thus the agency to continue to live her life as she chooses. She has her freedom of choice restored to her: the freedom to marry the man of her choosing and the freedom to live on the estate of her choosing. Whether one is critical of Radcliffe's conclusion or not, in terms of Emily's identity and the extent to which that identity is connected to her power, she is once again restored to a state more stable than that of the middle or even early sections of the narrative.

Chapter III

Caleb Williams: Modern Villains' Methods Exposed

In the same year that Radcliffe published *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, another author whose concern with power and abuses of power was more overt, William Godwin, published his Gothic novel *Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (*Caleb*). Since then, attention to Godwin as a contributor to English literature has varied. In 1993, Gary Handwerk observed that "Despite a recent resurgence of interest in his life and in certain of his works, William Godwin remains an elusive and little-noticed figure of English literary and intellectual history" (939). While recognizing an increased interest in Godwin's works in the late twentieth century, Handwerk still concluded that critics harbor a "long-nurtured suspicion about the quality and significance of much of his writing" (939). What most likely affects Godwin's reputation as a contributor to English literature is the difficulty in categorizing his style of writing. His novel *Caleb Williams*, for example, differs greatly from the Gothic fiction that precedes or follows it: indeed, one might question how it can be classified as Gothic at all. It lacks most of the classic features of the Gothic novel—the Gothic setting or fortress, the imprisonment of victims in towers or dungeons, the tortured female victim—which preoccupy so many Gothic novelists. Likewise, it lacks any supernatural elements—either "explained" as in Radcliffe, or "unexplained" as in Walpole, Lewis, or later novelists like Mary Shelley or Charles Maturin. What Godwin does, in essence, is expand the definition of Gothic beyond what had previously been established and would be frequently emphasized in Gothic fiction that was soon to follow: Gothic need not depend upon setting or the supernatural; it is based on terror—terror that can be found anywhere and at any time. Kenneth Graham clarifies this succinctly when he claims that

for Gothic fiction, “What is essential is terror, a frightened uncertainty enwrapped in a threat of violence” (“Gothic Unity” 58). More specifically, Betty Rizzo claims that Godwin’s novel “is squarely in the tradition” of Gothic because of its ability to describe “combat” between those in power and those who lack power (1387), a power that, I will argue, they have or lack as it is connected to their sense of identity.

In 2001, Monika Fludernik summarized the major categories of critical approaches to Godwin’s novel up to that point: either as a novel that explores in fictional form the principles of *Political Justice* or as an exploration of Caleb’s psychology (857). Other approaches have, however, been taken: John Zomchick has examined the novel as it investigates “individual right and juridical power” (177), and Fludernik herself, along with Marilyn Butler, explores the novel’s connection to Edmund Burke—Butler to Burke’s writing on the French Revolution and Fludernik to Burke’s theory of the sublime. While published too recently (2010) to be considered at length in this study, Tilottama Rajan’s *Romantic Narrative* discusses *Caleb* as a narrative that “is concerned with the stories we construct about others and ourselves, with the self-interest of interpretation, and with judgment and justice” (122). I discuss below the “stories” or narratives that Caleb and Falkland construct about themselves and about each other as they both help determine their identities—what they think of themselves and what others think of them (their reputations). And, finally, though it includes no extensive analysis of *Caleb*, Julie Carlson’s recent study of the entire Wollstonecraft/Godwin/Shelley family approaches Godwin’s novels as they reflect his family’s difficulty in effecting political change in the public sphere due to their reputations in their own private home. She notes that Godwin’s

> characters cannot pursue their public functions—whether that means bringing others to justice or bringing more just conditions to them—either because their characters are

> misconstrued and therefore the justice of their actions negated (Caleb, St. Leon, Mandeville) or because their entire adult life is spent trying to keep their "true" character from being revealed (Falkland, Coudesley, Deloraine). (87)

Carlson's claims are valid and relevant to this study of Caleb's and Falkland's identities and how their identities determine their power, or lack thereof. As I will argue in this chapter, it is the identities of both Caleb and Falkland that determine their power to (or not to), in Carlson's terms, "pursue their public functions." What ultimately this chapter proposes is that Godwin's novel has much to say about power—individual and political—and the connection between that power and identity, an important concept for a political philosopher who was a champion of individualism within a social context.

Over the course of *Caleb*, Caleb's situation becomes much like that of Emily St Aubert. Having uncovered a secret that threatens to ruin the reputation of his employer, the tyrannical country squire Ferdinando Falkland, Caleb finds himself eventually overpowered by Falkland, who is willing to employ any method short of murder to keep his own past crime (murder itself) a secret. Though the specific methods Falkland employs to weaken Caleb differ from those Montoni uses to overpower Emily St Aubert, the general goal is the same: to rob Caleb of his sense of identity and thus of his power. Godwin's novel, a more overtly political novel, as Maurice Hindle points out, is most obviously a novel about power (xiv). As in *Udolpho*, that power depends on both a certain sense of identity and continuity in life. Likewise, abuses of power in *Caleb* are carried out through a series of actions that severely threaten the identity of anyone who stands in the way of or threatens those who are guilty of abusing their power. More clearly and methodically than Radcliffe, Godwin telescopes his focus on a series of powerful men who attempt to destroy the lives and reputations of others who pose a threat to their own

egos and reputations. Both the characters' sense of who they are and their positions in society determine the power that they possess. Godwin's own Preface to the first edition of *Caleb*, suppressed until the later 1795 edition, claims that the novel presents "a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism by which man becomes the destroyer of man" (3). Though the novel eventually centers on the identity of the protagonist, Caleb, as he is nearly destroyed by his antagonistic employer, Falkland, the struggles for power begin long before the setting of the novel itself. Indeed, the struggles between Falkland and Caleb bring to an end a series of struggles in which Falkland has been involved directly or indirectly during his life in power as the local squire, representing the gentry who controlled and enforced the law in eighteenth-century England. As Caleb will come to discover, Falkland himself has committed a crime about which only he and Caleb know the truth, and that crime, committed many years before Caleb's birth, was the result of the young squire Falkland's attempt to ensure his own position in society by establishing a respectable reputation.

Falkland's History

Told in flashback as Caleb discovers the truth about Falkland's early life and eventually his heinous crime, Falkland's biography, which comprises Volume I of *Caleb*, is a series of struggles between powerful men bent on protecting their own reputations, even if doing so means destroying the reputations of those who threaten them. In his youth, Falkland was the model squire, reminiscent of Fielding's Squire Allworthy in *Tom Jones*—powerful, self-assured, generous—someone whom all the surrounding neighbors admired. He was truly a happy person, the complete opposite of the elderly, morose Falkland who employs Caleb. As Falkland's steward, Mr. Collins, reports to Caleb, early in his life, "'Ferdinando Falkland was once the

gayest of the gay. Not indeed of that frothy sort, who excites contempt instead of admiration, and whose levity argues thoughtlessness rather than felicity. His gaiety was always accompanied with dignity. It was the gaiety of the hero and the scholar. It was chastened with reflection and sensibility, and never lost sight either of good taste or humanity'" (11). As the second chapter of Volume I turns to Falkland's history, we discover that following this happy youth, Falkland's life has been a series of struggles against other powerful men determined to thwart his efforts to make his way in the world. When on his grand tour of Europe, Falkland meets the daughter of the Marquis Pisani, Lady Lucretia Pisani, who is being courted by one Count Malvesi. After a series of visits to Lady Pisani by Falkland, expectedly, Malvesi becomes jealous, challenging Falkland to a duel to protect his own reputation as a cavalier. Being a modern man of reason, however, Falkland chooses to diffuse Malvesi's anger and avoid the duel while maintaining his own honor. In his explanation to Mavesi, Falkland admits his own mistake in allowing himself to spend too much time with Lady Lucretia, and he shows a noble understanding of Malvesi's jealousy. At the same time, he preserves his own chivalrous reputation by stressing his own willingness to face death to preserve his honor had he and Malvesi not come to terms. He tells Malvesi,

> Count Malvesi, I feel the utmost pleasure in having thus by peaceful means disarmed your resentment, and effected your happiness. But I must confess, you put me to a severe trial. My temper is not less impetuous and fiery than your own, and it is not at all times that I should have been thus able to subdue it. But I considered that in reality the original blame was mine. Though your suspicion was groundless, it was not absurd." (17)

It is, perhaps, this challenge to his own reputation that determines Falkland's fate: though he returns to England from his grand tour as a reasonable and peaceful man, eventually such threats

to his reputation as a duel will result in his committing murder rather than back away from an enemy peacefully. Indeed, Falkland's close encounters with Count Malvesi serve to foreshadow later struggles over issues of power connected to the identity of all of the novel's characters, their intact reputations being one of the most significant aspects of that identity.

When Falkland returns to England, still a young man, only one person threatens his sparkling reputation: his neighboring squire, Barnaby Tyrrel, a character who combines the old English rustic qualities of a Fieldingesque Squire Western with a truly malicious streak. Tyrrel, born privileged and spoiled as a child, remains unlearned, devoid of the university education and travel experiences of Falkland. Based on what he learns of Tyrell, Caleb reports that

> He was early left under the tuition of his mother, a woman of narrow capacity, and who had no other child. . . . Mrs. Tyrell appeared to think that there was nothing in the world so precious as her hopeful Barnabas. Every thing must give way to his accommodation and advantage; every one must yield the most servile obedience to his commands. He must not be teased or restricted by any forms of instruction; and of consequence his proficiency, even in the arts of writing and reading, was extremely slender. (19)

Tyrrel develops into an arrogant, tyrannical, and insolent character, unlike Falkland, who, at this point in his life, is still kind and benevolent. Tyrell serves as an extension of the kind of thoughtless impetuosity Count Malvesi possessed and the eventual ruthlessness Falkland himself and others will show. Maurice Hindle points out that "it is not Falkland's immediate power over Caleb that worries us into identification with the latter's narrated dilemmas, but rather a despotic power, initially located in the 'arrogant' and 'tyrannical' Tyrell" (x). In contrasting Tyrell and Falkland, Godwin makes a direct statement about education from an enlightenment point of view: benevolence is the result of Falkland's superior education; it is very much a matter of

reason. Education or the lack thereof constitutes a large part of Falkland's and Tyrrel's identity, both that part of their identity formed by their sense of self and that part formed by what others think of them.

As he had in Rome, Falkland again comes into conflict with an antagonist, here Tyrrel, over the love of a woman, a Miss Hardingham. Tyrrel admires her, yet she chooses to dance with Falkland at a local ball. Offended and outraged that Miss Hardingham's choice, Tyrell plots revenge against Falkland: "But though he could not openly resent this rebellion against his authority, he brooded over it in the recesses of a malignant mind; and it was evident enough that he was accumulating materials for a bitter account, to which his trusted adversary should one day be brought" (25). This initial conflict is only elevated when a poem written by Falkland on the subject of chivalry is read out loud in public, causing his reputation in the public eye to rise even more. Tyrrel, in response, complains that poets are useless; he is not a man who appreciates the finer things in life. As he did with Malvesi, Falkland again tries to diffuse Tyrrel's anger by pointing out that the world is not made for any one man but for all men. In having Falkland make such a claim, Godwin uses him as a spokesperson for his own democratic principles: the time for tyrants like Tyrrel is coming to an end as the Western world embraces democratic principles that champion the rights and power of each individual. Tyrrel's response to Falkland, however, is to become even angrier, setting himself up for Falkland's eventual revenge. At this point in the novel, a poet by the name of Mr. Clare, who has recently arrived in the neighborhood and has championed Falkland's verses, falls ill, receiving a visit from Falkland. Clare wisely advises Falkland of two things: first, not to be too short tempered about his honor, in other words, not to be easily offended, and, second, to beware of Tyrrel. When Clare makes Falkland his executor, Tyrrel is once again angered, adding to his desire for revenge against Falkland.

At the same time, Tyrrel becomes protector to his underage niece, Miss Emily Melville, who, because her father has lost her mother's fortune, becomes dependent on Tyrrel. Emily's father's mishandling of his wife's fortune is itself a strong commentary on the problems with patrimony and marriage, an institution at the time predicated on ownership. The identities of Emily's mother and of Emily herself are determined in large part by the men who control their persons and their money: once their money, which reverts lawfully to Emily's father upon her mother's marriage, is spent, she is left completely dependent on her tyrannical uncle, Tyrrel. As a poor female, she is an easy victim. Emily falls in love with Falkland, yet her poverty makes her union with such a notable squire unlikely. After a public fire from which Falkland saves three quarters of the village, including Tyrrel's niece, Emily's praise of Falkland as her savior only adds fuel to the fiery desire to destroy Falkland that Tyrrel is harboring.

Tyrrel's response is to imprison Emily by confining her to her room. Though Emily questions Tyrrel's right to imprison her, he responds that his right emanates from his possession of her. She is a female, young, poor, and his dependent, making her, in essence, his property. Her inexperience and youth make her an easy victim: "Sometimes she thought of flying from a house which was now become her dungeon; but the habits of her youth and her ignorance of the world made her shrink from this project when she contemplated it more nearly" (55). Emily's further response is a powerful assertion of her freedom of mind when she tells Tyrell, "'You may imprison my body, but you cannot conquer my mind'" (60). Such a statement is reminiscent of that of Emily St. Aubert to Montoni when she asserts that he may steal her property but not her will. Emily Melville may be imprisoned, but she still has the will to assert her own independence. Such an assertion of willpower—even a strengthening of willpower—is one of the ironic results of Gothic villains' attempts to compromise an essential aspect of their victims'

identity. Emily feels strongly this threat when she asks Tyrell, "'how dare you refuse me the privilege of a reasonable being, to live unmolested in my poverty?'" (60). In addition to imprisoning Emily, Tyrell justifies his treatment of her by threatening her reputation when he pretends to use his concern for this aspect of her character as his justification for her imprisonment. Aware that, like most of the local women, Emily is fond of Falkland, "The squire himself did every thing in his power to blast the young lady's reputation, and represented to his attendants these precautions as necessary, to prevent her from eloping to his neighbor [Falkland], and plunging herself in total ruin" (59).

Tyrrel's next attempt to eliminate Emily's freedom is to force her to marry against her will to a Mr. Grimes, a boorish, uncouth, cold, insensitive character. As Tyrrel cannot force Emily to marry without her own consent, he resorts to treachery: Tyrrel's female servant becomes Emily's jailor. Tyrrel uses this jailor to further terrorize Emily: "her artful gouvernante related several stories of forced marriages, and assured her that neither protestations, nor silence, nor fainting, would be of any avail, either to suspend the ceremony, or to set it aside when performed" (61). At this point, Emily begins to suffer a serious identity crisis as a result of the terror she feels: "Her mind sunk under the uniform terrors with which she was assailed, and her health became visibly impaired" (62). Emily continues to suffer from a sense of terror as she is abducted by Grimes, whose intent is to rape her in the woods, thus ruining her reputation, perhaps the most important aspect of a young female's identity, determining in large part her ability to be accepted by polite society of the eighteenth century. Emily appeals to Grimes: "'For God's sake, Mr. Grimes, think what you are about! You cannot be base enough to ruin a poor creature who has put herself under your protection!'" (67). This event, which Monika Fludernik calls the classic Gothic "motif of virtue in distress" (857), Marilyn Butler discusses in historical

terms: “As a poor female relation in a system strictly given to male primogeniture, Emily has no economic independence, and her family feels little sense of moral obligation towards her. The imprisonment and attempted rape to which she is subjected is obviously an extreme case, but it follows course treatment and coercion which must have been very common” (245).

Emily, however, is able to evade Grimes, running to Falkland for protection. When Falkland saves her for a second time, he deposits her with a female relative, Mrs. Jakeman, who immediately gives Emily a temporary sense of safety. In his narration, Caleb himself generalizes about Emily’s example: “Such conspiracies as that of which she was intended to have been the victim, depend for their success upon the person against whom they are formed being out of the reach of help; and the moment they are detected, they are annihilated” (69). Although Emily has escaped Tyrell’s threats with the aid of Falkland, who saves her out of a strong sense of chivalry, the damage to her will to live is irreparable. Such suddenness in the changes in Emily’s life results in the anxiety that Erikson attaches to any sudden rupture in the normal continuum of one’s life (*Childhood*). In a preface to his description of Emily’s identity crisis, Caleb summarizes this sudden change: “Till the period at which Mr. Tyrrel had been inspired with this cruel antipathy, she had been in all instances a stranger to anxiety and fear. Uninured to misfortune, she had suddenly and without preparation been made the subject of the most infernal malignity” (84). The anxiety that Caleb here describes is the very anxiety rooted in a childhood fear of sudden change that Erikson notes individuals suffer from in an identity crisis.

Tyrrel’s next move is to have Emily arrested and imprisoned “for a debt contracted for board and necessaries for the last fourteen years” (85). Even Tyrrel’s steward, Mr. Barnes, whose “mind was hardened by use” (85) in Tyrrel’s service, protests, pointing out to Tyrrel, “‘Pray, your honour, think better of it. Upon my life, the whole country will cry shame of it’” (86).

Tyrrel, however, pursues his course, committing Emily to prison accompanied by her only friend, a Mrs. Hammond, who "loved her like a mother" (91). This imprisonment, like the imprisonment of all victims of powerful Gothic villains, brings an anxiety connected to many of the fears Erikson lists that compromise individuals' sense of identity: "suddenness in changes, intolerance of being manipulated, fear of losing autonomy, danger of being closed up, sense of being restrained, and fear of being immobilized" (*Childhood* 409-10). Caleb writes that "The forlorn state of these poor women, who were conducted, the one by compulsion, the other a volunteer, to a scene so little adapted to their accommodation as that of a common jail, may easily be imagined" (89).

Like Radcliffe's victims—Emily St Aubert and her aunt—Emily Melville's gender, which places her in a subordinate position to that of her male oppressor, makes her an easy target. She is in an even worse position than Radcliffe's female characters due to her economic status: she is dependant on Tyrrel, and thus he has yet another claim on her. (Characters' economic status will be an issue with more of Tyrrel's victims whom I later discuss.) Her imprisonment is more than Emily can withstand: "Her fever became more violent; her delirium was stronger; and the tortures of her imagination were proportioned to the unfavourableness of the state in which the removal had been effected" (89). She dies shortly thereafter, a shattered individual, after being visited one last time by Falkland. In summarizing Emily's destruction by Tyrrel, Caleb comments on both her death and the power of her torturer: "Such was the fate of Miss Emily Melville. Perhaps tyranny never exhibited a more painful memorial of the detestation in which it deserves to be held. The idea irresistibly excited in every spectator of the scene was that of regarding Mr. Tyrrel as the most diabolical wretch that had ever dishonoured the human form" (93). The effect on the chivalrous Falkland is even more profound. Before focusing on his

reaction, however, Caleb inserts another history associated with Tyrrel and related also to his tyranny.

Prior to Falkland's saving Emily from Grimes and her subsequent imprisonment by Tyrrel, Falkland is out searching for one of Tyrrel's renters, Hawkins, whose story serves as yet another example of a man whose identity is first compromised by Tyrrel and later by Falkland himself. Hawkins's conflict with the tyrannical Tyrrel has been going on simultaneously with Tyrrel's torture of Emily Melville and serves as another important comment on freedom of choice and its ability to form an essential part of individual identity. As an example of the corruption in politics during the eighteenth century, Hawkins has previously been evicted from his rental farm because he has refused to vote for the parliamentary candidate supported by the squire who was his landlord. As a result, he has come to rent a farm from Tyrrel, who immediately insists that Hawkins's son become his servant. Hawkins refuses to give over his son into servitude but insists that he still has a legal right to remain a tenant on Tyrrel's property because he has signed a legally binding lease. Tyrrel's response is to do everything he can to torture the Hawkins family, including cutting off their access to the local markets by placing a fence across a road that leads from Hawkins's property through Tyrell's estate. Hawkins's son's response is to destroy the fence to regain the family's freedom of mobility. When Tyrrel hears of young Hawkins's act, he decides to enforce his power through the Black Acts, passed in 1723, which Butler claims were laws "by which the eighteenth-century gentry maintained their absolute property rights in the countryside" (246). Tyrrel arbitrarily applies the acts to Hawkins's son, having him arrested and imprisoned. When Falkland intercedes with Tyrrel on Hawkins's behalf, Falkland portrays Hawkins as a poor, hated outcast. Nonetheless, Falkland is too late to save the Hawkins family, as Hawkins's son escapes from jail and the whole family disappears.

Again, as elsewhere, Tyrrel has used several of the most common methods of eroding the Hawkins's family's sense of identity: ruining the son's reputation by falsely accusing him of a crime, literally imprisoning him, and then forcing the entire family to become exiles, cut of from the supportive community of Falkland and others that provide them with an important sense of place and thus of identity. With the Hawkins's reputation ruined, they have no choice to flee to a place where they are unknown and out of Tyrrel's reach.

As a result of Tyrrel's treatment of the Hawkins family and Emily Melville's imprisonment and subsequent death, Tyrrel becomes himself a social outcast. This ostracism leads to the inciting moment in this part of the story, as Falkland and Tyrrel come into conflict during a public assembly at which Tyrrel strikes and knocks unconscious the well-meaning Falkland, humiliating him in front of his community of peers: "To Mr. Falkland disgrace was worse than death. The slightest breath of dishonour would have stung him to the very soul" (100). Tyrrel is subsequently found dead, murdered outside the assembly hall. Falkland is thereafter gloomy and unsociable, and public opinion turns against him for Tyrrel's murder. When he is eventually brought to trial for Tyrrel's murder, Falkland defends himself by resorting to his own hitherto spotless reputation, serving, as it were, as his own character witness. He claims that he hates that Tyrrel has been killed because he now cannot duel with him out of a sense of honor. He says,

> "I am accused of having committed murder upon the body of Barnabus Tyrrel. I would most joyfully have given every farthing I posses, and devoted myself to perpetual beggary, to have preserved his life. His life was precious to me, beyond that of all mankind. In my opinion, the greatest injustice committed by his unknown assassin was that of defrauding me of my just revenge. I confess that I would have called him out to

> the field, and that our encounter should not have been terminated but by the death of one or both of us. This would have been a pitiful and inadequate compensation for his unparalleled insult, but it was all that remained." (105)

The general public believes Falkland and the attention of the authorities is then turned to one of Tyrrel's other well-known enemies, Hawkins, who, along with his son, is arrested, tried, and executed for Tyrrel's murder. Though Falkland remains unsociable thereafter, his neighbors assume that the reasons are that his honor was tarnished by Tyrrel and that he never had a chance to restore his reputation.

As a tyrant in Volume I, Tyrell foreshadows what Falkland himself will eventually become. Likewise, the fate of Emily Melville and the Hawkins father and son foreshadow Caleb's own eventual trials in a novel whose characters resonate with each other in ways that amplify Godwin's social criticism of the corrupt system of power in place in the society in which they live. Butler sums up this connection: "Caleb's resemblance to the two victims of Volume I prepares the reader for the strange, yet convincing, emergence of Falkland, formerly the champion of Emily and Hawkins, as the archetypal tyrant of Volumes II and III" (246). What turns Falkland finally into the tyrannical torturer of Caleb Williams is Caleb's uncovering the truth: Falkland killed Tyrrel and framed the Hawkinses for the crime. Caleb concludes the fourth chapter of Volume II by noting that "the suggestion would continually recur to me, in spite of inclination, in spite of persuasion, and in spite of evidence, surely this man is a murderer!" (131). After confessing to what Caleb has already concluded, Falkland's life becomes one devoted solely to utilizing any means possible to keep Caleb silent and punish him for having discovered the truth. Emma McEvoy calls this shift in position an example of the "deliberate collapses and reversals of earlier Gothic. . . . The pursuer and pursued change places" (23).

Until Falkland confesses, he is tormented by Caleb's investigation into the truth. Once Falkland does confess, Caleb's own torment begins. Caleb reflects on the moment his fortune changes:

> No spark of malignity had harboured in my soul. I had always reverenced the sublime mind of Mr. Falkland; I reverenced it still. My offense had merely been a mistaken thirst of knowledge. Such however it was to admit neither of forgiveness nor remission. This epoch was the crisis of my fate, dividing what may be called the offensive part from the defensive, which has been the sole business of my remaining years. Alas! my offence was short, not aggravated by any sinister intention: but the reprisals I was to suffer are long, and can terminate only with my life! (139-40)

The remainder of the novel becomes a description of that life of torment.

Caleb's Youth and Relationship with Falkland

Although most of the first volume of *Caleb* is devoted to the history of Falkland, Caleb relates many details about himself that are important elements of his own identity. He tells us that "I was born of humble parents, in a remote county of England. Their occupations were such as usually fall to the lot of peasants, and they had no portion to give me" (5). Thus from the opening of the novel, his socio-economic status as the son of "peasants" places him in stark contrast to the country squires whose stories comprise the majority of Volume I. Caleb also attributes his weakness in relation to Falkland as much to his youth as to his inferior status: "My whole soul revolted against the treatment I endured, and yet I could not utter a word. Why could not I speak the expostulations of my heart, or propose the compromise I meditated? It was inexperience, and not want of strength, that awed me" (150). Thus, despite being a male, Caleb is

easily victimized by Falkland due to his youth and relative poverty, much as Emily Melville was when she found herself also orphaned and under the control of Tyrrel.

Further details that Caleb reveals about himself in the opening of the novel help us understand how a person from such a humble beginning has acquired a position with a wealthy employer. Despite his parents' poverty, Caleb tells us that he was given

> an education free from the usual sources of depravity, and the inheritance, long since lost by their unfortunate progeny! of an honest fame. I was taught the rudiments of no science, except reading, writing, and arithmetic. But I had an inquisitive mind, and neglected no means of information from conversation or books. My improvement was greater than my condition in life afforded room to expect. (5)

Important in terms of Caleb's identity here are his basic education, natural inquisitiveness, and "honest fame." It is with this education that he secures a position as Falkland's secretary at the recommendation of Falkland's steward, Mr. Collins, a friend of Caleb's family: "He observed the particulars of my progress with approbation, and made a favourable report to his master of my industry and genius" (6). Later, it is his intelligence and education that often provide him the means of survival in his direst moments and that make him at times appear superior even to Falkland and certainly to Falkland's agents, whom Caleb evades again and again.

Additionally, early in his service with Falkland, Caleb exhibits a disinterested analytical ability that surpasses that of Falkland and everyone else who knows of Tyrrel's murder. Caleb and Falkland have both grown up reading many of the same chivalric romances: Falkland believes wholeheartedly in the codes of chivalry contained in such romances, never questioning their limitations or contradictions—hence his extreme embarrassment at Tyrrel's threat to his own "spotless" reputation. It is only Caleb who sees beyond Falkland's façade to recognize the

possibility that no one—not even Falkland—is capable of perfection. After all, the code of chivalry to which Falkland adheres would have dictated that he challenge Tyrrel to a duel to regain his honor rather than murder him in cold blood. It is only Caleb, who possesses the investigative powers and abilities to draw the right conclusions, who correctly identifies Falkland, many years after his crime was committed, as Tyrrel's murderer. Caleb is what Betty Rizzo calls "the new emerging man, not privileged, not tenderly educated, but a reader, and a man who, even while young and inexperienced, sees the criminality of Alexander the Great, whom Falkland defends" (1388) in an early debate between the two over Alexander's virtues and faults. Falkland emerges as a remnant of an old Burkean defender of tradition and chivalry, not the thinking man capable of criticizing the past and its outmoded principles as Caleb does.

Later, after escaping from the prison to which Falkland condemns him, Caleb must turn to this learning and intelligence for survival—to earn the necessary money to live on and to provide himself with occupational diversions from his pursuit by Falkland. In essence, his education, an essential part of Caleb's identity that sets him apart from others born into the "peasant class" and one of the aspects of his identity that Falkland cannot destroy, allows him to survive when other important factors—home, freedom, safety, companionship—are taken from him. While on the run and living incognito in London, Caleb's education allows him to turn to writing to support himself. He determines that "literature should be the field of my first experiment" (266). His reflections on this choice of occupation show a well-reasoned approach to becoming a journalist:

> I was not without a conviction that experience and practice must pave the way to excellent production. But, though of these I was utterly destitute, my propensities had always led me in this direction; and my early thirst of knowledge had conducted me to a

> more intimate acquaintance with books, than could perhaps have been expected under my circumstances. If my literary pretensions were slight, the demand I intended to make on them was not great. All I asked was a subsistence. (266)

Taking advantage of the popular and relatively new field of periodical literature, Caleb "attempted a paper in the style of Addison's Spectators, which was accepted" (268). He later supplements these articles with "translation" (268). For a man of Caleb's position in society, having to survive and define himself as someone other than Falkland's servant, Caleb's move toward establishing a career, an important aspect of identity for the growing middle classes in the eighteenth century, provides him a temporary sense of continuity and stability. Unfortunatley, Caleb's efforts are discovered by Gines (whom I discuss in more detail later in this chapter), Falkland's spy, who exposes Caleb and causes him to have to abandon his writing career to once again evade Falkland's grasp. As soon as he abandons his writing, Caleb describes the classic anxiety resulting from a rupture in his life and identity: "The anxieties of my mind, in spite of all my struggles, preyed upon my health. I did not consider myself as in safety for an instant. My appearance was wasted to a shadow; and I started at every sound that was unexpected" (276).

Later, when he escapes to Wales, Caleb again puts his education to good use by advertising himself as "an instructor in mathematics and its practical application, geography, astronomy, land-surveying, and navigation" (299). Even much of his spare time is devoted to the improvement of an already firm mind: "In my youth I had not been inattentive to languages. I determined to attempt, at least for my own use, an etymological analysis of the English language" (304-05). Caleb recognizes the importance of such pursuits, not only as a means of making a living, but to also give him a sense of purpose: "Thus I was provided with sources both of industry and recreation, the more completely to divert my thoughts from the recollection of

my past misfortunes" (305). Accompanying his acceptance into this remote Welsh village, Caleb's work and pastimes provide him with the greatest sense of stability and thus certain identity that he has felt since discovering Falkland's secret and being forced to live his life on the run. He says of this period, "I began to look back upon the intervening period as upon a distempered and tormenting dream; or rather perhaps my feelings were like those of a man recovered from an interval of raging delirium, from ideas of horror, confusion, flight, persecution, agony, and despair!" (305). Erikson locates "in the tangible promise of 'career'" (*Childhood* 262) "the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others" (261), but, for Caleb, such continuity is short-lived as this respite in Wales, like all of those Caleb finds after leaving Falkland's estate, is but temporary, as he will once again be exposed and forced into flight.

Finally, it is also Caleb's education, articulate speech, and intelligence that, in Godwin's published ending to the novel, allows him to defend his own reputation, expose Falkland's past crime to a magistrate, and finally convince an audience to listen to his claims. In a rhetorical flourish, Caleb reveals the truth about Falkland but does so by deprecating himself and praising Falkland at the same time, thus willing his audience's sympathy. Though he before tried to reveal Falkland's crime to a magistrate, only by finding a rhetorical strategy that convinces his audience to listen with sympathy is Caleb successful. David Collings comments on this conclusion in the following way: "The rhetoric of sincerity in Caleb's final speech, not to mention in Falkland's response, resembles that used by Falkland to exonerate himself of the charge of murder" (857). The difference is that Falkland covers up the truth while appealing to his audience's sympathy; Caleb is able to reveal the truth but do so in a way that makes people listen. He says of the audience's reaction, "Every one that heard me was petrified with

astonishment. Every one that heard me was melted into tears. They could not resist the ardour with which I praised the great qualities of Falkland; they manifested their sympathy in the tokens of my penitence" (334). As Collings concludes, Caleb has come to understand that "The truth alone cannot win the day. Only after he learns that the telling of the truth, not the truth itself" (857) will give him the power to be believable is he successful in holding his audience's attention. That he does so while revealing that truth—unlike Falkland—wins him the forgiveness and sympathy even of Falkland, who declares, "'Williams . . . you have conquered! I see too late the greatness and elevation of your mind. . . . My name will be consecrated to infamy, while your heroism, your patience, your virtues will be for ever admired" (335).

What arguably contributes the most to what Falkland here calls "the greatness and elevation of your mind" is what Caleb describes early in the book as his "inquisitive mind" (5). Many critics have emphasized this aspect of Caleb's identity, interpreting it variously, as they have variously interpreted Caleb's curiosity about Falkland's past. Early in Falkland's service, Caleb questions the steward, Mr. Collins, about Falkland's moroseness. Collins then relates Falkland's biography to Caleb by way of explanation, believing himself that Falkland's sadness has resulted from the loss of a chance to defend his reputation by dueling Tyrrel. Caleb immediately asserts that "These reflections of my friend Collins strongly tended to inflame my curiosity" (11). Caleb is later more critical of his unchecked curiosity. After it leads him to break into the trunk in Falkland's closet that contains an account of the truth of Tyrrel's murder, he is caught by Falkland himself. Caleb concludes that "This was the termination of an ungoverned curiosity, of an impulse that I had represented to myself as so innocent or so venial. . . . My offence had merely been a mistaken thirst for knowledge" (139). Caleb spends much of his narrative trying to understand his own impulsive curiosity and even to justify it. When he finally

gets an audience to listen to his tale, he develops a new angle on his act that makes the act seem one of charity: he was concerned about Falkland and wanted to uncover the truth of his misery in hopes of helping him to overcome it. He tells his audience, “He was unhappy; I exerted myself with youthful curiosity to discover the secret of his woe. This was the beginning of misfortune” (331).

It is these various explanations of his actions that have led to so many differing interpretations of Caleb’s motivation to uncover the truth about Falkland. Many see Caleb’s curiosity as part of the natural curiosity that propels the kind of critical inquiry that interested Godwin himself (Rizzo, Reitz) and that propels progress—political, social, and scientific. Alternately, Gary Handwerk notes that many critics have attempted to connect Caleb’s curiosity to the power that it yields (953). Given Caleb’s subordinate position to Falkland and the power relative to that of his “peasant” parents that his acquirement of knowledge has afforded him as Falkland’s secretary, such a motivation is likely a partial explanation, even if Caleb is not conscious of it. Donald Wehrs makes a similar claim but extends his observations to add that this knowledge brings for Caleb more guilt and estrangement than power (503). This truth makes the eerie connection between *Caleb* and Godwin’s daughter’s own Gothic novel *Frankenstein* clear. One might argue that Shelley’s critique of Victor Frankenstein’s unchecked curiosity and failure to anticipate the negative repercussions of acting on that curiosity stems from her knowledge of her father’s novel. Just as Victor Frankenstein pursues the secret to reanimating flesh as a humanitarian action, Caleb’s “initial desire is to discover the truth in order to relieve Falkland’s suffering, if only by offering the comfort of fellowship” (Franta 703). Ironically, Victor Frankenstein’s discovery leads to his own pursuit by his creature as Caleb’s does by Falkland. In both novels, the protagonists have much that defines them as who they are, much of what

constitutes their identity—their peace of mind, safety, sense of place—compromised by the very curiosity that so much established an essential component of that identity in their early life.

One final aspect of Caleb's life and its connection to Falkland forms an essential part of Caleb's identity: the loss early in his life of his parents. In the first chapter of the novel, Caleb describes how it is that he came to be employed by Falkland:

> In the summer of the year—, Mr. Falkland visited his estate in our county after an absence of several months. This was a period of misfortune to me. I was eighteen years of age. My father lay dead in our cottage. I had lost my mother some years before. In this forlorn situation I was surprised with a message from the squire, ordering me to repair to the mansion-house the morning after my father's funeral. (6-7)

He later declares that "I had not now a relation in the world, upon whose kindness and interposition I had any direct claim" (7). Being orphaned at such a young age leaves Caleb in much the same situation as that of Tyrrel's niece, Emily Melville, and Radcliffe's heroine, Emily St Aubert. Like these young women, Caleb will, over the course of his narrative, attempt to attach himself to a number of people who will serve as surrogate fathers, mothers, and family members—all of whom he needs to make himself feel comforted, appreciated, and accepted for who he is. Falkland becomes the first and most complicated of these figures. Indeed, as is often the case in Gothic fiction, as Emma McEvoy observes, those characters who, like Falkland, emerge as villains "are all older men, or more explicitly, father figures" (24).

As soon as Falkland proposes to Caleb that Caleb become his secretary, Caleb reports that "I had never had occasion to address a person of this elevated rank, and I felt no small uneasiness and awe on the present occasion" (7). Caleb's regard for Falkland is from the beginning the kind of respect that children feel for the good father image. To further the

immediate connection, Caleb reports that if “I approved of the employment, he [Falkland] would take me into his family” (7). Significant here in complicating Caleb’s relationship with Falkland is the use of the terms “employment” and “family.” Maggie Kilgour discusses how the relationship of the class of people known as servants (and, as Falkland’s secretary, Caleb would fall into this class) to their masters was shifting in the late eighteenth century from that of medieval master and serf to that of modern employer and paid employee (62). That Caleb in part considers himself more Falkland’s employee than his serf is implicit in his offer to terminate his employment when Falkland is enraged by Caleb’s discovery of his crime. He writes to Falkland that “Sir, I have conceived the intention of quitting your service” (158). That the relationship in Falkland’s terms is more the serf to the master is implicit in his response to Caleb: “You write me here, that you are desirous to quit my service. To that I have a short answer: You never shall quit it with life” (159-60). Kilgour further explains the in-between position in which Caleb finds himself: “While increasingly becoming a purely commercial bond, [servitude] still retained elements of the old feudal system, in which loyalty and love bound men. Mr. Collins is a feudal retainer, faithfully devoted to his master, and Caleb himself has more an affective than economical relation with his employer, expecting Falkland to act as his father more than his employer” (62). The language Caleb uses to explain his admiration of Falkland’s reaction to Tyrrel’s treatment of Emily Melville is more the language one would use to describe a father figure than an employer: Caleb says when he hears this part of Falkland’s history from Mr. Collins, “I found a thousand fresh reasons to admire and love Mr. Falkland” (112).

Even after Caleb discovers Falkland’s secret, he continues to venerate him as a father figure. He says that “I felt what I had had no previous conception of, that it was possible to love a murderer” (136). Likewise, when Mr. Falkland’s brother arrives for a visit, Caleb declares in

familial terms that he “came to reside for a short period with our family” (144). Caleb later takes on the role of the despondent son who has disappointed his father, here through his curious inquiry into that father’s sordid past. He says that “I should in my own opinion be the vilest of miscreants if I uttered a whisper to his disadvantage” (154). After Caleb reveals Falkland’s past crimes to the public in the final trial in the book, rather than celebrate his victory, Caleb considers himself the son who has not only disappointed his father but who has also wounded him. In any archetypal quest, the reunion with the father is difficult, and Caleb’s certainly fits this pattern. He tells the audience, “I have reverenced him; he was worthy of reverence: I have loved him; he was endowed with many qualities that partook of divine” (331). In a discussion of the pity Caleb elicits for Falkland and for himself in this final trial, Daniela Garofalo notes that “When Caleb sees Falkland in court, Caleb predictably confronts not the savage master, but the weak father,” concluding that in the end “Caleb confronts Falkland’s terrifying power only, in the end, to face the wounded father who inspires pity” (242). In many ways, *Caleb Williams* overall is a novel that explores the effect that fathers and sons have on shaping the identity of each other. Falkland has suffered from the disappointing son as Caleb has from the disappointing father.

Falkland is the first of many parental figures and temporary friends to whom Caleb attaches himself over his adventures to gain a firm sense of place and acceptance. Betty Rizzo points to another potentially strong father figure in Caleb’s life: “Caleb is denied the paternal care he needs and longs for. The fatherly Collins is sent away on Falkland’s concerns, on his return is turned against Caleb, and finally is too old and frail to be burdened with the truth about Falkland’s plots” (1388). When Collins is sent by Falkland to manage his West Indies plantations, Caleb loses one of his most ardent supporters: “I had always considered the

circumstances of his critical absence as one of my severest misfortunes. Mr. Collins had been one of the first persons, even in the period of my infancy, to conceive hopes of me as of something above the common standard" (318). When Collins returns to Falkland's English estate, he has heard of Caleb's fate, and, being the faithful servant to Falkland that he is, has made every effort to avoid contact with Caleb. When Caleb does finally reunite with him for only a brief conversation, Caleb says, "'My father! . . . I am your son; once your little Caleb, whom you a thousand times loaded with your kindness'" (319). Even after Collins separates himself from Caleb, Caleb's concerns are more for Collins, his frail health, and the possibility that his own association with Collins might cause Falkland to turn against Collins as he has turned against Caleb.

When Caleb is separated from Falkland's estate, on the run, donning disguise after disguise to evade Falkland and his henchman, Gines, Caleb identifies with a number of kind individuals, only to have these relationships interrupted and dissolved. When he escapes from his first imprisonment, Caleb is taken in by Mr. Raymond, the leader of a band of thieves. As Monika Fludernik notes, "Mr. Raymond, the noble robber, is another focal character who shares a structural position with Falkland as object of Caleb's admiration" (859), and Caleb himself observes that "In a word, he treated me with as much kindness as if he had been my father" (223). Betty Rizzo sums up best the series of parental figures Caleb encounters while hiding out in London and the dissolution of each relationship: "The watchmaker who adopts Caleb as a surrogate son is seduced into betraying him by Falkland's proffered reward. Humbler characters are more likely to sense the truth. Old Tom, Caleb's fellow servant, even against his own reason, smuggles him tools with which to escape from prison, and in London Mrs. Marney protects him even though she herself is followed—and characteristically is rewarded by being arrested

herself" (1388). In essence, Falkland has the ability to destroy every supportive relationship Caleb forms over the course of the novel, keeping unstable that aspect of his identity that is shaped by his family and friends.

The happiest period of Caleb's exile occurs when he is hiding from Falkland in Wales, and this is due in large part to his acceptance into the small Welsh village. When he first settles there, he declares, "How happy should I feel, beyond the ordinary lot of man, if, after the terrors I had undergone, I should now find myself unexpectedly restored to the immunities of a human being!" (305). Caleb uses words like "friendship," "sympathy," and "kindness" to describe this short-lived phase of his life. He gains love and purpose living in a village where no one knows of the accusations Falkland has made about him. When these accusations come to light in the village, having been published by Falkland in a broadsheet called the "Most Wonderful and Surprising History and Miraculous Adventures of Caleb Williams" (278), in which Falkland has trumped up charges that make Caleb out to be the villain, the villagers turn against him. Most importantly, Laura Denison, whom Caleb has come to think of as a last mother figure, writes a note to Caleb declaring, "Let me see you no more" (308). Caleb even pleads with her to hear his side of the story, referring to her as she "whom I once ventured to call my mother!" (309), but her response is "I have neither wish nor inclination to hear you" (309). After this interview and his rejection by the entire village, Caleb reaches one of his lowest points in the novel, stating that

> It was now first that I felt with the most intolerable acuteness, how completely I was cut off from the whole human species. . . . The pride of philosophy has taught us to treat man as an individual. He is no such thing. He holds necessarily, indispensably to his species. He is like those twin-births, that have two heads indeed, and four hands; but, if you

> attempt to detach them from each other, they are inevitably subjected to miserable and lingering destruction. (313-14).

Clearly, these examples serve to illustrate the powerful effect family and communities have on an individual's identity. Erikson's case studies provide example after example that parallel Caleb's loss of identity as a result of continued interruptions in his relationships with others. He recounts in *Childhood and Society* the examples of children cut off from parents; a tribe of Sioux Indians enclosed in government reservations, cut off from their traditional hunting grounds and way of life; soldiers separated from family and community during World War II—all to illustrate the powerful role others have in the formation and stability of an individual's identity and the anxiety and powerlessness that result from a compromise of that identity.

Systems of Power

From Caleb's discovery of Falkland's secret—his murder years earlier of Barnabus Tyrrel—Caleb becomes the hunted, the enemy of Falkland, who will go to extreme measures during the remainder of the novel to silence Caleb in order to protect his own reputation as an upstanding citizen. Falkland's ability to control Caleb's life depends on his own power within eighteenth-century English society. That power itself depends on Falkland's identity—that view that he has of himself and that others share. His exercise and abuse of that power in Volumes II and III of the novel parallels the earlier abuse of power by Tyrrel in Volume I. Caleb notes that for Hawkins, for example, "it was of no avail for him to have right on his side when his adversary had influence and wealth" (75). The same can be said for Caleb when he finds himself pitted against the powerful forces that Falkland represents. Ingrid Horrocks points to the moment that Caleb uncovers Falkland's secret as the initial unleashing of Falkland's power: "Such

moments are indicative of the idea that those with power have a substantial investment in preventing others from gaining the knowledge they possess, and that they are willing to protect that investment with force" (35). After Caleb's discovery but while he is still in Falkland's employment, Falkland reminds Caleb of the power he has over him: "'You little suspect the extent of my power. . . . You might as well think of escaping from the power of the omnipresent God, as from mine!'" (150). Such statements by Falkland are part show, part ego, but also part truth: in a society where power is wielded only by those with position and wealth, characters like Emily Melville, the Hawkinses, and Caleb are virtually powerless.

On two other instances before Falkland has Caleb arrested on trumped up charges of theft, Falkland emphasized his power over Caleb. When Caleb attempts to resign as Falkland's secretary, Falkland tells him, "'I shall crush you in the end with the same indifference that I would any other little insect that disturbed my serenity'" (159). When Caleb appeals to Falkland's brother, Mr. Forester, to believe in his innocence and the falseness of Falkland's charges, Forester sides with Falkland. Caleb is astonished, as he will be many more times over the course of the novel, at the power that Falkland wields over others' beliefs. He says, "I was still more astonished at the superhuman power Mr. Falkland seemed to possess, of bringing the object of his persecution within the sphere of his authority" (169).

Even after Caleb escapes his first imprisonment, Falkland's seemingly omnipotent power thwarts Caleb's efforts. When Caleb is attempting to escape to Ireland, Falkland has him arrested, causing Caleb to question whether or not Falkland's power reaches "through all space" (249) and is able to penetrate any act of concealment Caleb attempts. At this point, Caleb begins to suffer from Falkland's power in tangible ways, revealing that Falkland's power over him is "insupportably mortifying and oppressive" (248). Later imprisoned again but acquitted of all

charges and released, he meets Falkland for the last time before the final trial in the novel. At this point, Falkland speaks of his personal power as if it places him above even English law. He asks Caleb, "'Do you think you are out of the reach of my power, because a court of justice has acquitted you?'" (292). In his Preface to the 1832 'Standard Novels' edition of *Fleetwood*, written some 38 years after Caleb, Godwin himself reflected on Falkland's power as the chief theme of *Caleb*: "The murderer would thus have a sufficient motive to persecute the unhappy discoverer, that he might deprive him of peace, character, and credit, and have him forever in his power" (349). Only in the published ending of *Caleb* do we find Falkland finally lose his power, and he does so only after he himself has been so weakened by ill health that he no longer feels the strength to oppose the truth that Caleb possesses.

Falkland, along with Tyrell, Forester, and anyone of their social standing, is a part of a larger system of power that in many ways threatens the identity of those like Caleb. The legal system, both the laws and the magistrates and courts that enforce them, and the class system itself are all part of this larger system. Gary Handwerk sees clearly that Falkland is a part of this larger force: "Caleb struggles as a righteous individual against the system whose representative or agent is Falkland, but he finds no opportunity for justice within politicized institutions" (945). Those characters who are victims of a system that supports the patriarchy at the expense of the lower classes clearly see themselves within this system but are powerless to do anything to effect change. Hawkins, for example, avoids any legal action against Tyrrel, despite Tyrrel's destruction of his property and family, because he understands that the "law was better adapted for a weapon of tyranny in the hands of the rich than for a shield to protect the humbler part of the community against their usurpation" (76). When Tyrrel then successfully prosecutes Hawkins's son for "having buttoned the cape of his great coat over his face" (78) when entering

a field where hares are hunted, Hawkins "was not unaware of the advantages which our laws and customs give to the rich over the poor, in contentions of this kind" (78). Caleb himself reflects on the Hawkins case, connecting poverty to Hawkins's identity: "O poverty! Thou art indeed omnipotent! Thou grindest us into desperation" (121). The humble characters in the novel understand the system because they are victims of it, but the people whose interests are supported by the legal system are also a part of this system, whether they are conscious of it or not. As Maggie Kilgour points out, *Caleb* emphasizes how "Falkland too is the product of his circumstances and class position" (64), learning early in his life always to live by, or at least appear always to live by, the "honour and reputation that is his ruling passion" (64). That certain members of the gentry like Tyrrel and Mr. Forester understand their role in this system of laws and politics is unclear. That Falkland clearly understands and takes advantage of a system that affords him superhuman power contributes greatly to what makes him a supreme Gothic villain.

Caleb, after being imprisoned and tried numerous times despite never having committed a crime, reaches much the same conclusion as Hawkins. Mr. Raymond, the leader of a band of thieves who represent another group of underprivileged characters often unjustly accused by and powerless against authority, states that nothing but misery attends "every man who is unhappy enough to fall under the government of these consecrated ministers of national jurisprudence" (287). E.J. Clery calls our attention to the ways Falkland and the "organs of the law" (168), which always work in favor of the propertied individual, eventually serve as a "mockery" (168) of Caleb's early and naïve claim that "I am an Englishman, and it is the privilege of an Englishman to be sole judge and master of his own actions" (165). After making this claim early in his narrative, Caleb endures experiences and subsequent sufferings as a victim of Falkland and the system of which he is a part that convince him otherwise. As John Zomchick argues, "instead

of constructing a disciplined and empowered subject, juridical discourse in *Caleb Williams* brings on the collapse of the novel's eponymous subject-in-formation" (177-78). I will further connect these issues of power to the effects they have on Caleb's identity in later discussions of Gines as Falkland's agent of the law and Caleb's pursuit, imprisonment, and exile.

Of course, Falkland, outside of his own estate, does not himself pursue and torment Caleb directly: doing so would be beneath him and potentially illustrate to others both his vindictive nature and the injustice of his treatment of Caleb. Instead, he enlists the aid of a hired man, Gines. Gines is, as Maurice Hindle argues, a new type of character in fiction in 1794 and thus a significant fictional innovation for Godwin. As the agent for the villain, his right arm, in effect, he becomes Falkland's means of removing himself from the sordid details of pursuit. Gines becomes the first important representative of what will emerge as the police state of the modern world, a "Jonathan Wilde type of eighteenth-century villain and a prototype of the state-employed but legitimate professional agent" (Hindle x). Ironically, it is not while Gines is employed as Falkland's agent that Caleb first meets him, but as Gines is part of Mr. Raymond's band of thieves. It is Gines who robs and beats Caleb after Caleb escapes from Falkland's first imprisonment. When Caleb is rescued from the side of the road by Mr. Raymond and taken in to live with his "gang" of thieves, Caleb once again runs into Gines, a member of the "gang" himself. Mr. Raymond, a "gentleman thief" who himself has been reduced to thieving by the very social system that compromises the identity of Caleb and so many others in the novel, questions Gines, asking, "were you the cause of this young man being left naked and wounded this bitter morning upon the forest?" (224). When Gines confirms his actions, he encounters the ire of Mr. Raymond and is forced to leave the gang. Although Caleb feels immediate relief at Gines's leave-taking, he never assumes that Gines would later be employed by Falkland to spy

on and pursue him. Of course, not only Falkland's pay but also Gines's own personal desire for revenge against Caleb for having him kicked out of Mr. Raymond's "gang" of thieves serves as motivations for him to hound Caleb in all of his hideouts. Caroline Reitz emphasizes the multiple qualities that contribute to Gines's character: "Falkland's lackey Gines, like many in late eighteenth-century law enforcement, is both a thief-taker and a thief…the very worst sort of man" (181).

With his personal desire for revenge, the support of Falkland, and the tacit approval of the social system that condones and employs such bounty hunters, Gines becomes for Caleb "a noxious insect, scarcely less formidable and tremendous, that hovered about my goings, and perpetually menaced me with the poison of his sting" (271). When Gines discovers Caleb posing at different times as a Jewish writer, a watchmaker's assistant, and a member of a small Welsh community, he exposes Caleb and Caleb is once again forced to flee. Caleb reports, "But the change of my name, the abruptness with which I removed from place to place, the remoteness and the obscurity with which I proposed to myself in the choice of my abode, were all insufficient to elude the sagacity of Gines, or the unrelenting constancy with which Mr. Falkland incited my tormentor to pursue me" (316). All of the above tactics employed by Caleb as a result of Gines's pursuit serve to further compromise Caleb's identity. Lack of a name, suddenness of change, lack of stability—all resonate with the ruptures in the life continuum that Erikson identifies with identity crises which lead to the kind of anxiety and powerlessness from which Caleb suffers.

Caleb's Imprisonment and Exile

Caleb is repeatedly imprisoned over the course of the novel. He escapes from the first prison, is released from the second, and, in the original unpublished version of the novel, is left disintegrating in the last, tortured even there by Gines. Each of these instances illustrates the common fears Erikson associated with a loss of identity: fear of being manipulated, losing autonomy, being closed up, being restrained, and being immobilized (*Childhood*). A.D. Harvey makes a similar observation about imprisonment in *Caleb*, noting that "The pursuit of Caleb is an archetypal representation of every man's fear of being trapped; it portrays a situation which most of its readers have actually experienced in nightmares" (246). Even before Caleb is first arrested, he finds himself a prisoner in Falkland's house, where he "could move neither to the right nor the left, but the eye of my keeper was upon me" (149). Because, Caleb reports, Falkland "preferred to govern me by terror," Caleb suffers "emotions of terror" (151). His first experience in prison is even worse. Due to being "locked into his dungeon," suffering from the "arbitrary control" of jailers exercising their "tyranny" (187), Caleb is reduced to a state of "inexpressible agony" (190). After an initial attempt at escape, Caleb's punishment becomes even worse: "In the morning they were as good as their word, fixing a pair of fetters upon both my legs, regardless of the ankle which was now swelled to a considerable size, and then fastening me with a padlock to a staple in the floor of my dungeon" (204). When he does finally escape from this first prison, Caleb launches into a lengthy praise of liberty, concluding that "Ah, this is indeed to be a man" (218).

During subsequent imprisonments, Caleb continues to suffer, losing hope and being reduced to despair and a state of misery (287). In the novel's unpublished ending, Caleb concludes his final remarks in a note to Mr. Collins. The remarks speak most strongly to how

Caleb's identity has completely been destroyed by his experiences, this final imprisonment from which there seems to be no escape being the culminating contribution to his loss of identity: "all day long I do nothing—am a stone—a GRAVE-STONE!—an obelisk to tell you, HERE LIES WHAT WAS ONCE A MAN!" (346). In addition to making a powerful statement about the effects prison has on an individual like Caleb, by extension, Godwin is criticizing the state of the prisons of his time and the very existence of institutions that, like Falkland and Gines, serve as a means of state torture of innocent victims. Fludernik summarizes her interpretation of Godwin's statement: "Not the continental instruments of judicial torture but the very doors, locks, bolts, and chains of incarceration are 'engines' of tyranny that constitute the 'empire' of man over man and turn the free man into a slave" (881). Caleb himself compares his state to that of a slave. That individuals with intelligence, motivation, natural curiosity, and a strong sense of right and wrong should have their lives taken away to be wasted in prisons is an injustice Godwin exposes through Caleb's story.

Not only does Falkland employ this obvious means of controlling Caleb's identity, but he finds other means as well, including the destruction of Caleb's reputation, that part of his identity that depends on how others view him. As St Aubert's and Valancourt's reputations were important to them and Emily St Aubert in Radcliffe's novel, so too is Caleb's. With the sullied reputation that Falkland creates for him, Caleb is only slightly more free when he is not in prison. Just as, in Volume I, Tyrrel attempts to ruin the reputation of his niece, Emily Melville, by claiming that she has plans to run to Falkland as a "kept woman" and the reputation of the Hawkins's family by having Hawkins's son arrested on false charges, Falkland will use Caleb's reputation as perhaps the greatest hold on him. Eric Daffron notes that from Caleb's discovery of Falkland's crime, his and Falkland's reputations depend on public sympathy, a sympathy that

Falkland has and Caleb lacks. In general, "the gentry's hegemony can be sustained through quite a different theatre: the theatre of sympathy which incites public opinion" (214). Given that the community at large is on Falkland's side already when Caleb discovers his crime, Caleb turns to his fellow servants for sympathy and understanding. So firm is Falkland's reputation, however, that even the servants side with him, whereas Caleb is denied society's "sympathies and in turn deemed a counterfeit" (Daffron 216).

After Caleb escapes Falkland's service, he receives a letter from Falkland's brother, requesting that Caleb return to Falkland to clear his reputation. Caleb agrees to do so claiming in an aside that Falkland "shall neither make prize of my liberty, nor sully the whiteness of my name" (166). Falkland, however, has no intent of letting Caleb maintain his reputation, for he immediately accuses Caleb of stealing jewels from him—a completely false accusation—and has him imprisoned for the crime. Reflecting on his unfair trial and subsequent imprisonment, Caleb questions, "But, if a fair fame were of the most inexpressible value, is this the method which common sense would prescribe to retrieve it?" (189). As Maggie Kilgour notes, from this point on, public opinion is dead set against Caleb; always "His appeals for love and sympathy are rejected when his identity is discovered" (67). Caleb's public identity is no longer within his control as he is continually misrepresented by Falkland and those who sympathize with Falkland (Kilgour 68). When Caleb does later find temporary acceptance as a Jewish writer by Mrs. Marney, who delivers his articles to his publisher, Falkland steps up his efforts to inform the public in general of Caleb's reputation by publishing Caleb's "History," a fictitious biographical sketch reminiscent of the popular criminal biographies of the eighteenth century. Of course, being "published" and in black and white, this one-sided story serves to poison the well for any further people who come into contact with Caleb. When Caleb reads a copy of the history, he

reports that “Every word of it carried despair to my heart” (279). In a final encounter with Falkland before the last trial in the novel, Falkland explains his motives to Caleb: “‘I live the guardian of my reputation. That, and to endure a misery such as man never endured, are the only ends to which I live. But, when I am no more, my fame shall still survive’” (292). To ensure that end, Falkland tries to get Caleb to sign a paper declaring that Falkland is innocent of Tyrrel’s murder, thus implying that Caleb has been a liar. To this request, Caleb emphasizes the importance of his own reputation, asking Falkland, “‘What is it that you require of me? That I should sign away my own reputation for the better maintaining of yours. Where is the equality of that?’” (293). Of course, Caleb still naively believes in the equality of their persons; Falkland has no such illusions. Caleb concludes this interview by observing, “‘What can Mr. Falkland contrive for me worse than the ill opinion and enmity of all mankind?’” (296).

Caleb’s last respite occurs when he escapes to Wales, where his reputation has not preceded him. When, however, the false “History” shows up in the village, even the woman who has become his adopted mother rejects him, declaring, “I can admire your abilities, without tolerating your character” (309). Caleb here reaches a point of despair, asking, “Was the odious and atrocious falsehood that had been invented against me to follow me wherever I went, to strip me of character, to deprive me of the sympathy of good-will of mankind, to wrest from me the very bread by which life must be sustained?” (312). That Caleb likens his public reputation to the bread that sustains his life underscores the effect reputation has on his identity and thus his life. In a parallel statement in the published ending of the novel, after Caleb once again reveals in public Falkland’s crime and actually convinces the hearers to believe him, he, in essence, takes Falkland’s life away. Falkland tells him, “‘you must be speedy in your justice; for, as reputation

was the blood that warmed my heart, so I feel that death and infamy must seize me together'" (336). Though such a claim may seem overly dramatic, Falkland does die three days later.

As a result of not being able to survive or be accepted for who he is as Caleb Williams, Caleb is on several occasions forced to live incognito, his various disguises serving as visual markers of his unstable identity. When he decides to leave the gang of thieves who have taken him in after his initial imprisonment, he chooses to disguise himself as a beggar, the first of many identities that connect him with other social outcasts. After approving of his own appearance in a mirror, he says to himself, "'This is the form in which tyranny and injustice oblige me to seek for refuge: but better, a thousand times better is it, thus to incur contempt with the dregs of mankind, than trust to the tender mercies of our superiors!'" (242). When he later stops at a public house on the London road, he overhears a group of laborers discussing the now legendary escaped criminal Caleb Williams; Caleb now has a public reputation for which he never wished and the result is that he must reveal to no one that he is actually Caleb Williams. The laborers' discussion confirms for him the necessity of remaining in disguise for most of the remainder of his exile. What may have seemed an extreme measure to take for safety now becomes paramount. David Collings notes that Caleb's disguises are at this point not a choice: "Of course, since nearly the entire nation is against him, he has no audience for his tale nor even for his true identity, and must adopt a series of disguises" (859), adapting to the circumstances in which he finds himself. The sense of not being himself, of being crafty and dishonest, is the immediate reaction Caleb has to his necessary disguises: he says, "Such are the miserable expedients and so great the studied artifice which man, who never deserves the name of manhood but in proportion as he is erect and independent, may find it necessary to employ" (247).

Caleb decides to further elude Falkland by setting sail to Ireland, adding to his disguise as a beggar an identification with another group of oppressed people—the Irish. When he is accused of being an Irish mail thief, however, he has to lose the Irish identification to avoid arrest: "When I was brought up to them upon the deck of the vessel, I spoke as fine an Irish brogue as one shall hear in a summer's day; and now, all at once, there was not the least particle of it left" (252). Having exposed himself, he must now create a new disguise to face the "dangers and anxiety" (262) he is burdened with. To enter London, he disguises himself as a farmer but realizes that a long stay in that city will necessitate a disguise better fitting the environment, so he commits himself "to manufacture a veil of concealment more impenetrable than ever" (263), assuming the role of a Jew. He bases his accent on one he has heard from a Jewish member of the former gang of thieves he lived with, darkens his complexion, and settles into a Jewish neighborhood. Caroline Reitz draws a comparison between two of Caleb's disguises employed thus far and connects those disguises to a veiled criticism of the English imperialist agenda of the eighteenth century, an agenda that often resulted in the oppression and threats to the identities of people like Jews and the Irish. She writes that "Godwin draws numerous comparisons between Caleb's persecution and those people oppressed around the globe" (180), including Jews. Caleb again has an immediate reaction to his own state, noting that "My life was all a lie. I had a counterfeit character to support. I had counterfeit manners to assume. My gait, my gestures, my accents, were all of them to be studied. I was not free to indulge, no not one, honest sally of the soul" (265).

Caleb at this point in the novel again suffers an easily recognizable identity crisis, referring to his own descent into states of "despondence" and "anguish" (265). Eric Daffron notes that "Caleb's practice of mimicry can be read from two perspectives" (227), claiming that

while “imitating those around him enables Caleb to blend into the social and thus elude the law” (227), “imitation defies the integrity of the self: becoming like others, one can never quite be oneself” (227). Nor can Caleb even remain the same character for very long. After a short success as a Jewish writer, Gines catches on to Caleb’s disguise and Caleb must once more “purchase the materials of a new disguise” (275), this time becoming an assistant to a watchmaker. Again, this situation is short-lived, as the watchmaker turns Caleb over to Gines for the reward offered for his arrest. Imprisoned once again only to be shortly thereafter released when no witnesses show up to speak against him at his trial, Caleb suffers from a loss of identity due both to the confusion created by the numerous roles he must so quickly and unexpectedly switch among and the utter disruption of any sense of continuity in his life. His confusion is exacerbated by this latest imprisonment and release, for this incident gives the appearance that Falkland has begun employing a new tactic to destroy Caleb: playing with him in a sadistic cat and mouse game. Caleb asks,

> Was it for this that I had broken through so many locks and bolts, and the adamantine walls of my prison; that I had passed so many anxious days, and sleepless, spectre-haunted nights; that I had racked my invention for expedients of evasion and concealment; that my mind had been roused to an energy of which I could scarcely have believed it capable; that my existence had been enthralled to an ever-living torment, such as I could scarcely have supposed it in man to endure? Great God! What is man? Is he thus blind to the future, thus totally unsuspecting of what is to occur in the next moment of his existence? (289)

In dramatic fashion, Caleb here comments on the fragmented and uncertain nature of what Erikson identifies as the vertical and horizontal components of identity: Caleb has no certainty of

who he is at the present moment nor any certainty of what his future holds. Everyone has doubts at any given time about both of these aspects of identity, but the constant need for pretense coupled with the constant uncertainty of when that pretense will have to change takes such uncertainty to a level of anxiety that is paralyzing for Caleb.

Unable successfully to conceal his identity for very long in any part of England, Caleb decides to escape to Wales in the hopes that in that remote location there is less a chance that his reputation is known. Having become exasperated at imitating various characters, Caleb decides to settle in "an obscure market-town in Wales" (299) as himself, declaring that "I was seized with so unconquerable an aversion to disguise, and the idea of spending my life in personating a fictitious character, that I could not at the present at least reconcile my mind to any thing of that nature" (298). Caleb does successfully assimilate into village life in Wales, finding employment, making friends, and even attaching himself to one particular family as one of its members. As a reader of *Caleb* by this point might guess, however, this relatively peaceful existence is soon brought to a halt by arrival in the village of Caleb's history. He is rejected and shunned by the villagers who, like all Caleb has known thus far, choose to believe Falkland's story without even listening to Caleb's explanation. Convinced that even a location as remote as the most obscure village in Wales cannot bring him peace, Caleb once again, and for the last time, returns to England. He again reflects on his loathing of disguises and searches for an alternative option for safe passage:

> There was one expedient against which I was absolutely determined—disguise. I had experienced so many mortifications, and such intolerable restraint, when I formerly had recourse to it; it was associated in my memory with sensations of such acute anguish that

> my mind was thus far entirely convinced: life was not worth purchasing at so high a price! (315)

Still, deciding to don no outward disguise, Caleb does choose to adopt “a different name” to avoid arousing any immediate suspicion on the part of anyone he would encounter. Upon re-entering England, Caleb unexpectedly meets his old friend Collins and builds up the courage to once again reveal his story to a chief magistrate. Caleb finally chooses to be and act as himself. Kenneth Graham links Caleb’s self-exile, disguises, blasted reputation, and subsequent anxiety to issues of his identity in the following way: “The years of flight, disguise, and anxiety also affect his sense of identity. . . . The adoption and maintenance of alterations in behavior and appearance impose strains on his sense of self that are exacerbated by the assessments of his character expressed by others” (“Gothic Unity” 54-55). In the published ending of the novel, by the time that Caleb is finally successful in convincing a magistrate of the truth that he knows, his sense of identity is so shattered that he declares, “it is now only that I am truly miserable” (336). He rests in an identity crisis too severe to quickly repair. Caleb’s inability to move forward places him in a situation markedly similar to that of war veterans Erikson studied and counseled. He writes of men who over the course of four years during WW II had themselves to play multiple roles, being drafted from civilian life, many of them family men, exposed to the (Gothic) terrors of war, and then returned to civilian life once again to attempt to resume their roles as family men. Erikson records their inability to adapt or to function (*Childhood* 40-41). He concludes,

> What impressed me most was the loss in these men of a sense of identity. They knew who they were; they had a personal identity. But it was as if, subjectively, their lives no longer hung together—and never would again. There was a central disturbance in what I then started to call ego identity. At this point it is enough to say that this sense of identity

> provides the ability to experience one's self as something that has continuity and sameness, and to act accordingly. (*Childhood* 42)

Lack of "continuity and sameness" for Caleb has led to his own loss of agency and ability to function.

Narrative Conclusions

One important survival tactic that Caleb employs over the course of his torturous adventures that arguably contributes to his ability to continue on despite innumerable odds against him, including and most importantly his increasingly uncertain sense of identity, is his recording of his experiences. Indeed, it is arguably the very narrative that he produces that will become the key to the beginning of his potential recovery. As characters in *Udolpho*—Annette, Ludovico, and Emily St Aubert herself—frequently resort to story-telling to make sense of the horrors they witness and to re-establish a sense of who they are, Caleb makes sense of his adventures through his writing. As Caleb finds himself friendless, with no one to listen to or believe him, he uses his narrative as a substitute for the human conversations most employ as a means of clarifying their life, including their sense of identity. The numerous case studies of patients that Erikson reports on attest to the need for these patients to talk their way through their problems: their narratives help them and their therapist make sense of the identity crises they are facing. More specifically, Marcela Cornejo's observations of the effect of narration on political exiles, whose experiences were not unlike those of the fictional Caleb Williams, remind us of the importance of the ability to tell one's own stories and the effects that this utterance has on the storyteller. She records that when approached to tell their stories of exile, "several of them were amazed that somebody had an interest in listening to them talking about 'something that to a

certain extent is over now'" (344). Caleb, after being freed from Falkland's control in the published ending of the novel, is under no compulsion to reveal the manuscript that contains his narrative, yet he does so anyway, for several reasons that he explains but also arguably for his own unconscious move toward recuperation. Again, Cornejo's conclusions are insightful here. In her "life stories approach" to "the construction of identity," she records that "Building a narration stood as one possibility to draw axes, to attempt to provide continuity to the series of ruptures resulting from exile; being able to put it into words for other people to hear, but most importantly for the individuals themselves, restored certain time continuity in the history, the project and the individual" (343-44). No character in *Caleb* suffers from a greater disruption of "time continuity" than Caleb himself; his narrative provides one means of restoring that continuity. When Falkland interrupts Caleb's relatively happy stay in Wales, bringing an end to the last hope for Caleb's establishment of a stable identity, Caleb turns to writing. He writes that "I hasten to the conclusion of my melancholy story. I began to write soon after the period to which I have now conducted it. This was another resource that my mind, ever eager in inventing means to escape from my misery, suggested" (313).

One of the problems with Caleb's narrative in the sense that it serves as a means of his constructing his own identity is how it is in competition with the narrative of Falkland's life and the narrative of Caleb that Falkland constructs and publicizes. Ingrid Horrocks notes that from the very beginning of his narrative, Caleb's is in competition with that "more powerful narrative already circulated by Falkland" (35), and Maggie Kilgour connects these narratives to Caleb's identity by asserting that "the wealthy aristocrat has the power to usurp the identity and narrative of the poor servant" (68). After only two pages of his own biography in the novel's first chapter, Caleb's attention turns to Falkland, whose life story dominates the entire first volume and much

of Volumes II and III. He tells us at the conclusion of Chapter one that "To his story the whole fortune of my life was linked; because he was miserable, my happiness, my name, and my existence have been irretrievably blasted'" (12). Just as the course of Falkland's life determines that of Caleb, so too does Falkland's narrative dominate that of Caleb. From the time Caleb hears Falkland's history from Mr. Collins, he exhibits a fascination with Falkland's story that borders on obsession. (In Chapter IV, I will explore similar obsessions with the life of Melmoth the Wanderer that come to dominate the lives and narratives of many characters in Maturin's novel.)

Caleb opens Volume II by declaring about Falkland's life that "There was a connection and progress in this narrative, which made it altogether unlike the little village incidents I had hitherto known" (112). In essence, Caleb falls victim to the same hero worship of Falkland that will persuade every other character in the novel until the last trial to believe Falkland's self-constructed narrative of his own life and his fictitious history of Caleb while discounting Caleb's narrative. Laura Denison, the strongest mother figure Caleb ever has in the narrative, serves as but one example as she forces Caleb to ask, "'Good God! Can you think of condemning a man when you have heard only one side of the story?'" (309). Even after Caleb discovers Falkland's secret and Falkland assures him that "'You shall continue in my service, but can never share my affection'" (142), the narrative once again returns to the praise of Falkland. Caleb declares, "I will never injure my patron; and therefore he will not be my enemy. With all his misfortunes and all his errors, I feel that my soul yearns for his welfare" (143), expressing a longing for Falkland's approval and continued protection against all odds. Caleb himself, in his admiration for Falkland, despite knowing his secret and the depths to which his actions will sink, allows Falkland's narrative to dominate that of his own.

Still, Caleb finds a kind of solace even in writing about Falkland. Indeed, uncertain about his future due to Falkland's continued menaces, Caleb finds more comfort in trying to make sense of his past: he declares that "The writing of these memoirs served me as a source of avocation for several years. For some time I had a melancholy satisfaction in it. I was better pleased to retrace the particulars of calamities that had formerly afflicted me, than to look forward, as at other times I was too apt to do, to those by which I might hereafter be overtaken" (314). Ingrid Horrocks sees in this curiosity coupled with uncertainty a similarity between Caleb and Emily St Aubert regarding the future of their own narratives: "*Caleb Williams* and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* are strikingly similar in their presentation of their protagonists' desire for knowledge about the direction of their own stories, and the opposition these desires repeatedly face" (34). This uncertainty and inability to imagine an acceptable future—a continuity of the narratives of their lives—given the threats they face, contribute in a significant way to the identity crises both Emily and Caleb face.

Neither of the novel's two endings brings complete resolution to either Falkland's or Caleb's narratives, but the first ending Godwin wrote but never published most clearly recounts the utter destruction of Caleb's identity, evident in the disintegration of his narrative, due in large part to the continued refusal on everyone's part to believe or even listen to what he has to say. In this trial, Falkland gets to speak first, persuading the magistrate and other witnesses of his own innocence even before Caleb gets to speak. When Caleb does finally think he has a chance to tell his side of the story, he is silenced. He records that "Having spoken for some time with incredible eagerness, and at length gasping and panting for breath, the magistrate sternly interposed. Be silent! said he. What is it you intend by thus continuing to intrude yourself. Do you believe you can overbear and intimidate us? We will hear none of your witnesses. We have

heard you too long" (342). After Caleb is again found guilty and imprisoned for the final time, he concludes his narrative with two postscripts, the second becoming increasingly fragmented as his identity crisis becomes acute. He writes to Mr. Collins that "I should like to recollect something—it would make an addition to my history—but it is all a BLANK!" (345). In a claim that clearly illustrates his own awareness of his loss of identity, he states, "If I could once again be thoroughly myself, I should tell such tales!—Some folks are afraid of that, do you see, and so—But I never shall—never—never!—I sit in a chair in a corner, and never move hand or foot—I am like a log—I know all that very well, but I cannot help it!—I wonder which is the man, I or my chair?" (346). Maggie Kilgour compares Caleb's end to that of other fictional characters who suffer similar destruction due to their own Gothic journeys: "Like Manfred, and more closely Clarissa, whose behavior after her rape is clearly the model here, Caleb becomes totally incoherent, his speech falling into pieces that mirror the fragmentation of his own identity under the continuing oppression of Falkland" (69-70). Caleb's final comparison is that of himself to a gravestone as he searches for a final metaphor to represent his figurative death.

In the published ending, Caleb does convince his audience to hear and believe his narrative, Falkland publicly admits his guilt, he and Caleb share mutual admiration and sympathy for each other's plights, and Falkland dies three days later, his hitherto spotless reputation forever tarnished by the truth of his crimes. Nonetheless, Caleb is still uncertain about his own narrative account of these events and once again allows Falkland's story to usurp his own. Despite the fact that Falkland's narrative has dominated Caleb's own up till the very end, Caleb asks, "Why should my reflections perpetually centre upon myself?—self, an overweening regard to which has been the source of my errors! Falkland, I will think only of thee, and from that thought will draw ever-fresh nourishment for my sorrows! (336). Blaming Falkland's crimes

on “the poison of chivalry” (336), Caleb justifies his narrative not as it vindicates his life but Falkland’s. He concludes with an apostrophe to Falkland’s memory: “I began these memoirs with the idea of vindicating my character. I have now no character that I wish to vindicate: but I will finish them that thy story may be fully understood; and that, if those errors of thy life be known which thou so ardently desired to conceal, the world may at least not hear and repeat a half-told and mangled tale” (337).

In terms of the novel’s focus on justice, the published ending, in which Caleb is able to convince an audience of the truth of what he has to say and both he and Falkland sympathize with and forgive each other, is more optimistic than the original. Kenneth Graham sums up this interpretation:

> *Political Justice* demonstrates the possibility that the individual may effect small changes, and so too does *Caleb Williams*. “Things” remain “as they are,” yet Falkland and Caleb are changed. Except infinitesimally, the world has not improved, but the reader is left with a sense of the direction that improvement will take; that is in a spirit of open and rational inquiry that can transform both individuals and institutions into instruments for the discovery and communication of truth. (“Narrative and Ideology” 223)

And yet, despite potentially admiring Caleb’s selfless pity for Falkland and his regrets for having exposed him publicly, readers are left uncomfortable with Caleb’s lack of certainty in himself now that his own name has been cleared. There is a connection between Caleb’s identity, still uncertain even in the published ending, and the theme of political justice. As Eric Daffron writes, “Since as confessional literature memoirs inscribe the self, Caleb ostensibly gives up that self for service to another, one that will apparently confirm Falkland’s socially sanctioned character” (218). If we read Falkland as representative of that Burkean upholder of tradition, a political and

judicial tradition in which men of Falkland's standing were representatives of truth and virtue and thus had authority and power, Caleb can be seen as the newly emergent common man whose own authority is struggling to take shape and be understood by both Caleb and everyone else in his society. That he and others are uncertain about and uncomfortable with this new role is understandable as change is difficult for most to easily grasp or accept. As Caleb's life has illustrated, new identities are difficult to assume, even as here, if they promise a better life. Writing in broad terms about changes in the twentieth century that can potentially bring on identity crises like those Caleb and those like him suffer as a result of social changes, Erikson argues that "Industrial revolution, world-wide communication, standardization, centralization, and mechanization threaten the identities which man has inherited from primitive, agrarian, feudal, and patrician cultures" (*Childhood* 412-13). Caleb Williams stands as but one example of a man struggling with his identity as a result of the beginnings of social changes in the eighteenth century that continue even into the twentieth century and beyond, an issue that I address once more in the concluding chapter of this study.

Chapter IV

Melmoth the Wanderer: A Smorgasbord of Villains

Finally, the Gothic novel that best synthesizes all Gothic villains' means of abuse of power, Charles Maturin's 1820 novel *Melmoth the Wanderer* pushes such abuses of power to the extreme. Forced to wander the earth in search of someone willing to assume his identity and the power that comes with his gift/curse of extended life and super-human knowledge and powers, Melmoth the Wanderer preys on victims who have been reduced by others to a point at which death seems preferable to their continued sufferings. Though Melmoth himself loosely links all of the "stories within stories" that make up the multiple frames of *Melmoth*, his character becomes in many ways simply a pawn to be used by Maturin to examine various categories of villains and their victims who, like Emily St Aubert and Caleb Williams before them, have their identity compromised by their oppressors: here, families who exert extreme and excessive control over their children; the Spanish Catholic church, which imprisons its enemies during the Spanish Inquisition; a generally anti-Semitic society which forces Jews to live underground; and wealthy individuals whose poor relatives are reduced to near starvation. With its multiple narratives, its tropes borrowed from so much of the Gothic fiction that precedes it, *Melmoth* becomes what David Eggenschwiler has called "almost an anthology of Gothic fiction" (165).

Although *Caleb Williams* focuses in large part on the power of Falkland, his power resting in his position as an eighteenth-century aristocrat, in order to come to the fullest understanding of Falkland and Caleb, Godwin examines them within the larger political and social environment that they inhabit. Godwin wanted to expose not only the tyranny of an individual in power like Falkland and the effects he has on Caleb's identity and subsequent

power but also the hierarchical society, the laws that support that hierarchy, and the effects of both on the identity of all characters that are a part of this vast system. *Melmoth* extends this analysis of social systems—systems of power—as they exist in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century institutions of patriarchy: social hierarchy, families, and religious institutions. As David Punter summarizes the connection between *Caleb* and *Melmoth*, "*Caleb Williams* and *Melmoth* both display forms of tyranny: the tyranny of social classing and the conventional injustice of authority, and the tyranny of dogmatism and inhumane religion" (*Literature* 130). Although Melmoth is willing to take advantage of those who have had their identities and thus power compromised by these institutions, he himself is never the cause of their identity crises (Isidora being the possible exception); he merely arrives to exchange places with those who have become the victims of social institutions so that his own tortured existence can come to an end.

Published in 1820 and, along with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), representing "the end of the Gothic romance proper, as a genre" (Sage vii), *Melmoth*, unlike *Udolpho* or *Caleb*, does not contain one continuous narrative but a series of individual narratives all connected to Melmoth, issues of identity, and issues of power. The outer framing story of the novel, set in 1816, is that of young John Melmoth, a student at Trinity College, Dublin, who is called away from college to his ancestors' Irish estate to witness the death of his uncle, known in the novel as "Old Melmoth." When he arrives after many years' absence, he is reminded that his uncle, as he was in John's youth, is a sullen, morose, eccentric individual, not unlike the Falkland that Caleb encounters when he is first employed. Like Falkland, Old Melmoth is someone who knows a secret that will not allow him to live in peace. On his deathbed, he requests that John avoid reading a moldering manuscript kept in a closet to which only Old Melmoth has had access for many years and that he destroy a portrait of a gentleman that hangs in the same closet. We

subsequently find that the portrait, dated 1646, is that of the Melmoths' ancestor, the Wanderer himself, and when John learns Melmoth's terrifying secret, he does burn the portrait out of horror. Like Emily St Aubert, however, who was also forbidden by her father on his deathbed from reading certain documents which he asks her to destroy, John finds the manuscript to be too tempting not to examine.

The manuscript contains the story of Stanton, an Englishman traveling in Spain in the late 1670s. While there, Stanton hears from a Spanish lady a story about Melmoth, one of many stories about the Wanderer that are circulating underground in Europe, especially in Ireland, England, and Spain. The story reminds Stanton of a previous encounter with a strange individual whom he concludes can only be the Wanderer himself. From this point on, obsession with Melmoth consumes Stanton. He leaves Spain to travel to London in search of Melmoth, whom he encounters outside a London theater. Melmoth warns Stanton that they will meet again—the next time in a madhouse. Stanton's obsession with Melmoth becomes so intense that he is indeed committed to a madhouse where he does once again encounter Melmoth. After his release from this asylum, he travels to Ireland to ask Melmoth's family about the Wanderer's whereabouts but can gather no information: it is then, around 1680, that he leaves at the Melmoth estate in Ireland the manuscript that young John inherits and reads.

On the same night that John finishes the manuscript, a terrible storm sinks a ship off the Irish coast near the Melmoth estate. The only survivor, who is brought to the Melmoth house to recuperate, is a Spaniard by the name of Alonzo Monçada. When Monçada learns in whose house he is resting, he shares with John a series of tales about the Wanderer, the first of which centers on Monçada himself, who meets the Wanderer in a prison of the Spanish Inquisition. Melmoth has come to him to make the same deal as he had with Stanton in his English madhouse

cell: I will exchange my soul and powers, including the power to traverse place and time, for yours. Like Stanton, Monçada rejects the request as the condition (though Maturin never reveals it in detail) is obviously a loss of salvation. Melmoth has made a Faustian bargain that even in their suffering none are willing to make. When Monçada escapes from the Inquisition prison, he seeks asylum with Adonijah, a Jewish scholar-physician who employs Monçada to transcribe a manuscript, one that just happens to contain stories of Melmoth, stories that Adonijah has been collecting about the Wanderer for over sixty years.

The remainder of the novel is Monçada's relating to John Melmoth the contents of Adonijah's manuscript, which contains the story of a Spanish girl, Immalee, who is stranded on an island in the Indian Ocean until her seventeenth birthday. While there, she is courted by and falls in love with the Wanderer. When she is rescued and returned to her family in Spain, Melmoth once again shows up, this time proposing marriage and impregnating Immalee, known to her Spanish family as Isidora. Interrupting this story are two other narratives, one told by a stranger to Isidora's father, "The Tale of Guzman's Family," and a story that Melmoth himself relates to Isidora's father as a warning, "The Lovers' Tale." The night after Monçada completes this last tale, the Wanderer himself appears at the Melmoth estate, convinced that no one is willing to trade places with him, ready to die and face the eternal punishment that is his lot. Borrowing a trope from Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* and Charlotte Dacre's *Zafloya*, Maturin has the body of Melmoth dragged from the estate by some unknown infernal power and subsequently dashed from a rocky precipice into the Irish Sea, his soul presumably sent to Hell. The only remains that John Melmoth and Monçada find is a scarf worn by the Wanderer, clinging to the stones from which he has been tossed.

As complex as the novel and the issues of identity and power that it explores become, even the outer framed story begins with questions of identity. In the distant background of this part of *Melmoth*, the original Melmoth in Ireland is an English nobleman who is an outsider. His position is not unlike that of Maturin's own family, who were French protestants seeking refuge in the Church of England in Ireland. The Irish estate itself was given to the Melmoth family in 1646 by Oliver Cromwell for service in the army. The estate was a confiscated estate originally belonging to a Roman Catholic supporter of Charles I. Thus the Melmoth family's aristocratic roots are tainted by an abuse of power and their identity as the aristocrats to whom locals show deference is questionable. This connection between *Melmoth* and the English civil war will be an issue that resurfaces in one subsequent tale in the novel and an issue that I will develop within the broader historical context of English national identity as part of the concluding chapter of this study.

As young John Melmoth leaves Trinity College, Dublin, to attend his dying uncle, he is aware that it is his uncle's money that ensures his own independence and, thus, to a large extent his identity. As John is the orphan son of his uncle's younger brother, "whose small property could scarce pay John's college expenses" (9), primogeniture has excluded him from any certainty about his present or future. From his youth, John has been impressed by his family with the extent to which Old Melmoth controls his future: "John, from his infancy, had been brought up to look on [his uncle] with that mingled sensation of awe, and of the wish, without the means to conciliate, (that sensation at once attractive and repulsive), with which we regard a being who (as nurse, domestic, and parent have tutored us to believe) holds the very threads of our existence in his hands, and may prolong or snap them when he pleases" (9). John's father's relative poverty and his uncle's eccentricities (he is consumed and made ineffectual by his obsession

with money and his ancestor, the Wanderer) lead both father and surrogate father to fail to provide the supportive parental role John needs. They become the first of at least five father figures in *Melmoth* who fail in their roles as fathers, leaving their children, all in their youth, adolescence, or like John, early adulthood, without those educators or role models that play such an important formative role for characters like Emily St. Aubert in *Udolpho*. Like Caleb Williams, who seeks father figures in men throughout his adventures, John Melmoth too lacks the supportive figures needed to help him successfully transition from youth into adulthood.

At issue with Old Melmoth's role as a surrogate father to John are his obsessions: with wealth and with his own confusing ancestry. Maturin builds upon the traditional miser's story, making Old Melmoth an extreme case. Though John finds at the reading of the will that his uncle has accrued vast wealth, he has done so at the expense of his connections with others. He rants and raves during his last days about candles being needlessly burned for light, wine being needlessly drunk by those family and friends who have gathered to visit him in his illness, and even the food that will undoubtedly be served during his wake. David Eggenschwiler provides the most extensive analysis of the effect of this miserly obsession on Old Melmoth and his nephew as part of a larger theme of obsessive states that Maturin and other Gothicists explore. He writes that "This single-minded pursuit also breaks man's connections with other men and with nature; it destroys fellow feeling and isolates him in the symbolic prisons, madhouses, and monastic cells that fill the romance. Old Melmoth must be withdrawn and suspicious of all people, and his wariness of his nephew suggests the first of several broken family ties in the book" (167). His obsession with his money makes him a paranoid individual incapable of trusting anyone, even his nephew, who has nothing but respect for his uncle, and incapable of giving or receiving any shred of human sympathy. Such paranoia can be likened to that of

Falkland, obsessed with his own reputation, and, as Eggenschwiler notes, parallels his other obsession: that of his ancestor, the Wanderer. It is this last obsession that has the most profound influence on John: we have no indication that John will become the miser his uncle was, but he does inherit his uncle's obsessive fascination with the Wanderer, as will many more characters in the book. Although John has left college only to attend his dying uncle, against the advice of his guardians, he postpones returning to Dublin in order to read Stanton's manuscript and to listen for days to stories from Monçada, all of them centered on the Wanderer (Eggenschwiler 168). Like most of the stories in *Melmoth*, we are left in the end with an unclear idea of John's fate: has his ancestor's mysterious adventures begun to control his life as it had that of his uncle and will do to so many other characters in *Melmoth*? As the history of Falkland dominates Caleb Williams's life in Godwin's novel, the history of the Wanderer either controls or threatens to control the lives of many characters in *Melmoth*.

The story of John Melmoth and the Melmoth family in general is but a part of the complex tale that Maturin creates. Though the framed narrative had been employed by Gothic novelists before, notably Mary Shelley in *Frankenstein*, Maturin embeds story within story in *Melmoth*, each story centering on a question of identity, some characters even assuming multiple identities and appearing in multiple tales. The result is a feeling of uncertainty among all of the characters. "Who am I" is a question that could frequently be asked by any number of characters in *Melmoth* whose identity is questionable. The first of these characters about whom we learn is Stanton, whose manuscript version of his own life and his own obsession with the Wanderer is made known to readers as John himself spends the days and nights following his uncle's death trying to read and interpret the cryptic story.

Stanton's Manuscript

One of the briefer tales in *Melmoth*, Stanton's story has received little critical attention, most analyses of *Melmoth* focusing on the subsequent lives of Monçada and Immalee/Isidora. His story is important, however, as the manuscript that he leaves in Ireland includes John Melmoth's first detailed account of his ancestor, the Wanderer, preparing him for the longer, more elaborate tales about the Wanderer related by Monçada. Stanton's story also serves to further explore the obsession with the Wanderer that haunts Old Melmoth, that threatens to do the same to John, and that likewise occupies many years in the life of Adonijah, who is a part of Monçada's longer tale. Finally, Stanton's story introduces many of the religious prejudices that will affect the lives of so many subsequent characters, and his confinement in a madhouse foreshadows other characters' lives in monastic cells, Inquisition prisons, and underground hideouts.

Stanton's origins and early life are obscure. His narrative begins when, as a young man, he is traveling in Spain. On one particular evening in 1677, he witnesses two peasants killed by lightning. Shortly after this event, Stanton first encounters the Wanderer himself:

> As they were about to remove the bodies, a person approached with a calmness of step and demeanor, as if he were alone unconscious of danger, and incapable of fear; and after looking on them for some time, burst into a laugh so loud, wild, and protracted, that the peasants, starting with so much horror at the sound as at that of the storm, hurried away, bearing the corse with them. Even Stanton's fears were subdued by his astonishment, and, turning to the stranger, who remained standing on the same spot, he asked the reason of such an outrage on humanity. (35)

Here Stanton's manuscript attempts to record the Wanderer's response and describe his countenance, the aspect of his person that Stanton and all subsequent characters who encounter the Wanderer most remember, but the manuscript becomes illegible, as it does at many junctures in his narrative. Stanton makes little of this incident until he later becomes aware that the stranger whose laugh and face are so memorable is indeed the Wanderer.

Though the manuscript records only briefly Stanton's subsequent experiences in Spain, it does introduce us to a problem associated with Spanish fear and hatred of the English that will be further developed in later narratives. As Stanton attempts to find shelter during the stormy night in 1677, he is turned away by many potential hosts, one of whom exclaims, "'no heretic—no English—Mother of God protect us—avaunt Satan!'" (35). Even Stanton hears in this exclamation something unusual: "Stanton felt there was something more than national bigotry in the exclamations of the old woman; there was a peculiar and personal horror of the English.—and he was right" (35). Only later, after hearing numerous other tales that include both this "national bigotry," religious intolerance, and appearances of the Wanderer, do we conclude that the old woman's fears are motivated by a fierce sense of Spanish nationalism, religious intolerance of Protestantism, and associations made between every Englishman and the Wanderer, known through legends to represent an evil force. When Stanton does eventually find shelter in an abandoned Spanish villa, the housekeeper tells him a story of the Wanderer's appearance at a wedding at which the priest dies inexplicably, the bride is found dead on her wedding night, and her groom goes mad. The woman concludes her narrative by making a connection to the very stranger Stanton has heard laugh earlier the same night. She tells him that "the Englishman certainly had been seen in the neighborhood since;—seen, as she had heard that very night" (44). Stanton too makes a connection: "'Great G—d!' exclaimed Stanton, as he

recollected the stranger whose demonic laugh had so appalled him, while gazing on the lifeless bodies of the lovers, whom the lightening had struck and blasted" (44). Thus begins Stanton's fascination with this demonic stranger, a fascination that will in large part determine the remainder of his life as the manuscript records it.

Stanton's next four years are spent in London searching for the Wanderer. How he knows to seek him in London is never clarified by the fragmented manuscript; however, he does finally encounter the Wanderer outside a London theater. It is during a brief interview between the two that we get a glimpse of Stanton's future life and the best statement in the novel of the Wanderer's principal goal in his own protracted life. Burning with curiosity to know more of the Wanderer, Stanton requests a subsequent interview, telling Melmoth to "'name your hour and your place'" (50). Melmoth's response shocks Stanton: "'The hour shall be mid-day . . . and the place shall be the bare walls of a mad-house, where you shall rise rattling in your chains, and rustling from your straw, to greet me,—yet still you shall have *the curse of sanity*, and of memory'" (50). The following explanation for the arrival of Melmoth under such circumstances clarifies his mission. He explains to Stanton, "'I *never desert my friends in misfortune*. When they are plunged in the lowest abyss of human calamity, *they are sure to be visited by me* '" (50). This statement serves to explain Melmoth's appearance to most characters in the novel. Melmoth's misery, itself caused by his knowledge that he is a damned soul, having traded his salvation with Satan for 150 years of extra life and other powers, such as the ability to travel through time and space and foretell the future, has made his life unbearable. He thus searches for victims whose own life is one of misery in hopes that they will trade places with him, relieving their own misery but in doing so relinquishing their chance for salvation after death.

After this interview, Melmoth's prophecy comes true. The manuscript picks up some years later with Stanton "plunged in a state the most deplorable" (50). His compulsive talk of and search for Melmoth provides his friends and family with "the idea that he was deranged" (51), and he is tricked by a cousin into entering a madhouse from which there seems to be no escape. In this miserable state, his loss of personal freedom coupled by confinement and the emotional tortures caused by the rantings of the madhouse's inmates, Stanton suffers an identity crisis, a loss of a sense of who he is, which Melmoth will subsequently try to take advantage of. On his first night of confinement, "He was in complete darkness; the horror of his situation struck him at once, and for a moment he was indeed almost qualified for an inmate of that dreadful mansion" (54). Over the course of many days, his confinement is made worse by his having to listen to two inmates debate religion and politics. Survivors of the English Civil War and Cromwell's Protectorate, "a puritanical weaver, who had been driven mad by a single sermon from the celebrated Hugh Peters" is in constant debate with "a loyalist tailor, who had been ruined by giving credit to the cavaliers and their ladies" (55). These characters and their connection to the Anglican cavaliers and Puritan roundheads are but two characters among many in *Melmoth* who are connected to the religious and political issues that led in the seventeenth century to the English Civil War, an event that hovers in the background of the entire novel as a period during which individuals, families, and the English nation as a whole suffered identity crises of unequalled proportion. I will return to these issues once more in a discussion of another of *Melmoth*'s narratives, and I will reflect on the significance of this background for Gothic fiction and issues of power and identity more fully as part of the concluding chapter of this study.

It is in this condition that Stanton reaches his nadir and "began to sink under the continued horrors of the place" (59). His fears become so exaggerated that he reaches a state of

paralysis: “He became squalid, listless, torpid, and disgusting in his appearance” (60), ripe for Melmoth’s temptation. When the Wanderer appears to Stanton in his madhouse cell, he questions Stanton, “‘Is not your condition very miserable?’” (61). In an effort to prepare Stanton to accept his offer of release, Melmoth describes the loss of sanity that Stanton will most likely suffer from if he does not accept such an offer. Melmoth’s lengthy description of Stanton’s possible future condition lists many of the factors that have contributed to Stanton’s crisis and that have affected the sense of identity in many of the characters in *Udolpho* and *Caleb*, discussed in previous chapters. He tells Stanton,

> “Perhaps still more (dreadful) the *fear* will at last become a *hope*,—shut out from society, watched by a brutal keeper, writhing with all the impotent agony of an incarcerated mind without communication and without sympathy, unable to exchange ideas but with those whose ideas are only the hideous spectres of departed intellect, or even to hear the welcome sound of the human voice, except to mistake it for the howl of a fiend, and stop the ear desecrated by its intrusion,—then at last your fear will become a more fearful hope; you will wish to become one of them, to escape the agony of consciousness.” (63)

Stanton’s possible fate, as described by Melmoth, sounds strikingly similar to the state Caleb Williams does find himself in while imprisoned, incapable of defending himself because no one will believe or even listen to him; and the description serves to anticipate the actual experiences of other characters in *Melmoth* whose identity is compromised to the point at which they feel helpless or, in some cases, do indeed succumb to madness.

After hours of description, Melmoth finally makes his offer to Stanton: “‘Escape—escape for your life . . . There is the door, and the key is in my hand. Choose—choose!’” (65), to which Stanton asks, “‘and what is the condition of my liberation?’” (65). As will be the case with each

of Melmoth's temptations, Maturin never states exactly what these condition are; we are left only to speculate, but after repeated individuals reel in horror, we can only conclude that the individual's very soul is at stake. After several illegible pages in Stanton's manuscript, the novel's narrator concludes that the offer "seemed, however, to have been rejected by Stanton with the utmost rage and horror, for Melmoth at last made out,—'Begone, monster, demon!'" (65). Inexplicably, Stanton is finally liberated from his madhouse cell only to continue to pursue the Wanderer. His fate, however, is never to encounter him again; Melmoth has no interest in Stanton after his offer is rejected. Stanton does, however, locate the Melmoth estate in Ireland, leaving with that generation of the Melmoth family the manuscript that young John reads and with which his fascination with his mysterious ancestor begins.

"Tale of the Spaniard"

On the evening following John Melmoth's completion of Stanton's manuscript, a violent storm arises and shipwrecks a trading vessel off the coast within sight of the Melmoth estate. The life of the only survivor, Alonzo Monçada, will serve as the next exploration of identity formation and subsequent identity crises detailed in the novel. As Monçada recuperates from his near-death escape from the shipwreck, he learns that he is doing so in a house owned by a Melmoth. When he first meets John, he has trouble even uttering the word: "He paused, shuddered, and with an effort that seemed like convulsion, disgorged the name of Melmoth" (80). Recalling his own recent study of Stanton's manuscript, John is intrigued. Monçada agrees to share with John what he knows of his ancestor the Wanderer. His account begins with his own lengthy biography, which describes his childhood identity confusion and the subsequent identity

crises that have led him, just before the shipwreck, “to be alone on the earth, without sympathy and beyond relief” (81).

Monçada’s early life is mysterious. He reports growing up in “a wretched house in the suburbs of Madrid” (82), raised by a strange woman, but visited every week by a young couple who call him “their beloved child” (82). When he asks why these supposed parents never take him home with them, they both weep, award his keeper with an expensive gift, and depart. The sense of abandonment from which Monçada suffers is evident and strongly affects the beginning of a life in which he can trust no one. Erikson writes specifically of the roles mothers play in establishing a child’s ability to trust:

> But let it be said here that the amount of trust derived from earliest infantile experience does not seem to depend on absolute quantities of food or demonstrations of love, but rather on the quality of the maternal relationship. Mothers create a sense of trust in their children by that kind of administration which in its quality combines sensitive care of the baby’s individual needs and a firm sense of personal trustworthiness within the trusted framework of their culture’s life style. This forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity which will later combine a sense of being “all right,” of being oneself, and of becoming what other people trust one will become. (*Childhood* 249)

I would further this claim, based on the strong bond that I examined between Emily St Aubert and her father, by asserting that the same could be said for both parents. In a moment of self analysis, Monçada himself reflects on the potential long-term effects of his early inability to trust his parents. He tells John, “I observed their visits were always short, and paid late in the evening; thus a shadow of mystery enveloped my infant days, and perhaps gave its lasting and ineffaceable tinge to the pursuits, the character, and the feelings of my present existence” (83).

When Monçada reaches the age of twelve, he begins to piece together details of his life only to have those details lead to more identity confusion. Unexpectedly, he is one day brought a new set of clothes and swept away to a palace where he meets an elderly gentleman in the presence of his parents. He is introduced to a young boy a year younger than himself, told the stranger is his brother, and both are embraced by the couple whom Monçada has come vaguely to know as his parents. Later that evening, the elderly gentleman dies, but Monçada is not permitted to attend his bier with his brother or parents. When he, in a state of utter confusion, finally asks an attending priest, "'Who am I?'" he is told, "'The grandson of the late Duke of Monçada'" (85). When he asks why he is not allowed to mourn with the family or attend the funeral of his supposed grandfather, he is given no answer, but instead is sent to a convent, supposedly to receive an education. Only weeks later does Monçada overhear a domestic in the convent declare, "how singular it was, that the eldest son of the (now) Duke de Monçada should be educated in a convent, and brought up to a monastic life, while the younger, living in a superb palace, was surrounded by teachers suited to his rank" (85). Astute readers of *Melmoth* at this point see the lack of historical logic in Monçada's situation better than he does. The rules of primogeniture have been violated. While it would not be uncommon in a Catholic country for a younger son to be given to monastic life to ensure the inheritance of the family estate by the elder, to have the elder placed in this situation brings the family's choice into question. It will take much begging on the part of Monçada to have the mystery explained.

After repeated inquiries addressed to his father and mother, Monçada is told that on his becoming a monk depends "the peace of a whole family,—the feelings of a father,—the honour of a mother,—the interests of religion,—the eternal salvation of an individual, all suspended in one scale" (93). Declaring himself unfit for and uninterested in monastic life, despite his sincere

religious beliefs, Monçada repeatedly requests a different choice in life. Denying his requests again and again, his parents are finally forced to explain in full their reasons for committing him, their eldest son, to a monastery: he, the elder Monçada son, is illegitimate. His mother explains to him that while pregnant out of wedlock, she "'devoted you to him, as the only expiation of my crime'" (101). In her reasoning, the only way she can save her own soul and that of her son is to have his prayers as a monk intercede with God to ensure their salvation. Herein Maturin extends the neglect Monçada's mother has hitherto shown to her son by having her attempt to "buy her salvation by denying her natural ties" (Eggenschwiler 170) to her child. At stake here is not only a woman's salvation but the reputation of a noble Spanish family, willing to sacrifice a child to maintain the image of a family worthy of the Monçada title.

The reputation of the Monçada family and the supposed salvation of its members are, for them, compelling reasons for their actions; to this Maturin adds ecclesiastical greed and the desire for the convent to which Monçada is committed to enhance its own reputation. Monçada declares to John Melmoth that "A son—the eldest son of the Duke de Monçada, taking the vows, was a glorious triumph for the ex-Jesuits, and they did not fail to make the most of it" (103). From this point forward in *Melmoth*, the family and the church—two powerful institutions in Catholic Spain of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (the latter frequently exercising extreme control over the former)—serve as the Gothic villains who compromise the identity of individuals to ensure their own continued power and place in society. In recounting one of the many punishments inflicted on monks and novices in the monastery, often for their unwitting violation of the most mundane of rules in the order, Monçada at one point declares that "The Jesuits are fond of courting power, but they are still fonder of keeping it, if they can, to themselves" (119). Martin Eggenschwiler's reading of *Melmoth* contrasts the basic sense of

human love and sympathy supposedly at the heart of families and institutional religion with the fictional reality created by Maturin and other Gothicists interested in abuses of power in both institutions: he writes of the Spanish society portrayed in *Melmoth* that "in its familial, religious, and political institutions it sacrifices humanity for man's excessive longings" (171), these longings being in *Melmoth* reputation and the power that comes with it. In a letter Monçada later receives from his younger brother, Juan, who himself only gradually comes to an understanding of the true dynamics of his family and the abuses they have committed against his brother, Juan writes, "'We have been both the victims of parental and priestly imposition; the former we must forgive, for our parents are the victims of it too. The Director has their consciences in his hand, and their destiny and ours at his feet'" (131). The result of the abuses of power by this larger social institution, the church, will have a devastating effect on any individuals, like Monçada and his brother Juan, who try to defy its power by asserting their own independence of thought.

Monçada has no desire to become a monk. Though he never loses his religion, even after the horrors he suffers, the monastic life is not one of his choice. It is this lack of choice that causes him to suffer as much as does the physical and emotional tortures imposed on him by the monastery and eventually the Inquisition itself. Being forcefully constrained in a monastery from which there is no escape, coerced into taking vows by the guilt imposed on him by his mother, Monçada and other novices placed in similar circumstances suffer from at least three of the fears common to all humans, which Erikson notes, with a compromised sense of identity, can escalate into anxiety: fear of losing autonomy, "intolerance of being manipulated and coerced beyond the point at which outer control can be experienced as self-control," and fear of being restrained (*Childhood* 409-10). Even another aging monk, coming to a realization of his own misery at age sixty and after many years as a monk, declares to Moncada, "'The moment life is put beyond the

reach of your will, and placed under the influence of mechanical operations, it becomes, to thinking beings, a torment insupportable'" (123). Again and again, Monçada begs his father for a choice: a career, the military, anything to restore his freedom and provide him control over his own life. Again, however, for his parents, the family's salvation, reputation, and their connection to the all-powerful church disallow any such choice.

The results for Monçada are clear manifestations of his impending identity crisis: lethargy, lack of willpower, fear, anxiety, and a general lack of agency to continue to function. Early in his tenure in the monastery, the first signs of a problem are evident in his lethargy—his lack of desire to pursue anything. Once his mother finally convinces him to take his vows, he reports that his heart "turned to stone. . . . I felt my destiny was fixed—I had no wish to avert or arrest it—I was like one who sees an enormous engine (whose operation is to crush him to atoms) put in motion, and, stupefied with horror, gazes on it with a calmness that might be mistaken for that of one who was coolly analysing the complication of its machinery" (102). His response to any question or request is to show no emotion but to repeat as if repeating a mantra, "'I am to become a monk'" (103). On the day on which he is to take his vows, he reports that "the profound stupefaction in which I was plunged prevented my noticing things which would have inspired the most uninterested spectator" (106). After taking his vows, feeling "his destiny was decided," (110), Monçada "neither thought, nor felt, nor lived,—if life depends on consciousness, and the motions of the will" (111). The result is a suspicion of Monçada's sincerity on the part of the Superior and his fellow monks. Their response is to scrutinize his every subsequent move: "they all pledged themselves to each other to watch me; that is, to harass, persecute, and torment me into being the very character with which their malice, their

curiosity, or their mere industry of idleness and wantonness of unoccupied invention, had invested me already" (112).

Monçada does have two subsequent hopeful times, this hope provided by his brother, Juan, who begins a surreptitious correspondence with him via letters smuggled to and from the two through the monastery's porter. The first letters propose to Monçada the possibility of having a civil court try his case, rule in his favor, and have his monastic vows annulled. The idea that it is possible to have his freedom restored has an immediate and rejuvenating effect on Monçada: "A new world of hope was opened to me. I thought I saw liberty on the face of heaven when I walked in the garden" (145). Of course, losing a monk who has his vows annulled by a civil court, whose power over ecclesiastical authority would set a precedent, is not an event that the monastic order welcomes, and the monks intensify their scrutiny of Monçada. Upon the discovery of Monçada's plans, the Superior declares, "'How comes it that you have dared to . . . Reclaim your vows, and expose *us* to the scandal of a civil court and its proceedings'" (154). Just as the reputation of Monçada's family is among the chief reasons he is confined in the monastery, the convent's own reputation takes precedent over Monçada's desire to leave. The Superior asks him, "'What will become of our character? What will all Madrid say?'" (155).

As "'The basis of all ecclesiastical power rests upon fear'" (131), as Monçada's brother has told him, Monçada begins both to suffer from legitimate fears and exaggerate perceived fears of the extreme means the order may pursue to punish him for his conduct, and, later, when he does attempt an escape from the monastery, even ignore fears of possible punishment by the Inquisition that he should anticipate. In essence, he goes through two of the stages that Erikson sees resulting from an identity crisis, one in which fears normal to all humans become anxiety and the other in which real dangers are ignored (*Childhood* 407). Additionally, Erikson

emphasizes a connection between this anxiety and institutions like churches whose desire to gain and maintain their power has taught them the value of threats to the identity of anyone who defies that power. Erikson's connections so clearly describe Monçada's condition that they are worth quoting in full:

> We have nothing to fear but anxiety. For it is not the fear of a danger (which we might be well able to meet with judicious action), but the fear of the associated state of aimless anxiety which drives us into irrational *action*, irrational *flight*—or, indeed, irrational *denial* of danger. When threatened with such anxiety, we either magnify a danger which we have no reason to fear excessively—or we ignore a danger which we have every reason to fear. To be able to be aware of fear, then, without giving in to anxiety; to train our fear in the face of anxiety to remain an accurate measure and warning of that which man must fear—this is a necessary condition for a judicious frame of mind. This is the more important since political and religious institutions, in vying for the allegiance of men, have learned to exploit infantile panics common to all mankind or to particular sections of it. (*Childhood* 407-408)

Monçada's first reaction to the Superior's discovery of his lawsuit fits Erikson's category of exaggerated fears. Anticipating the monastery's potential reaction to his lawsuit, Monçada imagines every possible punishment they might impose: "A thousand images of indescribable horror rushed in a host on me. I had heard much of the terrors of convents,—of their punishments, often carried to the infliction of death, or of reducing their victim to a state in which death would have been a blessing. Dungeons, chains and scourges, swam before my eyes in a fiery mist" (156). While ostracism is the worst punishment Monçada actually suffers as his case is being tried, he allows his anxiety over potential repercussions to overwhelm him. Once

Monçada and his brother discover that they have lost the case because "the precedent was reckoned too dangerous" as the church would have "all the monks in Spain appealing against their vows" (190), Monçada's brother then makes another, more dangerous, effort to effect his brother's freedom: arranging for a parricide who has sought sanctuary in the monastery to assist Monçada in an escape. This measure, for which Monçada will be punished when the attempt fails, underscores the desperation of one suffering an identity crisis who is compelled to ignore dangers which are real: though he has escaped extreme torture thus far, the monastery has yet to employ that most Gothic of powerful institutions, the Inquisition.

Even before the attempted escape, Monçada anticipates potential disasters that he should judiciously fear. With some vague sense of "hope of escape" (198), he writes to his brother,

> "Reflect, dear Juan, that I am staked against a community, a priesthood, a nation. The escape of a monk is almost impossible,—but his concealment is down-right impossible. Every bell in every convent in Spain would ring out *untouched* in pursuit of the fugitive. The military, civil, and ecclesiastical powers, would all be on the 'qui vive.' Hunted, panting, and despairing, I might fly from place to place—no place affording me shelter. The incensed powers of the church—the fierce and vigorous gripe of the law—the execration and hatred of society—the suspicions of the lowest order among whom I must lurk, to shun and curse their penetration; think of encountering all this, while the fiery cross of the Inquisition blazes in the van, followed by the whole pack, shouting, cheering, hallooing on to the prey." (199)

Despite this possible fate, Monçada attempts the escape, only to find that he has been tricked by the unscrupulous parricide Juan has enlisted to assist him. After the parricide stabs and kills Juan, Monçada does indeed languish for four months in a prison cell of the Inquisition, brought

food and water daily by the very parricide who turned him over to the Inquisition. Still, when he recovers and realizes his condition, he ignores legitimate fears of the Inquisition, relying on the belief that he has never been a heretic, at least in his mind (252). Mark Hennely's comments on Monçada's imprisonment in the Inquisition cell underscore Monçada's delusional hopes. For Hennely, in the hands of Maturin, the Inquisition "becomes an emblem of that sometime indifferent, sometime hostile universe which divides man against himself, intelligence against instinct" (673). From this point until his eventual escape, Monçada will vacillate between terrors that border on the irrational and a lack of judicious fear of that which does indeed threaten him.

In the meantime, his life consists of a series of Inquisitional "examinations" followed by long periods of solitary confinement. It is during this confinement that he has a vivid dream that serves as a visual manifestation of both the power of the Inquisition and the extremes to which it could subject Monçada: an *auto da fe*, in which he is being burned at the stake. Linda Jones interprets the dream as representing Monçada's being torn between "adherence to the Father's Law and resistance to its patriarchal authority" (57), here implying a fear of his literal father, who, after all, allowed his son to be cast into a monastery, the ecclesiastical law represented by the church Fathers, and the law of God the Father. It is at this point of his existence that, as we have been anticipating, Melmoth arrives in his cell to offer Monçada the same escape on the same conditions that he offered Stanton in his English madhouse cell, conditions that Monçada refuses to mention to anyone except his confessor.

Fortunately, for Monçada, he doesn't have long to contemplate Melmoth's offer, as a fire breaks out in the prison, affording him the opportunity to escape in the confusion that follows. Running desperately, he arrives and seeks sanctuary in the home of a Jewish family, posing in Spain as Catholics. Safe for a while based on the rumor that he has died in the Inquisitional

prison fire, Monçada must go through one last emotional torture before he can begin his recuperation. Safely exiled in this hideout, Monçada makes the mistake of watching with fascination the mob execution in the streets outside his bedroom window of the very parricide who pretended to aid him in his escape only later to turn him in to the Inquisition. Caught up in the frenzy of the horrific scene, Monçada reports that he "echoed the screams of the thing that seemed no longer to live, but still could scream; and I screamed aloud and wildly for life—life—and mercy!" (284). Monçada later declares that "I actually for a moment believed myself the object of their cruelty. The drama of terror has the irresistible power of converting its audience into its victims" (285). Amy Smith offers a convincing analysis of this vivid scene, connecting it to its role in Monçada's recovery, his way of dealing with the guilt and fears that have followed him after his escape from the Inquisition. Calling this scene the "nadir of Alonzo's psychological descent" (528), she argues that Monçada's identification with the parricide victim of the mob is necessary, a way of vicariously purging his guilt for defying church authority, his parents' authority, and being an indirect accomplice in his brother's death. She writes that "An apostate monk, Alonzo too would be subject to the mob's fury, but since he must remain alive and sane to finally triumph over the tempter, once again Maturin employs a method of transference for the extremity of suffering. Here the parricidal monk serves as a psychological scapegoat and Alonzo vicariously shares, without physically experiencing, his last agonies" (528). As an extension of this analysis, I would assert that as the mobbed victim Monçada identifies with is himself a monk, such an identification with a monk who is literally killed rids Monçada of the last vestiges of his identity as a monk, an identity that has led to a crisis from which he must now begin to recover.

This move toward recovery will have one last barrier: a member of the mob sees Monçada in the window of his bedroom as he witnesses the mob scene and reports him to the Inquisition. The Jew with whom he is hiding has no choice but to conceal Monçada in a subterranean passage beneath his house, where Monçada will become the amanuensis for another Jewish man, Adonijah, a scholar-physician who, coincidentally, has spent sixty years collecting stories about the Wanderer which he is transcribing into a manuscript to serve as evidence of the Wanderer's existence. Going blind himself, Adonijah offers Monçada the job of helping him transcribe his manuscript. It is here that the last tales about the Wanderer come to be known to Monçada and it is from the memory of this manuscript that he relates to John Melmoth the last information about John's mysterious ancestor.

"Tale of the Indians"

The first of the tales contained in Adonijah's manuscript, that of Immalee/Isidora, is the best known story within *Melmoth*, often cited as capable of standing on its own, independent of all others in the novel. It is recorded in Adonijah's manuscript in two parts, the first set on a remote island in the Indian Ocean, the second set in Spain. The years covered are roughly those of Stanton's tale, sometime in the 1680s. The two sections are interrupted by the final two tales in the novel, which I cover separately in later sections of this chapter.

The story's opening is shrouded in as much mystery as its island setting, an island "unknown to Europeans, and unvisited by the natives of the contiguous islands, except on remarkable occasions" (302). Prior to this story's setting, there had been a temple to Siva on the island, but an earthquake left it in ruins and the population fled. Since that remotely distant time, "The island, thus left to itself, became vigorously luxurious, as some neglected children improve

in health and strength, while pampered darlings die under excessive nurture. Flowers bloomed, and foliage thickened, without a hand to pluck, a step to trace, or a lip to taste them" (303-04). Here, as elsewhere in "The Indians' Tale," the setting is described in Edenic terms, a place remarkably similar to the Eden of Genesis or of Milton's *Paradise Lost* before the fall, an intentional connection that Maturin makes to contrast the island's only inhabitant with Melmoth the Wanderer, who appears on the island later in the tale, a contrast that I will develop later in this chapter.

It is in this Edenic setting that we meet its only inhabitant, Immalee, a "neglected child" herself. Only in the second half of the story do readers come to a full understanding of how a single, seventeen-year-old female finds herself on such an island. She is actually the daughter of a Spanish merchant; she is the sole survivor of a shipwreck that left her stranded at the age of three. That such a young child would survive for the next 14 years alone on an otherwise uninhabited island is yet another part of the mystery of this tale that Maturin never clarifies. Completely pure and innocent, ignorant of any world other than that of her isolated island, Immalee is the first character introduced in this novel who has until age 17 never suffered any of the horrors that so many of its other characters have. One of the more complete and romantic descriptions of her connects her to her island home:

> She could not be conscious of fear, for nothing of that world in which she lived had ever borne a hostile appearance to her. The sun and the shade—the flowers and foliage—the tamarinds and figs that prolonged her delightful existence—the water that she drank, wondering at the beautiful being who seemed to drink whenever she did—the peacocks, who spread out their rich and radiant plumage the moment they beheld her—and the loxia, who perched on her shoulder and hand as she walked, and answered her sweet

> voice with imitative chirpings—all these were her friends, and she knew none but these. (311)

There is much here that defines Immalee's identity. She identifies with the plants and animals of the island only. Her inability to understand fear, having never experienced it, will make the contrast between this life of innocence and her subsequent life in Spain even more of a pronounced source of confusion and fear. Also, Immalee is the only character in the novel who is not immediately suspicious of Melmoth when she first meets him: she has not conversed with another human being since the age of three, so she doesn't understand the notion of suspicion or fear. Adonijah's manuscript concludes the initial description of Immalee by noting that "Pain she had never felt—of death she had no idea—how, then could she become acquainted with fear?'" (312).

We might here make a comparison between Maturin's "Immalee," clearly an exotic variation of "Emily," and the two other Emilies considered in this study, Godwin's Emily Melville and Radcliffe's Emily St Aubert. Knowing no "pain" or "fear" prior to the arrival of the Wanderer on her desert island, Immalee is reminiscent of Emily Melville prior to incurring Tyrrel's "antipathy" (84), as Caleb tells us, being in her youth "a stranger to anxiety and fear" (84). Likewise, Maggie Kilgour compares Emily St Aubert's childhood at her own Edenic La Valée (and Immalee's island will later be described in Edenic terms as well) to that of Rousseau's Emile (115). She even compares La Valée, Emily's own "version of the Crusoesque island idealized by Rousseau" to a garden of Eden (115). Just as it will be Tyrrel who removes Emily Melville from her home—a place of safety and security—to a prison, his tyrrany leading her loss of stable identity, and Montoni and others will do the same to Emily St Aubert, the

arrival of Melmoth on Immalee's island begins a series of events that bring on sudden changes in experiences and environments that will have the same devastating effects on Immalee's identity.

Initially intending to tempt Immalee as his next victim, Melmoth arrives on the island but is immediately struck by her beauty and innocence: when he asks her who she is in her native Spanish, only a few words of which she remembers from childhood, all she can utter at first is "'God made me,' from the words of the Christian catechism that had been breathed into her infant lip" (313). Later, the narrator reports on the effect of Immalee's innocence on Melmoth and offers insight into what an experience with such a perfect child of nature would have on one even as miserable as the Wanderer:

> We know not, and can never tell, what sensations her innocent and helpless beauty inspired him with, but the result was, that he ceased to regard her as his victim; and when seated beside her listening to her questions, or answering them, seemed to enjoy the few lucid intervals of his insane and morbid existence. Absent from her, he returned to the world to torture and to tempt in the mad-house where the Englishman Stanton was tossing on his straw. (332)

In a later story in *Melmoth*, we discover that Melmoth's mortal life ended in 1666, the year, we assume, that his deal for 150 years of additional "life" on earth was made. That being the case, Stanton may indeed be the first of his victims, and, if so, his periods of escape spent with Immalee here serve as a relief from the horrors that he witnesses Stanton suffer and the torture he inflicts on him. With Monçada, in contrast, their meeting occurring over a hundred years later, Melmoth seems to have lost all semblance of humanity or repulsion at horror. Here with Immalee, we seem to see a being who has not yet become the hardened creature he will eventually be. These moments of relief are, however, always temporary, as Melmoth's deal with

Satan has already been made: “The habitual and impervious gloom of his soul soon returned. He felt again the gnawings of the worm that never dies, and the scorchings of the fire that is never to be quenched” (333).

One of the significant effects of Melmoth’s conversations with Immalee is the beginning of her loss of innocence. Much of this loss is brought about by the negative descriptions of religions and the horrors associated with so many of the world’s religions to which Melmoth introduces Immalee. When he asks her in an early interview if she has any religion, she asks “‘*Religion!* What is that? Is it a new thought?’” (323). Melmoth, having developed a cynical and bitter attitude toward all organized religions, tells her, regarding the different “modes” of worship as he calls them, that “‘there is but one point in which they all agree—that of making their religion a torment;—the religion of some prompting them to torture themselves, and the religion of some prompting them to torture others’’’ (323). As Immalee has never experienced evil or pain, she has no concept of what torture means; Melmoth is all too happy to clarify for her. Using a rather magical telescope, he gives Immalee a view of multiple religious ceremonies on the mainland of India, each gruesome and horrifying. She witnesses worshippers of Juggernaut crawling in the sand on knees worn bare, nails piercing their hands; others prostrate themselves beneath the wheels of chariots that crush them to death. When she sees mothers throw their children beneath these same wheels as human sacrifices, Immalee “dropt the telescope in horror, and exclaimed, ‘The world that thinks does not feel. I never saw the rose kill the bud!’” (327). Thus begins her painful move from innocence into experience.

Having exhibited an example of those religions that teach worshippers to torture themselves, Melmoth turns Immalee’s attention to a conflict between Muslims and Hindus to illustrate those who torture others: “But before they entered the mosque, they spurned and spit at

the unoffending and terrified Hindoos; they struck them in the flats of their sabers, and, terming them dogs of idolators, they cursed them in the name of God and the prophet" (328). Immalee's response is to fall to the ground and declare, "'There is no god, if there be none but theirs!'" (329). At this point, Immalee's telescope sights a Christian church, which "evinced some uneasiness" on the part of Melmoth. Reluctant to answer her questions about Christianity, Melmoth, "perhaps constrained by some higher power" (330), as the text tells us parenthetically, can point out only the positive aspects of Christianity, declaring that for these worshipers, "'their religion enjoins them to be mild, benevolent, and tolerant'" (330). This revelation causes Immalee to declare, "'Christ shall be my God, and I will be a Christian!'" (330). At this point, Melmoth, again relatively new to his life as an agent of Satan, realizes that he has gone too far and, in doing so, instead of turning Immalee away from all religion in horror, has converted her to Christianity unintentionally; as a result, "He fled murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night" (330).

The significance of Melmoth's "mistake" is that Immalee develops a strong faith that will serve to sustain her through subsequent trials, as Monçada's faith serves him. What Maturin explores through Immalee's faith, as he has done with Monçada's, is the extent to which their faith—sincere and in keeping with true Christian principles from the overall narrative perspective—is incompatible with the outward, often hypocritical, displays of religion deemed necessary by organized religion and its proponents, specifically the Catholic church and the Inquisition, its policing force. Once Immalee is rescued from her island paradise and returned to her family in Spain (where her name becomes Isidora), her mother, Donna Clara, worries about her nonconformist views, views that the novel implicitly champions by presenting them in a positive light while placing them in stark contrast to the views of those who question them.

Shortly after this return, Isidora's mother declares to Father Jose, her family's confessor, "'Oh, Father, how she will talk sometimes!—like a creature self-taught, that needed neither director or confessor but her own heart'" (369-70). Shocked, the priest's response is "'How! . . . need neither confessor or director!—she must be beside herself'" (370). Maturin's Calvinist beliefs, for which he blamed his own fate as an impoverished curate in the Church of England while not being given a larger preferment, becomes clear, even heavy-handed here. Nonetheless, it is this personal relationship to her God, one formed in part by her own sense of natural religion and in part because, ironically, of the teachings of Melmoth, that will sustain Isidora and lead to her salvation at the end of her tale.

Donna Clara goes on to lament to Father Jose Isidora's beliefs, which seem heretical to her devoutly Catholic beliefs but are clearly sanctioned by the novel as a whole. She declares in tears to Father Jose that Isidora "'will say, but never till greatly urged, that religion ought to be a system whose spirit was universal love. Do you understand anything of that, Father?'' (370). Father Jose dismisses such claims, forcing Donna Clara to continue, "'That it must be something that bound all who professed it to habits of benevolence, gentleness, and humility, under every difference of creed and of form'" (370). Even Father Jose, later in a modest defense of Isidora, whom he secretly admires for her purity of thought, tries to assuage Donna Clara's fears for her daughter by pointing out that Isidora has become known in her newly adopted home for her charity, visiting regularly the poor, to which Donna Clara, in her insensitivity, declares that she herself "'never could abide the sight of a beggar'" (372). The conformist views of the hypocritical mother stand in stark contrast to those true Christian principles of the daughter. This contrast will only become stronger as Isidora's independence of thought becomes more pronounced.

Before examining what eventually happens to Isidora, however, we must return to her earlier existence as Immalee on her island paradise to examine the effects on her identity that Melmoth's presence has. They are immediate; even after their first encounter, Immalee loses that innocence in which she has lived for fourteen years. David Eggenschwiler discusses this change, noting that after witnessing the horrors that humans are capable of inflicting on each other through the visions of society the Wanderer shows her, "Fallen from Innocence into Experience, she loses her completely natural existence" (173). The tone and imagery of the novel here takes on that of the story of the fall from Eden. The narrator states that "None but crimeless and unimpassioned minds ever truly enjoyed earth, ocean and heaven. At our first transgression, nature expels us, as it did our first parents, from her paradise forever" (333). Once Melmoth enters this paradise, of course, the serpent has entered the garden and there is no turning back: Immalee's identity is forever altered. On one visit, Melmoth "heard sounds that perhaps operated on his feelings as the whispers of Eve to her flowers on the organs of the serpent. Both knew their power, and felt their time" (350). The language of purity, peace, and happiness now gives way to that of the experienced person, jaded and weary of life:

> Now she stood as if deserted even by nature, whose child she was; the rock was her resting place, and the ocean seemed the bed where she purposed to rest; she had no shells on her bosom, no roses in her hair—her character seemed to have changed with her feelings; she no longer loved all that is beautiful in nature; she seemed, by an anticipation of her destiny, to make alliance with all that is awful and ominous. She had begun to love the rocks and the ocean, the thunder of the wave, and the sterility of the sand,—awful objects, the incessant recurrence of whose very sound seems intended to remind us of grief and of eternity. Their restless monotony of repetition corresponds with the beatings

> of a heart which asks its destiny from the phenomena of nature, and feels the answer is—'Misery.'" (347)

The nature that Immalee lived as a part of in early sections of "The Indians' Tale" was described in terms of what Burke would call the beautiful: that which is small, delicate, life-affirming. After her encounters with Melmoth, this language gives way to the Burkean sublime: that which is awe-inspiring, that which looks to the vastness of eternity, that which hints at impending death. Even before this incident, soon after Melmoth visits the island, there is a perceivable change in Immalee: the death of a loxia, fallen from its nest, now takes on significance for her that such an event wouldn't have before. She, in essence, has learned from Melmoth to think about the world around her, not just to accept and participate in it. If we can view the move from Innocence to Experience as a move into the world of knowledge and thought, Immalee clearly goes through this experience. She says of Melmoth, "'I begin to comprehend what he said—to think, then, is to suffer—and a world of thought must be a world of pain!'" (320).

Coupled with this sadness associated with thought and knowledge of the world outside of her former paradise is a concern and eventual anxiety caused by Melmoth's disappearance. We must recall here that, as an abandoned child, Immalee has, like Monçada, been scarred by that abandonment, the results of which leave her more fearful of its repetition. As Melmoth is the only human of whom Immalee has any conscious memory, she immediately becomes attached. At the conclusion of their first meeting, she tells Melmoth, "'till I saw you, I never felt a pain that was not pleasure; but now it is all pain when I think you will not return'" (318). Having become attached to Melmoth and their conversations, Immalee becomes increasingly angry and confused each time he visits her and leaves without the assurance that he will return. Erikson lists a "fear of being left" (*Childhood* 410) as one of the common fears stemming from childhood

that can contribute to later identity crises. Discussing the issue of trust and fidelity in adolescents (and Immalee's innocence and immaturity when she first meets Melmoth certainly argues for her having not moved from adolescence into adulthood), Erikson asserts that "If the earliest stage bequeathed to the identity crisis an important need for trust in oneself and in others, then clearly the adolescent looks most fervently for men and ideas to have *faith* in, which also means men and ideas in whose service it would seem worth while to prove oneself trustworthy" (*Identity: Youth and Crisis* 128-29). We have seen Immalee search for a system of belief in which she can place her trust, having witnessed many religious practices Melmoth has exposed her to, arriving at a belief in a very personal God void of any association with institutional religion. In Melmoth, she also searches for that individual whom she can trust, and he constantly violates that trust. After his initial visit to the island, some time passes before he returns, this time to continue Immalee's "education" about the civilized world. As he prepares to leave once again, in a burst of confused anger, Immalee declares, "'Go, then, to your world,—since you wish to be unhappy—go!—Alas! it is not necessary to go there to be unhappy, for I must be so here. Go,—but take with you these roses, for they will all wither when you are gone!—take with you these shells, for I will no longer love to wear them when you no longer see them!'" (345). After their various encounters on the Indian island, and even after visits to Immalee as Isidora in Spain, Melmoth will abandon Immalee for long periods of time during which she suffers. What we come to find out during his last visit to her in India is that he is struggling with himself. Having originally intended Immalee to be a victim—someone with whom to exchange his miserable life—he comes to love her and though attracted to her, he struggles to avoid bringing her completely into his world, a world that is throughout the novel vaguely associated with darkness and misery.

Of course, love is a two-way street, and Immalee rapidly develops an intense connection to Melmoth. After an early visit during which Melmoth has denounced civilization, including the high mortality rate in cities, Immalee declares, "'But they die in the arms of those they love . . . and is not that better than even life in solitude—as mine was before I beheld you?'" (336). As I have discussed with Radcliffe's heroine and especially with Caleb Williams, humans are by nature social creatures; only after meeting Melmoth does Immalee come to this understanding. In an early conversation with Melmoth, she mentions her "friend," whom she sees only when she goes to drink from the stream. We and Melmoth conclude that Immalee is staring at her reflection. After Melmoth's visits, she no longer comments on this incident, as if she has exchanged her narcissistic focus on self for an identification with Melmoth. Regarding intimacy in general, Erikson writes that "the young adult, emerging from the search for and insistence on identity, is eager and willing to fuse his identity with that of others. He is ready for intimacy, that is, the capacity to commit himself to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises" (*Childhood* 263). Immalee, unaware of the extent to which she would have to "sacrifice and compromise" with Melmoth, seems to be willing to form such an intimate relationship; he, on the other hand, is not so willing out of a fear of ultimately corrupting Immalee to a point at which she will enter his world, a world of darkness. At one point, Melmoth overhears Immalee in a soliloquy that clarifies her feelings on love and her fear of abandonment at once: "'Before he came, every thing loved me, and I had more things to love than I could reckon by the hairs of my head—now I feel that I can love but one, and that one has deserted me'" (351).

The relationship between the two begins innocently enough. At first Immalee is satisfied seeing Melmoth as the mature mentor, even if his cynical attitude and negative views expose her to the reality of the world in ways she is not fully capable of comprehending. At her level of maturity, she begins forming a relationship described by Erikson as typical for adolescents: “To a considerable extent adolescent love is an attempt to arrive at a definition of one’s identity by projecting one’s diffused self-image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified. This is why so much young love is conversation” (*Identity: Youth and Crisis* 132). Their first dialogue that speaks of any intimacy beyond conversation is a difficult one. When Melmoth asks her whom she loves, she tells him in all of her innocence “‘You!’” (355). Her reasoning is that “‘You have taught me to think, to feel and to weep’” (355). She subsequently, having admitted her feelings, suffers the pangs of love typical in its early stages: “But since she had seen the stranger, new emotions had pervaded her young heart. She learned to weep and to fear; and perhaps she saw, in the fearful aspect of the heavens, the development of that mysterious terror, which always trembles at the bottom of the hearts of those who dare to love” (357). In a final struggle with himself, Melmoth engages in a mock marriage ceremony before abandoning Immalee for the final time on her island. At once declaring to her, “‘WED ME BY THIS LIGHT! . . . AND YOU SHALL BE MINE FOR EVER AND EVER!’” (360), Melmoth’s suddenness of action and terrifying tone cause Immalee to faint. Thinking her perhaps dead, Melmoth again struggles with what is left of his conscience, tearing himself from her, declaring, “‘let her be anything but mine!’” (360). Once again he abandons her never to visit the island again.

When, three years later, we find that Immalee has been returned to her Spanish family and is known to them as Isidora, Melmoth once again begins nightly visits to her, wooing her

through her bedroom window. After much debate with himself, he once again proposes marriage and Immalee accepts. In one of the more bizarre scenes of the novel, the two are wedded in darkness by what later turns out to be the risen corpse of a dead holy man. Thereafter, pregnant with Melmoth's child, her "marriage" unknown to her family, Isidora once again suffers from Melmoth's absences. She begs Melmoth, "'Oh! Melmoth, pity me,—deliver me from this life of constraint, falsehood, and dissimulation. Claim me as your wedded wife in the face of my family, and in the face of ruin your wedded wife will follow—will cling to—will perish with you!'" (570). Once again, however, Melmoth fails Immalee: after making one final, half-hearted attempt to escape with her on the night she gives birth to their child, Melmoth visits her only once more, this time in a prison of the Inquisition, she having been arrested for being married to Melmoth. This time Melmoth visits her to tempt her to change places with him, his original intention in visiting her Indian island. As Stanton has and Monçada and others will, she rejects his offer and we find her "dying of that internal and incurable would—a broken heart" (594).

Even if Melmoth were not in Immalee/Isidora's life, the very "*suddenness* in the changes around" (Erikson, *Childhood* 409) her that she goes through over the course of only three years upon her removal to Spain from her island home would be enough to cause Immalee great suffering, weakening her ability to function. In a discussion of what she terms a series of psychological experiments that Maturin subjects his characters to in *Melmoth*, Amy Smith observes that the agenda in this two-part tale is to explore "what happens when a woman raised alone on a tropical island is suddenly transplanted to seventeenth-century Madrid" (529). From the moment we begin reading of Isidora's new life, we witness changes that are so sudden and pronounced that Isidora has trouble coping. Just after a description of Isidora's family members and their individual agendas in wanting to control her life, the narrator tells us,

> And it was amid such beings that the vivid and susceptible Immalee, the daughter of nature, 'the gay creature of the elements,' was doomed to wither away the richly-coloured and exquisitely-scented flower of an existence so ungenially transplanted. Her singular destiny seemed to have removed her from a physical wilderness, to place her in a moral one. And, perhaps, her last state was worse than her first. (368)

An immediate effect can be seen on her identity as she struggles through memory to cling to that which she has known. She becomes like Emily St Aubert imprisoned in Udolpho, the memory of her former idyllic life at La Vallée at times her only source of solace:

> And so strange was the contrast between her former and present existence,—so subdued was she by constraint and coldness,—so often had she been told that every thing she did, said, or thought, was wrong,—that she began to yield up the evidences of her senses, to avoid the perpetual persecutions of teasing and imperious mediocrity, and considered the appearance of the stranger as one of those visions that formed the trouble and joy of her dreamy and illusive existence." (372)

As the lives of Stanton and Monçada become, this "dreamy" existence gradually yields to one of nightmare as Isidora begins to suffer an identity crisis. Joseph Lew astutely interprets this transitional period in Immalee/Isidora's life: "Isidora/Immalee's two names refer to two irreconcilable identities that are equally hers—Isidora cannot 'forget' Immalee, nor can she succeed in repressing her 'natural' childhood, adolescence, or religion" (190). As I've discussed, the natural religion that she developed in India cannot be reconciled with the rigid instructions of the highly ritualized Catholic Church, whose teachings she is now suddenly and wholly to accept without question. Likewise, the freedom of choice she had living alone is now irreconcilable with the rigid social protocol she is expected to adopt. As Isidora's life becomes as confusing as

a dream, Melmoth once again returns to her, causing her to dwell on her former existence rather than work to adapt to the changes that have occurred around her. She tells him, "'Amid the disruption of every natural tie,—amid the loss of that delicious existence which seems a dream, and which still fills my dreams, and makes me sleep a second existence,—I have thought of you—have dreamt of you—have loved you!'" (385). Isidora can neither return fully to her former existence nor adapt to her new one.

If Immalee was the "child of nature" on her Indian island, she is now the child of Don Francisco de Aliaga, a Spanish merchant, and his wife, Donna Clara. As I have focused so much attention on the role parents and surrogate parents play in the establishment of the identities of the protagonists in *Udolpho* and *Caleb* as well as in the life of Monçada in *Melmoth*, an analysis of Isidora's parents will be useful to establish their contribution to Isidora's new identity as their daughter. We are first introduced to Isidora's mother, Donna Clara, "a woman of a cold and grave temper, with all the solemnity of a Spaniard, and all the austerity of a bigot" (367). Convinced that "'the islands in the Indian seas are particularly under the influence of the devil'" (375), she explains to her confessor, Father Jose, that "'The wish of my soul''' (374), is for her daughter to take the veil. As Monçada's mother felt that she could pay for her sin of having a child out of wedlock by commiting her illegitimate son to a monastery, Donna Clara seems to feel the need to compensate for being absent for 14 yeas of her daughter's life, during which time she lived on "'that island,'" by committing her to a nunnery. Doing so would assuage God, the Catholic church, and rid Donna Clara of a daughter whose independent spirit is vexing. Donna Clara reveals herself to be a person who herself has never loved and is thus incapable of expressing love or human sympathy for Isidora. When Donna Clara reads her daughter a letter written by Aliaga, declaring that he has arranged a marriage for Isidora, Isidora faints. Taking

this as a sign of disapproval of Aliaga's choice, Donna Clara pronounces that "'this comes of this foolish business of love and marriage. I never loved in my life, thank the saints!—and as to marriage, that is according to the will of God and of our parents'" (411). She even goes so far as to write a response to her husband declaring Isidora insane due to her reluctance to conform to the wishes of the church and her parents. Donna Clara is clearly a conformist, fully accepting her prescribed role as obedient wife and Catholic subject. On the night that Isidora disappears to attend her unholy "marriage" with Melmoth, Donna Clara expresses her horror. It is, however, not a horror brought on by the disappearance of her daughter, by the potential loss of a loved one, but by the fear of the loss of her own reputation. The narrator summarizes her situation: "The distress of Donna Clara was aggravated by her fear of her husband, of whom she stood in great awe, and who, she dreaded, might reproach her with unpardonable negligence of her maternal authority" (565). Important here is the word "authority": she thinks of Isidora not as a child who needs compassion, love, understanding, and support, but one who needs to be tamed by authority—authority from all around her. I cited Erikson's insistence on the importance of a mother's trust and support in the case of Monçada, and Immalee's story seems to underscore further what happens when that maternal affection is absent.

In the father, Aliaga, Maturin creates the male counterpart to Donna Clara, a man consumed with self interest, devoid of compassion, a man even weaker than Monçada's ineffectual father. With Monçada's father, one can offer some excuse due to his youth. Aliaga, the "mature" man, lacks any of the responsibility associated with a man of his position as a father. Kate Ellis makes a pointed comparison when she observes that "Aliaga is not a virtuous precapitalist father like Radcliffe's St. Aubert" (176). Ellis's focus on Aliaga as a merchant is important, as the making of money (and, as with his wife, his slavish devotion to the Catholic

church) defines his person almost exclusively, even if it means ignoring other needs of his family, especially Isidora. We are first introduced to Aliaga via a letter that Donna Clara receives from him. Its opening is surprising given the recent events that have brought Isidora back into his family. He writes, "'It is about a year since I received your letter advising me of the recovery of our daughter, whom we believed lost with her nurse on her voyage to India when an infant, to which I would sooner have replied were I not otherwise hindered by concerns of business. I would have you understand, that I rejoice not so much that I have recovered a daughter, as that heaven hath regained a soul and a subject" (410). Granted, in the seventeenth century, transmittal of letters was slow, but given that Aliaga later has letters of business awaiting him at various points on his journey through Spain, a year seems a long time to wait to respond to the recovery of a daughter. He admits himself that "concerns of business" delayed his response. Additionally, his joy that "heaven hath regained a soul and a subject" clearly outweighs any parental affection. These two factors—business and church—largely define Aliaga's life and, indirectly, determine Isidora's future identity. He concludes the letter with the note that he has located for Isidora a future husband, one that she will subsequently meet on the day she gives birth to Melmoth's child. Whereas Donna Clara's wish has been for Isidora to become a nun, Aliaga's concern is that she marry well financially, a man who, in Aliaga's subsequent words, has "qualifications" (410).

As I discussed earlier, Melmoth has had doubts about his union with Isidora, torn between love for her and the knowledge that a union with him would destroy her life, as it subsequently does. On two occasions, Aliaga is given a warning that Isidora is in danger. He ignores both, citing business concerns as being more pressing. On the night of her union with Melmoth, Isidora comes to him twice in his dreams. On the first visit, he asks what she wants,

and her reply is "'A father,'" begging Aliaga to "'Save me!—save me!—lose not a moment or I am lost'" (425). He ignores this visitation only to have her return with the final note, "'It is too late'" (426). Prior to this night, even Melmoth himself visits Aliaga with two warnings, the first couched in the terms of "The Lovers' Tale," telling him that "'the interest I alluded to as possible for you to feel, refers to another one, for whom you ought to feel if possible more than for yourself'" (493). Aliaga, "whose faculties were somewhat obtuse" (562) doesn't heed the warning, forcing Melmoth to directly warn him of the dangers his daughter faces should he and she actually marry. Again, however, Aliaga fails to act. Instead of heading home immediately to ensure the safety of his family, he stops to read letters of business, reverting to "the inveterate habitudes of a thorough-paced mercantile mind," (564), writing to his wife, "that it might be some months before" he returns home (564). When he does arrive, Melmoth and Isidora are married and she is on the verge of childbirth.

As his actions prior to his return to Madrid illustrate the extent to which his concerns for business outweigh those of his family, Aliaga's actions after the discovery of Isidora's marriage to Melmoth and her pregnancy illustrate the mutual influence of money and the church on his actions. When, on the day planned for Isidora's marriage with another wealthy Spanish merchant that Aliaga has arranged, the family finally discovers that she is already married to Melmoth and pregnant with his child. Even Donna Clara is torn between concern for her husband and "compassion for her wretched daughter" (586); however, Aliaga immediately declares, "'Let the wife of the sorcerer, and their accursed offspring, be delivered into the hands of the merciful and holy tribunal, the Inquisition'" (586). This being declared in public, "He afterwards muttered something about his property being confiscated, but nobody paid attention" (586). Clearly, Aliaga has multiple opportunities to serve as the loving, supportive father he could be, but each

time he fails to do so. Unilke either the supportive father in *Udolpho* or the absent father in *Caleb*, Maturin's fathers have the opportunities to help shape the identities of their children, but they always fail in their duties.

Here we should recall the words of Juan Monçada to his brother Alonzo, in which he recognizes the role Alonzo's parents and the church have had on his being forced to become a monk. Juan recognizes that, to an extent, the parents must be forgiven because of the undue influence of the church on every decision they make. The story of Isidora invites us to see her family in the same light. We are told early on in Isidora's story that though a "good man," Father Jose, the family confessor, "loved power, and he was devoted to the interests of the Catholic church" (369). Further commenting on the manipulation Father Jose will employ to maintain this power in the Aliaga family, the narrator reports that "this desire is not only natural but necessary, in a being from whose heart his profession has torn every tie of nature and of passion; and if it generates malignity, ambition, and the wish for mischief, it is the system, not the individual, we must blame" (374). As Radcliffe's Montoni is part of a social structure that gives him undue power over the women he victimizes and Godwin's Falkland a part of a social and legal system that gives him power over those whom he outranks, so too are many of the powerful characters in Maturin's novel themselves the victims to a system—religious, social, and legal—that is larger than the individual.

The means that this social/religious/legal system employ against its victims, Isidora being one of the most tragic, is to deny them choice—freedom—the ability to act independently. Erikson observes that such systems have "learned to exploit" (*Childhood* 408) certain fears common to all people, including here the "*intolerance of being manipulated* and coerced beyond the point at which outer control can be experienced as self-control" (*Childhood* 409). In a

subsequent discussion of how “forms of expression” allow adolescents to develop their individual identities, Erikson concludes that this freedom of expression—in its broadest sense—is important, “For, indeed, in the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity” (*Identity: Youth and Crisis* 130). Isidora is one of Maturin’s characters who, after her return to the Aliaga household, is most clearly denied any opportunity for personal opinion or expression. Even before Isidora’s family receives the letter from Aliaga informing them of her arranged marriage, Donna Clara has stressed to Isidora that “‘Your duties as a child are easily understood—they are merely perfect obedience, profound submission, and unbroken silence, except when you are addressed by me, your brother, or Father Jose’” (368). Donna Clara’s demands clearly stifle any sense of expression on Isidora’s part. As Donna Clara takes her desire to control Isidora even further, Isidora’s very freedom of thought is felt to be dangerous: Donna Clara laments to Father Jose, “‘No, she retires neither to pray or sleep, after the devout custom of Spanish women, but I fear, to’—‘To do what?’ said the priest, with horror in his voice—‘To think, I fear,’ said Donna Clara” (369). The kind of thought control Monçada experiences in the monastery is barely more extreme than that exercised over Isidora in the family of Aliaga. Finally, of course, is the issue of the arranged marriage Aliaga is planning for his daughter, who, at least in her mind, is, by the time of the planned wedding, already betrothed to Melmoth. She complains to Melmoth that “‘I cannot sustain the horrors to which I am exposed! All this day I have been dragged through rooms decorated for my impossible nuptials!’” (579), begging Melmoth to “‘Take me—take me from this place! My existence is nothing—it is a vapour that soon must be exhaled—but my reason is threatened every moment!’” (579). By the time she is imprisoned by the Inquisition, Isidora has lost even the desire to express

or assert herself, simply giving in to those forces that so overpower her, becoming lethargic and acquiescent, ready only to die.

Shortly after she learns of her arranged marriage, Isidora begins exhibiting symptoms of a debilitating identity crisis, becoming "the victim of emotions, whose struggle seemed at first to threaten her reason" (411). In an aside that reflects the common experience of women being coerced or forced into a marriage against their will (Radcliffe's heroine being another example), the narrator of *Melmoth* reflects that "To the mere reader of romance, it may seem incredible that a female of Isidora's energy and devotedness should feel anxiety or terror in a situation so common to a heroine," concluding, "But neither the writers or readers seem ever to have taken into account the thousand petty external causes that operate on human agency with a force, if not more powerful, far more effective than the grand internal motive which makes so grand a figure in romance, and so rare and trivial a one in common life" (413). Maturin here clearly takes Isidora's situation—the anxiety that she feels, the loss of agency that results—and brings it out of the realm of romance to the realm of actual life. Those "external causes," which I have discussed above—individuals and institution that act to compromise the identity of the individual—have weakened Isidora's agency. Passage after passage in subsequent pages of Maturin's narrative recount the loss of power and confusion over who she is that plague Isidora until her death.

A final word will compare Isidora's fate to that of other characters whose stories contribute to this study. I began with a focus on Radcliffe's heroine, Emily St Aubert, who succeeds in escaping her nemesis, Montoni, and, by finding support, love, and security, re-establishes her identity as a mature adult. Caleb Williams's ending is vastly different. Plagued with guilt for the trauma to which he has subjected Falkland, he remains, even in the slightly more optimistic published ending, a broken man, one who, perhaps in part due to his ability to

tell his story, is on a potential road to recovery. What happens to Stanton, victim of an unscrupulous relative and an institutionalized mad-house, is never addressed by Maturin. Though his release from the mad-house serves as evidence of his sanity, his obsessive focus on Melmoth seems to remain even as he leaves the Melmoth's Irish estate. Monçada escapes the Inquisition and is saved from subsequent incarceration by Adonijah. How he makes it to Ireland on a trading vessel is left unknown; perhaps telling his story to John Melmoth serves for him, as narratives do in *Udolpho* and *Caleb*, as a partial means of coming to terms with his identity crisis. For Isidora, there is no escape from the Inquisition; however, several events just prior to her death reveal important insights into her sense of identity. First, she clearly identifies herself as the mother of her newborn daughter, placed in the prison cell with her. Addressing her dying child, she says, "'It is my own…and only mine! It has no father—he is at the ends of the earth—he has left me alone—but I am not alone while you are left to me!'" (587). Likewise, she feels a sense of triumph, as she tells Father Jose, in her final rejection of Melmoth's offer to trade places with her: "'In rejecting his last terrible temptation—in resigning him to his destiny, and preferring submission to my own, I feel my triumph complete, and my salvation assured'" (595). Powerless in the face of her family and the Inquisition, like all of Melmoth's would-be victims, she musters the courage to assert her will, preferring death and salvation to eternal damnation. Finally, within the Christian framework of the novel, she does seem to receive salvation at her death. Addressing Father Jose, who is with her in the Inquisition prison at her death, she asks for and receives absolution, uttering "'Paradise!'" with her last breath. Death, like the madness to which John Sandal succumbs in one of the last tales in *Melmoth*, which I cover later in this chapter, is at least an escape from the identity crisis Isidora has suffered.

"The Tale of Guzman's Family"

The last two tales in *Melmoth*, "The Tale of Guzman's Family" and "The Lovers' Tale," are brief, but they do, respectively, illustrate poverty as a source of identity crisis for a father and family and a connection between one family's identity crisis with an important cultural upheaval in English history. Both are tales that Isidora's father, Aliaga, is told as he travels through Spain toward home, the first by a stranger and the second by Melmoth himself as a warning to Aliaga to return home to protect Isidora.

"The Tale of Guzman's Family" thematically connects to Aliaga's failure to protect his family as it recounts a father and uncle's failure to provide for their families. Set in Seville, the story opens with a description of one Guzman, a wealthy and aged merchant (like Aliaga himself) of obscure origin. We quickly learn that the Guzman family has suffered a schism when his younger sister, Ines, chooses to marry a German Protestant by the name of Walberg, a musician and *Maestro di Capella* to the Duke of Saxony. Being a good Catholic, Guzman is more upset that his sister marries a Protestant than that she marries a poor German. After many years of separation, Ines in Germany and Guzman in Spain, Guzman falls ill and desires a reunion with his sister. Against the advice of his priests, he invites his sister and her family to Spain. The narrator makes a strong assertion about Guzman's convictions: "He determined, in spite of all the priests in Seville, to invite his sister and her family to Spain, and to leave the mass of his immense fortune to them; (and to that effect he wrote, and wrote repeatedly and explicitly). But, on the other hand, he promised and swore to his spiritual counselors, that he never would see one individual of the family; and that, though his sister might inherit his fortune, she never—never should see his face" (447).

So, the Walberg family—Ines, her husband, his two elderly parents, and their four children—arrive in Seville, and, when Guzman dies shortly thereafter, they discover that they are to be housed in a mansion and paid an annual sum by one of Guzman's priests. The stranger relating this tale to Aliaga says of them that at this point in their lives, anyone "who wished to embody the image of domestic felicity in a group of living figures, need have gone no farther than the mansion of Walberg" (449). During this temporary period of happiness, Guzman's will dictates that his nieces and nephews' education "qualify them as companions for the descendants of Hidalgoes" (454). Such an "ornamental" education disturbs Ines, but in his shortsightedness, Walberg is elated. Thus begins a series of mistakes made by Walberg that sets him in stark contrast to his more pragmatic and cautious wife and to the one "good" father that this study has examined, Emily St Aubert's father. All goes well until it is discovered that instead of leaving his fortune to his sister's family, Guzman has left everything to the Catholic church. Incensed, the priest who was appointed by Guzman to pay the family their annual sum declares that "nothing but the foulest means that might be resorted to by interested and bigoted monks, could have extorted such a will from the dying man" (458), and he advises Walberg to contest the will in a civil court. In a recent psychoanalytic reading of *Melmoth*, Linda Jones interprets the confusion over the will in the following way, connecting it to the many failed fathers in the novel: "While the trajectory of *Melmoth* is a father's Will (that of Old Melmoth), in the Guzman tale it is specifically a *lost* Will. Wills denote, stand in for the absent (the deceased)" (52). Readers are invited to make thematic connections to many of the fathers in *Melmoth* who fail to provide the support their families need to develop and sustain a certain sense of identity: Monçada's ineffectual father, Isidora's self-absorbed father, John Melmoth's eccentric and miserly uncle, Old Melmoth, a patriarchal father figure, and, here, Guzman. In contrast to the strong, wise

father in Radcliffe, these men fail in many ways, the result being families who more readily become susceptible to those forces that will eventually compromise their identities.

Recalling Alonzo Monçada's lack of success in the Spanish civil court system trying to have his monastic vows annulled, we might anticipate that, during the four-day trial over Guzman's will, despite the fact that for two days "the advocates of Walberg carried all before them" (459), the ecclesiastical advocates are victorious, for "The chance of a heretic stranger, against the interests of churchmen in Spain, may be calculated by the most shallow capacity" (460). The Walberg's find themselves in a severely compromised situation: they are outsiders in Spain, do not speak the language, are considered heretics, and have failed to develop in their children any of the "practical" skills (due to Guzman's will) that could provide them with lucrative careers. Poverty soon overtakes them, altering them in significant ways, as the following scene involving Walberg and his aged father illustrates by presenting a family portrait vastly different than that of the "domestic felicity" previously described:

> "Father—father" cried Walberg, shouting in the ear of the doting old man, "you are eating heartily, while Ines and her children are starving!" And he snatched the food from his father's hand, who gazed at him vacantly, and resigned the contested morsel without a struggle. A moment afterwards the old man rose from his seat, and with horrid unnatural force, tore the untasted meat from his grandchildren's lips, and swallowed it himself, while his rivelled and toothless mouth grinned at them in mockery at once infantine and malicious. (467)

Though Emily St Aubert suffers the threat of the loss of her estates, Caleb Williams struggles to procure enough money to buy food, and Monçada is forced several times during his imprisonment in both the monastery and Inquisitional prison to live on only bread and water, no

characters in the Gothic novels in this study come as close to starvation as the Walberg family, whose anxiety results from the "fear of being impoverished" that Erikson notes is common to all people (*Childhood* 409).

Subsequently, in an attempt to provide the basic necessity of food, the Walberg children are reduced to miserable states. Julia, the beautiful eldest daughter, goes to buy food on one occasion only to be mistaken for a prostitute due to her tattered clothing. The threat she feels is real. More extreme than this, Everhard, the eldest son, who becomes increasingly pale over the course of a few days, is discovered selling blood to a local barber/surgeon. Finally, led by their mother, all of the children turn to begging to survive, reducing themselves to one of the lowest levels of humanity. Perhaps because of the traditional concept that the man of the house should be the primary breadwinner, Walberg seems to suffer the most severe identity crisis. At the family's lowest point, the narrator reports that "It was during this division of what all believed to be their last meal, that Walberg gave one of those proofs of sudden and fearful violence of temper, bordering on insanity, which he had betrayed latterly" (472). Walberg attacks his father, whom Ines, out of sympathy, always provides a larger portion of food, causing his wife and children to interpose. As a result, "The wretched father, incensed to madness, dealt blows among them, which were borne without a murmur; and then, the storm being exhausted, he sat down and wept" (473). Amy Smith interprets Maturin's narrative method here and its effects: "Again Maturin employs a single circumstance; in this case an abrupt and unexpected reduction to extreme poverty, then chronicles the degeneration of Walberg" (528). Add to the poverty itself the "abrupt and unexpected" way in which it descends on the family, and Maturin couples a normal fear of poverty with a sudden break in the continuum of the Walberg family's life that reduces them to powerless beings.

To make matters worse for Walberg, he begins receiving daily visits from Melmoth, as had Stanton, Monçada, and Isidora in earlier tales. Melmoth's offer is the same: an escape from poverty for you and your family in exchange for your soul. Walberg comes closer to accepting this offer than any of Melmoth's other potential victims due to the fact that he is responsible not only for himself but for his entire family. In explaining his dilemma to Ines—to accept Melmoth's offer or not—he becomes Melmoth-like himself. He tells her,

> "Hear me!—My soul is lost! They who die in the agonies of famine know no God, and want none—if I remain here to famish among my children, I shall as surely blaspheme the Author of my being, as I shall renounce him under the fearful conditions proposed to me!—Listen to me, Ines, and tremble not. To see my children die of famine will be to me instant suicide and impenitent despair! But if I close with this fearful offer, I may yet repent—I may yet escape!—There is hope on one side—on the other there is none—none—none!" (477)

Herself Spanish, Ines knows the legend of Melmoth and she is terrified for the possible fate of her husband. Overwhelmed, she faints. Thinking her dead, the maddened Walberg thanks God she dies from simply hearing his story, declaring that it is a death preferable to that of starvation. He concludes that rather than let her or their children starve, "'It would have been kind to have strangled her with these hands! Now for the children!'" (477).

The following scene brings "The Tale of Guzman's Family" to its climax. Convinced that his wife is dead, Walberg attempts to kill the three youngest of his children who are at the time in the house. The scene is horrifying and illustrates the desperate state to which Walberg has been reduced:

> "Father!—father!" cried Julia, "are these your hands? Oh let me live, and I will do any thing—any thing but"—"Father!—dear father!" cried Ines [another daughter], "spare us!—to-morrow may bring another meal!" Maurice, the young child, sprung from his bed, and cried, clinging round his father, "Oh, dear father, forgive me!—but I dreamed a wolf was in the room, and was tearing out our throats; and, father, I cried so long, that I thought you never would come. And now—Oh God! Oh God!"—as he felt the hands of the frantic wretch grasping his throat,—"are you the wolf?" (478-79)

Linda Jones offers a compelling interpretation of this scene in light of Freud's Wolf Man patient, whose dream of being devoured by wolves Freud interprets as a manifestation of "a castration anxiety" sourced to "a desire for seduction by the father" (51). Jones's reading of Maturin's text makes the dream seem even more horrifying:

> The sheer horror of Maturin's text, however, is that the dream is real-ized, since on waking, the dream wolf is actually found to be the 'real' father: signifier and signified become one. Psychoanalysis shows us that real dreams are about *unconscious* fears; here, however, the fear is materialized: Maurice Walberg's wolf is not, like that of Freud's patient, *outside* the window, but *in* the room—not symbolic, but real. The Gothic transformation closes the gap, leaving no space between nightmare and what is real so that there is no means of escape, and it is this fusion of unconscious fears with 'reality' which seems to underlie the essential horror of *Melmoth*. (52)

There is much that needs connection here to my discussion of Walberg's identity as a father and his subsequent identity crisis as a result of his perceived failure as that father. First, we might recall the extent to which both Monçada's and Isidora's fathers "threw them to the wolves," so to speak, by failing to protect them from outside forces. Implicit here also is an indictment against

Walberg's own father, who resorts to a selfish raving that threatens starvation for the children and grandchildren from whom he takes food. Finally, we might reflect on the extent to which Everhard Walberg, the eldest son, who sells his own blood to make money to support the family, is symbolically castrated (he is found pale and lifeless one night in bed, covered in blood, his wounds having failed to heal), as his father, Walberg himself, has been metaphorically emasculated by the failure of an uncle (another surrogate father figure) whose will (a substitute for the father's "will") fails to provide him the means to support his family, thus causing him to fail in the traditional masculine role as provider. In such a reading, Walberg's gender identification becomes slippery, clearly linking him to so many of the weakened male characters in *Melmoth* who support Kate Ellis's claim that the novel as a whole "continues to explore what happens when men are locked into a fate that deprives them not only of their freedom but of their gendered identity" (173).

Unfortunately, what has been one of the briefer but more compelling tales in *Melmoth*, "The Tale of Guzman's Family" has a rather anti-climactic ending. In the midst of the above scene, the two Walberg daughters faint, Maurice feigns death, and Walberg assumes, in his state of momentary insanity, that he has killed his whole family. Enter the eldest son, Everhard, escorting his grandfather and accompanied by the kindly priest who was to deliver the family's yearly stipend according to Guzman's original will. The priest announces that the will previously upheld in court was a forgery (a trick of monks jealous of Walberg's inheritance), the original has been located, and the family is once again wealthy. The narrator concludes that "Happiness is a powerful restorative" and reports that despite occasional nightmares about poverty and the visitations of Melmoth that come to Walberg, "The family then set out for Germany, where they reside in prosperous felicity" (482). Still, the tale does resonate with Monçada's and Isidora's

tales as an indictment against the power and corruption of religious institutions and the effect they can have on the identities of their victims. Likewise, it resonates with both of these previous tales in terms of the roles that families can have on the identities of its members. And, finally, it looks forward to a variation on the effects of sectarian divisions in families that pervade the following tale.

"The Lovers' Tale"

I examine the last tale in *Melmoth*, which occupies only four of its 39 chapters, to extend an analysis of the effects of religious differences on the collective identities and unity of families, as well as their individual family members, an issue introduced in "The Tale of Guzman's Family," and to prepare to further historicize Gothic fiction in the concluding chapter. Recited to Aliaga by Melmoth himself as a warning to him to return to Madrid to protect his family, the story centers on the powerful Mortimer family, whose family seat, Mortimer Castle, located in Shropshire, traces its roots back to the days of the Norman Conquest. By the time of the War of the Roses, the family's reputation is legendary. Melmoth tells Aliaga that "'The Mortimer family, in fact, by their power, their extensive influence, their immense wealth, and the independency of their spirit, had rendered themselves formidable to every party, and superior to all'" (495). During the reign of Henry VIII, the first Sir Roger Mortimer becomes a supporter of the Reformation, and the family becomes devoted members of the Church of England, remaining so even during the reign of Mary Tudor, despite having property confiscated and family members menaced under Mary's reign. At the time of the English Civil War, the second Sir Roger remains a distinguished loyalist and supporter of the Church of England, but the war and the religious differences that spawned it take their toll on Sir Roger: "Sequestrations and

compositions,—fines for malignancy, and forced loans for the support of a cause he detested,—drained the well-filled coffers, and depressed the high spirit, of the aged loyalist" (497). In addition to the family's financial losses and loss of status during the Civil War, Sir Roger's family is personally affected by the rebellion: his eldest son is killed defending Charles I, and his youngest son, a Puritan convert, dies fighting for Cromwell. In the meantime, Sir Roger's only daughter marries a Puritan by the name of Sandal. Once the Mortimer family is initially divided in its religious and political loyalties, the institutions of church and state, working together, weaken the family's unity and instigate a series of events that result finally in a complete loss of family identity and power, including the entire Mortimer seat.

Just before the Restoration, Sir Roger is left with one daughter and three grandchildren, one by each of his three children. Sir Roger determines never to see his Puritan daughter again but agrees to raise her son, John Sandal. Like old Guzman, who acknowledged his Protestant sister and agrees to support her and her family financially but refuses ever to see her, Sir Roger allows religious and political differences to sever forever his bond with his only remaining child. At the time of Sir Roger's death, the grandchildren assemble at Mortimer Castle, though the family has been forever fragmented:

> "So in Mortimer Castle were, in their infancy, assembled the three grandchildren, born under such various auspices and destinies. Margaret Mortimer the heiress, a beautiful, intelligent, spirited girl, heiress of all the pride, aristocratical principle and possible wealth of the family; Elinor Mortimer, the daughter of the Apostate, received rather than admitted into the house, and educated in all the strictness of her Independent family; and John Sandal, the son of the rejected daughter, whom Sir Roger admitted into the castle

> only on the condition of his being engaged in the service of the royal family, banished and persecuted as they were." (500)

Due in large part perhaps to their similar religious training in their youth, only John Sandal receives his protestant cousin, Elinor, with true kindness. They develop a close, though innocent bond before John goes off to fight for Charles II in the Dutch Wars. John returns, a distinguished hero and Captain in the royal navy, and the love between John and his cousin Elinor flourishes. They eventually are engaged and have the support of all the living Mortimers in the castle, including its matriarch, Mrs. Ann, Sir Roger's elderly sister.

One person, however, stands in the way of their union: John's mother, the widow Sandal, Sir Roger's Protestant daughter, once banned from Mortimer Castle but allowed by Margaret to visit after Sir Roger's death. Somehow, she gains access to Sir Roger's will, the details of which only Sir Roger's sister, who supports the union between Elinor and John Sandal, is supposed to know. The details of the will make John's mother's motives clear: Sir Roger

> bequeathed his immense estates to his grand-daughter Margaret, in the event of her marrying her kinsman John Sandal;—in the case of his marrying Elinor, he was entitled to no more than her fortune of ₤5000;—and the bequest of the greater part of the property to a distant relative who bore the name of Mortimer, was to be the consequence of the non-intermarriage of John Sandal with either of his cousins. (523)

Herself having lived in relative poverty since her rejection on religious principles by her father, Sir Roger, the widow Sandal goes to extreme measures to ensure her son's inheritance by promoting his union with Margaret, not Elinor. Only later in the narrative do we or Elinor discover what those measures are.

The widow Sandal is in the short term successful: on the intended wedding day of Elinor and John, everyone shows up at the chapel except John. Mortified at being jilted, Elinor leaves Mortimer Castle and goes to live with a maternal aunt, a devout Puritan who subjects Elinor to a life of "cold mediocrity" (529). Upon reception of letters from Mortimer Castle reporting the death of Sir Roger's sister, Mrs. Ann, and the return of John Sandal, Elinor decides to return to the castle, her heart still engaged to John. As her reception from Margaret and John alike is only "sisterly" (533), she recognizes that John no longer loves her as he formerly did. Elinor continues to suffer: "She had now, for many days, to undergo the torture of complacent and fraternal affection from the man she loved'' (537). It becomes increasingly clear to Elinor that John's affections are now with Margaret. As a result, Elinor lives in Mortimer Castle "like those sufferers in eastern prisons, who are not allowed to taste food unless mixed with poison, and who must perish alike whether they eat or forbear" (543). Though she once again returns to live with her maternal aunt, life for Elinor is miserable wherever she goes. The once vibrant Mortimer granddaughter is reduced to a sterile life.

She is recalled to Mortimer castle once more after Margaret and John have been married and Margaret is about to give birth to their first child. Margaret has grown very ill as her pregnancy has progressed. Convinced that the pregnancy will not be successful, Margaret is further affected by the guilt of not being able to produce an heir to the house of Mortimer. When she gives birth to stillborn twins, Margaret laments to their corpses, "'had they not been the heirs of the Mortimer family—had not expectation been wound so high, and supported by all the hopes that life and youth could flatter her with,—she and they might yet have existed'" (550). Margaret then dies, leaving a husband and cousin to mourn her passing. By placing at least part of the blame for the deaths of Margaret and her two babies on the demands of primogeniture,

Maturin forces readers to call to mind the original cause of the Mortimer family's fragmentation: religion. It was, after all, Henry VIII's desire for a male offspring that resulted in the creation of the Church of England, which the Mortimer's at the time supported, and Sir Roger's childrens' later conversion from that church to other branches of Protestantism that resulted in so many schisms within their family.

As the stories of Monçada and Immalee/Isidora do before, "The Lovers' Tale" asks us to look at how family, social conventions, politics, and institutional religion intersect, uniting forces, to destroy the individual freedom of those who don't conform to expectations. Margaret, Elinor, and John's generation of Mortimers have their lives irrevocably altered by the will of a grandfather, who makes demands on his successors that curb their freedoms. (We recall here, of course, the other two wills in *Melmoth*—that of Guzman and Old Melmoth—both of which so significantly contribute to the identities of their descendents.) To emphasize the extent to which family members are willing to go to hold on to or regain lost power, Maturin here extends the fates of the Mortimers to yet another family member: the widow Sandal. Wracked with guilt over the death of her grandchildren and daughter-in-law, the widow Sandal confesses to John and Elinor the extremes to which she has gone to prevent their marriage and to promote the union between Margaret and John and thus ensure her son's inheritance of the entire Mortimer estate. She confesses that the story she told John—that he was not really her son but the son of her husband and Elinor's mother, thus making him Elinor's half-sister—was a fabrication. Overwhelmed by this truth, John falls senseless, never to completely regain his sanity. He becomes the ward of Elinor, and the estate goes after all to the distant relative mentioned in Sir Roger's will. Thus in only three generations, what was once one of the strongest and most

powerful families in England is reduced to only two members, one insane and the other forever in mourning.

It is in this miserable state that Elinor begins receiving visits from the Wanderer, who expectedly offers her the same bargain as he does to all of his would-be victims. Elinor, like Isidora and Monçada, however, is armed with her faith and the friendship of a local minister, who just happens to have been one of Melmoth's early friends, has traveled across Europe with him, and has been a witness to his "mortal" death. When the Wanderer sees him with Elinor, he leaves without molesting her again. Years later, with Elinor still serving as his caregiver, the insane John Sandal shows one final moment of lucidity, seemingly thanking her for her years of care, and dies. Elinor herself dies shortly thereafter, in a manner similar to that of Isidora, convinced of her own salvation and happy that John showed one final sign of recognition before they were separated forever.

The Final Appearance of the Wanderer

The tales within the novel end with Monçada's completion of "The Indians' Tale," a part of which includes "The Tale of Guzman's Family" and "The Lovers' Tale." He tells John Melmoth that he can relate other tales of Melmoth to him from Adonijah's manuscript, but he never gets to do so (and the reader is appreciative) due to the arrival at the Melmoth's Irish estate of none other than the Wanderer himself. Monçada recognizes him from his former appearances to him in the Inquisitional prison, and John from the 1646 portrait inherited from Old Melmoth. Unable to find a victim who will exchange fates with him and tired of his unnatural existence, Melmoth the Wanderer has come home to die. Before he does so, he offers some explanations of

his life that resonate with the focus of this study and reinforce its theme of the connection of power to identity.

Plagued with Faustian powers and an extended life that he longs to leave, Melmoth seeks victims whose identity has been compromised. All of his potential victims are near suicide, desperate to escape their meaningless lives. Seeing them as easy targets, Melmoth appears to these individuals just before their demise, offering to exchange with them his own existence for a release from their weary lives. As he explains to John and Monçada, "'It has been said that this power was accorded to me, that I might be enabled to tempt wretches in their fearful hour of extremity, with the promise of deliverance and immunity, on condition of their exchanging situations with me'" (601), admitting that, however, "'none have consented'" (601) and concluding with a statement that reinforces Maturin's opening explanation for the novel as a whole, the thesis that no Christians would sacrifice eternal salvation, even to escape the miseries to which earthly life has subjected them. As the Wanderer states the case, "'I have traversed the world in the search, and no one to gain that world, would lose his own soul!'" (601), no one, of course, but the Wanderer himself. In Maturin's Christian terms, then, the ultimate and most important aspect of his characters' identities is their faith—their belief and hope in a salvation that will restore to them the peace that their struggles with individuals and institutions more powerful than themselves has attempted to take away.

Chapter V

Conclusion: Why Gothic Now?

I began the introduction to this study by posing a series of questions about identity, power, and the ways in which the connection between the two is a central theme of Gothic fiction. I hope that the succeeding chapters have, at least in part, helped to answer those questions and develop an understanding of how power is dependent on a person's or group's sense of individual or collective identity, how that sense of identity can be compromised by others, and how we can find evidence of this struggle explored in Gothic fiction. What I would like further to reinforce by way of a conclusion is the connection between these issues and the emergence of Gothic fiction in the eighteenth century, why Gothic has remained an important genre since its inception, and why in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries there has been such a resurgence of interest in Gothic, both in criticism and in new fiction.

I earlier cited 1794, the year that witnessed the publication of Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, as a seminal year in Gothic fiction. The French Revolution, initially supported by liberal English thinkers and condemned by conservatives, was in its fifth year. England's national response was an open declaration of war against the new French Republic and an investigation, and in some cases, arrest and trial, of suspected liberals at home. Gothic fiction reflects the politics of the day, politics that were terrifying, in England and abroad. In the afterword to her study of Gothic fiction, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction 1762-1800*, E.J. Clery summarizes the connection of this era of Gothic fiction to its historical context: "The 1790s saw a process whereby, as Gothic fiction moved toward the political, politics moved toward a Gothic aesthetic. Godwin's *Caleb Williams* represents the terrorist genre at the peak of

its potential as a means of conscious intervention in the political events of the day" (172). Ellis continues to discuss the fact that while the English reading public was consuming Gothic fiction, in its paranoia, it was also consuming news of the French Revolution and the horrors it spawned. Godwin was not, however, the only Gothicist whose works are connected to the politics of his time. Ellis also argues that one of the issues related to middle-class women that Radcliffe's fiction involves is "revealing, however fleetingly, the true conditions of irrationality and oppression governing their existence" (173), a good summary of an agenda most thoroughly contained in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*.

That "irrationality and oppression" were political and gender issues being connected in the 1790s is clearly evidenced in both Mary Wollstonecraft's 1790 *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, a response to Edmund Burke's conservative condemnation of the French Revolution, and Thomas Paine's 1791 *The Rights of Man*: that society has traditionally been organized as it is offers no rational justification for its remaining so. And, of course, Wollstonecraft's subsequent 1792 *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was a reaction to the 1791 pamphlet *Rapport sur l'instruction publique, fait au nom de Comité de constitution* by Chares Maurice de Talleyrand, a French Revolutionary whose writing advocated a free public education system for both sexes but still insisted that female education should prepare women to remain subservient to men. Wollstonecraft attacks the hypocrisy of and lack of logic in the arguments of someone fighting for a revolution that supports the equality of all men only to insist on the inequality between the sexes. These political and gender issues were being hotly contested in rapid-fire responses throughout the 1790s, and Radcliffe's and Godwin's novels likewise engage the same issues, both of which affect individuals' identity and the power that is associated with that identity.

So, what of Maturin's 1820 *Melmoth the Wanderer*? If the French Revolution dominated the political debates and lives of the first-generation Romanticists, the Napoleonic Era certainly did the same for the second generation: Maturin's setting for *Melmoth*, 1816, the year after Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo, is significant. If the English government perceived a potential threat from French Revolutionaries, certainly Napoleon's imperialist and expansionist agenda brought about similar fears. It was in the British national interest to defeat Napoleon, re-establish British supremacy on the high seas, and thus allow for the continuation of their own imperialist agenda, one that so strongly defined Great Britain throughout the nineteenth century. Likewise, the extent to which the Protestant Reformation dominates so many of the tales in *Melmoth* should make us reflect on this paradigm shift in Europe and especially its effects on individual and national identity in England. If being Protestants in Catholic Spain determines much of the identity of Stanton and the Walberg family, being Independents/Puritans in a family that has traditionally supported the Church of England, that *via media* between Catholicism and Puritanism, does so for the identities of many members of the Mortimer family. Richard Astle's comments on these historical connections in *Melmoth* offers a thorough summary:

> The date of Melmoth's bargain, his "first death," 1666, is no doubt chosen for the demonological significance of "666," but it is also the year after the Conventicle Act, which completed the dispossession of the Puritans after the Restoration. At the other end of his bargain, 150 years later and a year after Waterloo, Melmoth's return to the Wicklow estate (which was confiscated by Cromwell from the Catholic nobility and given to the Wanderer's younger brother for services in the revolution) is announced by a storm that recalls "The tremendous storm that shook all England on the night of

> Cromwell's death." In this light, then, the book becomes not only the religious sermon Maturin says it is, but also a political one. (1002)

Maturin ingeniously manages to include references to two periods—the English Civil War and the Napoleonic wars—both of which are eras of national identity crises in Great Britain, crises that resonate with the familial and individual crises explored through so many stories in the novel.

In a more recent study of politics and identity in *Melmoth*, Joseph Lew makes a further connection between the novel and Maturin's own identity within his social context. Recalling that Maturin's family was descended from French Huguenots who moved to Ireland and converted to the Church of England, Lew argues that "*Melmoth* explores problems of cultural and personal identity and assimilation—a problem particularly acute for the English in Ireland during Maturin's lifetime, but also becoming increasingly important in Great Britain's colonial holdings" (174). Though Maturin's exploration of cultural and personal identity might be displaced onto various fictional characters living in different regions and times, the issue itself connects Maturin's novel to issues of identity as historically contingent.

Following Lew's study, critics continue to explore less direct connections between *Melmoth* and Anglo-Irish tensions that resulted from the Acts of Union that by 1801 united Great Britain and Ireland. Referring to Maturin's fiction as "Unionist Gothic" (351), Jim Hansen cites postcolonial views that see the colonized (here, Ireland) being typically presented as feminized in relation to the masculinized colonizers (355). As such, "in the journalistic consciousness and in the literary imagination of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries the Union took on the character of a Gothic marriage" (356), a marriage that is forced on an unwilling Ireland (357). Hansen notes that marriages in Maturin's fiction that are not based on mutual love

between husband and wife can be read so that "the novel allegorizes the uneasy intimacy between the colonizer and the colonized" (358). What such tension points to is a question of Irish identity as a British colony. Hansen sees the character of Melmoth in the "Tale of the Indians" as representative of the colonizer and Immalee the colonized, citing their eventual disastrous and unholy union as reflecting the potential outcome of the union of Great Britain and Ireland: as Immalee's identity is eventually destroyed, so could be Ireland's. To further Hansen's connection, I would stress that this tale can also be seen to anticipate the eventual colonization of India, with whom the English had been trading since the seventeenth century. Immalee's father, Aliaga, is, after all, a Spaniard who trades with both India and, as he explains to Melmoth himself, England. While, as Hansen discusses, the novel never takes a firm anti-colonial stand, it does raise questions of difficulties associated with colonization and the potential effects such an experience have on the identity of the colonized.

Furthermore, the novel can be read as representing fears resulting from "Catholic nationalism" which "was growing as a force in Ireland" (Marshall 142) in the years Maturin was writing *Melmoth*. Ashley Marshall is astute in further observing that, even though the stories of Monçada, the Walburg family, and Immalee/Isidora explore the negative effects of Catholicism on individual's and family's identities, Maturin doesn't limit his criticism to that church alone. Marshall asks us to recall especially "The Lovers' Tale" in which differences between adherents to the Church of England and to other dissenting sects tear apart and destroy the entire Mortimer family. Just as strict adherence to the requirements of Catholicism in seventeenth-and eighteenth-century Spain supersedes family ties in both the Aliaga and Monçada families, so too does religious fanaticism work to separate family members during the Protestant Reformation and English Civil War. In essence, while insisting on the importance of individual faith, Maturin's

novel is strongly critical of any faith that is state sanctioned and that can "transform devotion into rancorous enthusiasm, making a spectacle out of what should remain private piety" (Marshall 133). Maturin's fears seem to be that should Catholicism become a national religion in Ireland, the results would be good for neither Catholics nor Protestants (Marshall 145) because freedom of choice would be curtailed for both groups, a freedom that Erikson argues we all fear losing (*Childhood*).

Though much of what is classified as Gothic fiction following Maturin in the Victorian era comes in the form of the penny dreadfuls, cheap sensational fictions that are often vaguely disguised rewrites of earlier Gothic novels, much of the Gothic aesthetic and many of its themes become important elements in more realist novelists, and, most of these novels have as a central concern identity. The Victorian era does come with its own historical and cultural changes, many of them rapid technological and scientific changes that left Victorians, in the words of that Victorian cultural sage, Matthew Arnold, "Wandering between two worlds, one dead, / The other powerless to be born." A few examples will illustrate the many issues of identity confusion that pervade novels from this period. Both of the best known Brontë sisters' novels, *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, have as a central aesthetic the Gothic, and both raise questions about identity and its connection to the characters' agency. Set in part in the thought-to-be haunted Thornwell Hall, *Jane Eyre* comes with its own ghost/madwoman whose identity remains unclear even at the end of the novel, prompting later novelist Jean Rhys to provide her with a fictional history in *The Wide Sargasso Sea*, a novel itself whose constant references to zombies explores characters with liminal identities. Jane, of course, is an orphan who, like so many protagonists in Gothic fiction, lacks the formative familial support to shape her identity, and Mr. Rochester is commonly classified as a Byronic hero (as is Melmoth the Wanderer), a popular figure in much

Gothic-inspired fiction and one whose identity is always uncertain. *Wuthering Heights* comes with its own Byronic hero as well, the even more mysterious Heathcliffe, whose origins are more obscure than that of any character in *Jane Eyre*. Who is he and where did he come from?

Charles Dickens, always concerned with what will sell (and Gothic fiction seems always to sell) was likewise concerned with individual identities of people with humble and often mysterious origins and the extent to which English society and its institutions had an impact on those individuals' identities and power. In *Great Expectations*, Pip (yes, another orphan), raised in the house of a humble blacksmith, thinks during his entire adolescence and early adulthood that his "great expectations," the money that allows him to be educated as a gentleman and thus escape his humble origins, comes from Miss Havisham (whose own origins and Gothic existence in Satis House are a mystery) only to discover that he has been mistaken all along: the money has been supplied surreptitiously by Magwitch, whom Pip first meets when he is seven but doesn't see again until he is 23 and Magwitch has returned to England under the name Provis. Identity confusion abounds in this novel as it does in *Bleak House* (whose title is even Gothic), in which many of the characters, again origins obscure, are in a life-long battle with Chancery Court, that most powerful and corrupt of nineteenth-century English institutions, which serves as the novel's most imposing villain. Even the novels by Dickens that avoid many of the tropes of the classic Gothic novel come with their villains that borrow heavily from the Gothic villains that precede them: in *David Copperfield* one finds Mr. Murdstone, the evil stepfather who marries women for their money and overpowers them (think Radcliffe's Montoni), destroying their identities, and Uriah Heep, the creepy and unscrupulous villain who usurps power and money from Mr. Wicklow and David's own Aunt Betsy.

Besides the Gothic elements that become appropriated by these realist novelists, Gothic proper also sees a resurgence in the Victorian age, most notably in the form of vampire fiction. Published as a serial story between 1845 and 1847, *Varney the Vampire*, alternately attributed to either James Malcolm Rymer or Thomas Preskett Prest (no clear identity of the author) most obviously borrows many of its tropes from Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Like Melmoth, Varney's origins as a vampire date to the English Civil War: he claims that he was cursed with vampirism as a result of betraying a loyalist to Cromwell during the war. Like Melmoth also, Varney is miserable in his existence, and, as Melmoth is eventually tossed into the Irish sea from a jagged precipice, Varney ultimately dies in a similar manner by throwing himself into Mount Vesuvius. If readers do feel somewhat sympathetic for Melmoth's situation (he does, after all, actually love Immalee and tries not to corrupt her), Varney becomes the more sympathetic vampire, extending this trope and creating a character similar to many of the sympathetic and even likable vampires in twentieth-century vampire fiction and film. In 1872, Joseph Sheridan LeFanu creates a variation on the vampire in *Carmilla*, which centers on a female vampire who only seduces other females as victims (and, one might wander here about a possible influence on *Carmilla* of Coleridge's own Gothic *Christabel*, whose mysterious Geraldine seduces, perhaps, the poem's eponymous ingénue), presenting what can be seen as one of the first lesbian vampires, a character type that is a prominent feature in many twentieth-century fictional versions of vampires presented in novels, television adaptations, plays, and films. The Victorian fascination with vampires, of course, culminates with Bram Stoker's 1897 *Dracula*, which thereafter serves as the quintessential vampire story. Always presented as the outsider, the "Other," who invades the normal lives of ordinary individuals, the vampire, like the zombie and the werewolf, serves as a fictional representation of one suffering from identity confusion: "Who

am I, what are my powers, and how do/can I use those powers to overpower others" are questions that are at the heart of all vampire stories.

There is no loss of interest in the Gothic in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and though it is beyond the scope of this study to dwell too long on its many variations in fiction, film, and television, a few examples will illustrate the connection of this more contemporary Gothic to issues of identity and power. Though not known as a writer of Gothic fiction, Kazuo Ishiguro's novels always deal with issues of identity and power. His novel *The Remains of the Day*, winner of the 1989 Man Booker Prize for Fiction, centers on the life of an English butler, Mr. Stevens, whose identity is intimately connected to that of his former employer, Lord Darlington. Stevens considers himself to have been a great butler because he was employed by a great man. This assertion is, however, in Stevens's mind and in the mind of the reader, brought into question as Stevens's recollections of life in Darlington Hall before and during World War II reveal that Lord Darlington was a Nazi sympathizer and anti-Semite, bringing the Gothic horror of the Holocaust and questions of Jewish identity (touched on in both *Caleb* and *Melmoth*) into the background of the novel. Attempting to come to terms with this fact, as well as the fact that Darlington Hall has been sold to an American businessman, forces Stevens to re-evaluate his entire concept of who he is. Am I the great butler that I have always claimed to be? How will I transition from life serving an English gentleman to one serving a rich American who rarely even visits Darlington Hall, an estate he purchases primarily to advertise his wealth and power?—these are questions that pervade Stevens's reflections. The fear that he can no longer conceive of himself as he would like, nor do others conceive of him as he would like, results in an exploration that is debilitating for the aging man. He concludes the novel reflecting on Lord Darlington and himself:

> His lordship was a courageous man. He chose a certain path in life, it proved to be a misguided one, but there, he chose it, he can say that at least. As for myself, I cannot even claim that. You see, I trusted. I trusted in his lordship's wisdom. All those years I served him, I trusted I was doing something worthwhile. I can't even say I made my own mistakes. Really—one has to ask oneself—what dignity is there in that?" (243).

The dependence of Stevens's identity on that of Lord Darlington is strongly reminiscent of Caleb's connection to Falkland in Godwin's novel. As Caleb's identity remains uncertain after Falkland's death, Stevens's ability or inability to create an identity separate from that of Lord Darlington is left unanswered at the novel's close. Stevens's life and, after Lord Darlington's death, his ability to move forward with his life depend on his concept of himself, a concept that has formerly depended on his clear identification with someone who has disappointed him.

Though Ishiguro's next novel, *The Unconsoled*, focuses almost exclusively on a protagonist who has lost the ability to function because of a loss of identity (he even suffers amnesia), the novel that most clearly links issues of identity and power to the Gothic is his 2005 *Never Let Me Go*. The novel's narrator and protagonist, Kathy H., is thirty-one and works as a "carer" for "donors," and most of Kathy's reflections center on her childhood experiences at Hailsham, a boarding school in England. The novel's constant references to "donors" and "harvesting" leave readers in the dark about the identities of Kathy and her two schoolmates, Ruth and Tommy, until about a third of the novel is finished. It is then that the truth of these characters' identities emerges: they are clones, created by humans who want later to "harvest" organs from them. Kathy is a "carer" for other clones whose organs are being "harvested," and who herself in eight months will have the same done to her. The novel raises questions about the identity of these powerless beings: Are they human? What makes one human? Do they have

souls? Would “people” produced by cloning have the same rights as those born naturally? What Ishiguro does is merge a 1990 “realist” setting with a futuristic, Gothic one that explores in horrific ways the potentially powerless clones of a fictional future. In a discussion that Kathy has in her thirties with her former Hailsham art teacher, the basic question she has is why Hailsham spent so much time fostering learning and art in young people whose whole existence was to be sacrificed for others. Her teacher’s response is revealing: “‘You built your lives on what we gave you. You wouldn’t be who you are today if we’d not protected you. You wouldn’t have become absorbed in your lessons, you wouldn’t have lost yourselves in your art and your writing. Why should you have, knowing what lay in store for each of you? You would have told us it was all pointless, and how could we have argued with you?’” (268). Had the Hailsham students known the truth of who/what they were, had they not been “protected” by parental figures, had they not been given a sense of purpose through their “art and writing,” they would have ceased to have the power to continue to function. In other words, to live their expected lives and fulfill their purposes, they had to be given a sense of identity. The heartbreaking and horrifying part of Ishiguro’s story is that such an identity was allowed to develop only so the clones could live long enough to sacrifice that identity—and indeed literally sacrifice themselves as donors—for those from whom they were cloned. Ishiguro creates a novel that is intimately connected to one of the greatest fears to emerge out of the 1990s, the fear of what might become of humans’ ability to clone animals. He creates a twentieth-century *Frankenstein* that is even more frightening in its implications. If Victor Frankenstein could manage to create one “creature” whose uncertain identity leaves him powerless, what would the creation of a whole school of such beings imply?

Another manifestation of the Gothic emerges in the twentieth century in the form of adolescent fiction that is Gothic in its themes and aesthetic. From Lois Lowry’s 1993 *The Giver*,

to Neil Gaiman's 2002 *Coraline*, to the immensely popular series of vampire novels by Stephanie Meyer, the *Twilight* series, adolescent Gothic fiction has seen a growth in popularity and quality (*Breaking Dawn*, the fourth novel in Meyer's *Twilight* series won the 2008 British Book Award for Children's Book of the Year). Given that Erikson and other identity theorists focus on the transitional adolescent years as being essential in the development of an adult sense of identity, and given that so much Gothic fiction focuses on characters in this age group, adolescents' own fascination with Gothic should not be a surprise. So much is changing for them during these years: relationships with friends are shifting, adolescents moving from clique to clique attempting to identify with their members; relationships with parents and relatives are being redefined in adult terms; thoughts about future careers are being explored. It is a confusing time in which the search for a stable identity occupies so much adolescent energy. Even the identification of so many teens with the Goth image (the pale makeup, black hair and clothes) is a search for alternative identities with which to connect before moving into the world of adulthood. That Gothic fiction explores the lives of characters whose identitiy is in the process of formation makes it a genre to which adolescent readers can clearly relate.

Popular fiction has also tapped into the frenzy for all things Gothic. Charlaine Harris's series, the *Southern Vampire Mysteries* (aka the Sookie Stackhouse novels), contains ten individual novels as of 2010 and has been adapted by HBO into the popular television series *True Blood*. Its vampires, like those in Meyer's *Twilight* series, and "shape-shifters," reminiscent of earlier film versions of the werewolf, are presented as sympathetic characters. Harris's stories are also connected to power and contemporary social issues. As I mentioned in a discussion of Victorian vampire fiction, vampires are often read as representing the Other, religious or ethnic—those Others that bring so much fear and paranoia to the majority from whom they

differ. From a telling shot in the opening credits of *True Blood* of a church sign—those seemingly ubiquitous billboards of the American South—which reads “God hates fangs” to the numerous openly gay and lesbian vampires in the episodes, Harris has created works that explore directly and indirectly what it means to claim a gay or lesbian identity in a largely homophobic culture. If Gothic novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth century addressed the struggles for power of women and the average man, this twenty-first century series clearly explores connections between gay and lesbian identity and the struggle for power.

As Gothic fiction has evolved to address a large array of issues connected to identity and power, criticism of Gothic has likewise headed in many directions, all of them explorations of the Gothic’s obsession with identity and power. Psychoanalytic readings frequently explore the psychological component of identity. Feminist readings do the same for issues of identity connected to sex and gender. Historicist readings attempt to examine these works of Gothic fiction within their historical context, often uncovering the social and political struggles that they record. George Haggerty and other recent critics are doing the same for issues of sexuality, specifically homosexuality. In the introduction to his 2006 study *Queer Gothic*, Haggerty argues that

> Like other expressions of transgressive desire throughout the eighteenth century, gothic fiction is not about homo- or heterodesire as much as it is about the fact of desire itself. And throughout these works this desire is expressed as the exercise of (or resistance to) power. But that power is itself charged with a sexual force—a sexuality—that determines the action and gives it shape. By the same token, powerlessness has a similar valence and performs a similar function. (2)

Several scenes from Maturin's *Melmoth* immediately come to mind when considering the way in which scenes that recount struggles for power—either an attempted assertion of power or loss of power—are highly homoerotic. Amy Smith cites two such moments in her study of Maturin's experimentation in *Melmoth*, arguing that we experience a type of voyeuristic pleasure in such scenes (532-34). The first, from Monçada's experiences in the Spanish monastery, occurs as several monks whip a young novice for having broken one of the order's rules. As Monçada tells John Melmoth, one night in the halls of the monastic dormitory, "A naked human being, covered with blood, and uttering screams of rage and torture, flashed by me," continuing that

> A more perfect human form never existed than that of this unfortunate youth. He stood in an attitude of despair—he was streaming with blood. The monks, with their lights, their scourges, and their dark habits, seemed like a groupe of demons who had made prey of a wandering angel….And indeed no ancient sculptor ever designed a figure more exquisite and perfect than that they had so barbarously mangled. (120)

Here and in a subsequent description of the eldest Walburg son, Everhard (and I avoid the temptation to comment on the erotic nature of his first name), whose beauty has been praised throughout "The Tale of Guzman's Family," Maturin combines in Sadean fashion the erotic and the painful. Having learned that he can sell his blood for money needed to buy food for his family, one night he is found by his family close to death: "The snow-white limbs of Everhard were extended as if for the inspection of a sculptor, and moveless, as if they were indeed what they resembled, in hue and symmetry, those of a marble statue. His arms were tossed above his head, and the blood was trickling fast from the opened veins of both" (469). The young novice and Everhard, both victims of powerful social forces, are described by Maturin in terms both gruesome and erotic.

To these two scenes to which Smith draws our attention, I would add the most homoerotic scene in the novel. In the preface to Monçada's tale of a monk who transgresses by falling in love and getting caught in the act of making love in his monastic cell (the monk and his lover are later sealed in a subterraneous cell beneath the monastery and starved to death), Maturin tricks us into thinking that the affair is between two men, and he allows us to read five pages before clarifying. We are told that a young man, not unlike Monçada himself, in forced to take monastic vows by his powerful family. He is dejected until another young "novice" enters the convent. Monçada states that "from the moment *he* [emphasis mine] did so, a change the most striking took place in the young monk" (228). Only later are we told that "The wretched husband and wife were locked in each other's arms" (230) when they are discovered by the superior. All that readers can conclude is that the young monk and his "wife" were secretly married, the monk was forced to take vows, and his wife, posing as a male, entered the same convent to secretly be near him. The scene bears a striking resemblance to Lewis's equally homoerotic attraction of Ambrosio to a young novice named Rosario in *The Monk*. Well into their friendship, itself homoerotic, Ambrosio and we discover that "he" is actually a young woman named Matilda, posing as a male. Obviously, much work could be done on gender (identity) confusion and homoeroticism in Gothic fiction, and Haggerty's work is a good beginning.

In addition to offering multiple critical perspectives on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Gothic fiction, contemporary criticism of Gothic is also expanding its focus to contemporary Gothic itself, including its appearance in new media. Atara Stein's 2009 *The Byronic Hero in Film, Fiction, and Television* extends the study of the popular Gothic character, the Byronic hero, from nineteenth-century versions in Byron's own drama and poetry, through

his appearance in nineteenth-century novels, including *Melmoth*, to such recent movies as *The Terminator* and *Alien* and the popular television series *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. David Punter and Glennis Byron's 2004 study *The Gothic* is even more ambitious in its scope, covering not only the classic novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but also going back to the roots of Gothic as an aesthetic in the middle ages, moving forward into postcolonial Gothic and the graphic novel, and considering Gothic as an art and architectural aesthetic.

As literary criticism of Gothic has evolved, as has Gothic fiction itself, its creators taking advantage of new media and genres as they emerge, so too have theories of identity. While as late as 1982 Robert Kegen in his study of adult development, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*, acknowledged that "In writing this book I have taken courage from the example of Erik Erikson" (vii), since then theories of identity have expanded to consider a broader range of issues that contribute to individuals' and groups' sense of identity. Valentine M. Moghadam's 1994 collection of essays, *Identity Politics and Women*, for example, examines ways in which political climates impact women's lives and ways in which those women's lives impact political climates. Her collection contains essays on Islamic politics and women, gender and religious identities, identity politics and women's ethnicity, and women's connection to the new Right in the United States. Such a multicultural perspective also dominates Manuel Castells trilogy *The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture* as well. In Volume II, *The Power of Identity*, Castells moves beyond a study of identity in the twentieth century, a century in which Erikson argued that social factors such as "Industrial revolution, world-wide communication, standardization, centralization, and mechanization" were having significant impacts on individual's identity (*Childhood* 412-13). In the twenty-first century, "centralization" and "mechanization" are being replaced by "globalization" and "information" as

factors determining identities. Castells, studying collective identities of social and "virtual" social groups, begins by recognizing that

> Our world, and our lives, are being shaped by the conflicting trends of globalization and identity. The information technology revolution, and the restructuring of capitalism, have induced a new form of society, the network society. It is characterized by the globalization of strategically decisive economic activities. By the networking form of organization. By the flexibility and instability of work, and the individualization of labor. By a culture of real virtuality constructed by a pervasive, interconnected, and diversified media system. And by the transformation of the material foundations of life, space, and time. (1)

As humans fear changes, they fear even more sudden changes and changes that, due to globalization, impact lives on a world-wide scale. The democratic nations that have emerged in the Western world over the past two centuries (which we see struggling to emerge in the Gothic fiction cited in this study) are now faced with an ever-changing information technology and the requisite information literacy that is necessary to negotiate these new developments. These rapid changes have begun "fostering the emergence of the yet to be discovered, informational democracy" (Castells 418). Arguably, it is the "yet to be discovered" part of this world that has the potential to alter both individual and collective identities in ways that leave many uncertain and others outright afraid.

As long as people continue to allow natural fears to escalate to states of anxiety; as long as we have questions about identity, how it is formed and how it is maintained; as long as we fear those with greater power than we; the Gothic will remain to help us negotiate these issues. To offer one final example of how these issues pervade our current culture, academic and

popular, I will cite the fall 2010 issue of the *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, its entirety devoted to "Scare Tactics." Articles cover (as we might expect) vampires and Halloween. Kate Ellis discusses female empowerment in the Gothic novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Robert Ferrell and Peter Szatmary turn to politics and fear in an analysis of the Gothic nature of scare tactics employed by 1950s McCarthyism. Emory University psychology professor Scott O. Lilienfeld distinguishes between fear and anxiety in much the way Erikson distinguished the two. And, a final article focuses on the Islamophobia that has emerged in the United States and other Western countries post 9/11 2001. That such diverse topics are included in one issue is a clear indication of the connections we make between those who abuse their power (politicians and terrorists explored in this issue), the fears that result, the effects of these fears on the identities of those victimized, and the ways in which these issues are most clearly at the heart of what we call Gothic.

Works Cited

Astle, Richard. "*Melmoth the Wanderer*." *Survey of Modern Fantasy Literature*. Vol. 2. Ed. Frank Magill: Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Salem Press, 1983. 998-1003. Print.

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." Trans. Ben Brewster. *Lenin and Philosophy*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971. 127-86. Print.

Bosma, Harke A., et al., eds. *Identity and Development: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994. Print.

Bruce, Donald Williams. "Ann Radcliffe and the Extended Imagination." *Contemporary Review* 258.1505 (1991): 300-08. Print.

Burney, Frances. *Evelina*. 1778. Ed. Edward A. Bloom. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002. Print.

Butler, Marilyn. "Godwin, Burke, and *Caleb Williams*." *Essays in Criticism* 32 (1982): 237-57. Print.

Carlson, Julie A. *England's First Family of Writers: Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, Mary Shelley*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2007. Print.

Castells, Manuel. *The Power of Identity*. 2nd. ed. Vol. II *The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004. Print.

Clery, E.J. *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762-1800*. Cambridge Studies in Romanticism 12. Cambridge; Cambridge UP, 1995. Print.

Collings, David. "The Romance of the Impossible: William Godwin and the Empty Place of Reason." *ELH* 70.3 (2003): 847-74. Print.

Cornejo, Marcela. "Political Exile and the Construction of Identity: A Life Stories Approach." *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 18 (2008): 333-48. Print.

Dacre, Charlotte. *Zafloya; or, The Moor: A Romance of the Fifteenth Century*. 1806. Ed. Adriana Craciun. Peterborough, Ontario, Canada: Broadview, 1997. Print.

Daffron, Eric. "'Magnetical Sympathy': Strategies of Power and Resistance in Godwin's *Caleb Williams*." *Criticism* 37.2 (1995): 213-32. Print.

Durant, David. "Ann Radcliffe and the Conservative Gothic." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 22.3 (1982): 519-30. Print.

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis, MN: U of Minnesota P, 1996. Print.

---. *Marxism and Literary Criticism*. London: Methuen and Company, 1976. Rpt in *Criticism: Major Statements*. 3rd. ed. Comp. and ed. Charles Kaplan and William Anderson. New York: St. Martin's P, 1991. 552-73. Print.

Eggenschwiler, David. "*Melmoth the Wanderer*: Gothic on Gothic." *Genre* 8 (1975): 165-81. Print.

Ellis, Kate Ferguson. *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1989. Print.

Erikson, Erik H. *Childhood and Society*. 1950. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 1963. Print.

---. *Identity and the Life Cycle*. 1959. New York: Norton, 1980. Print.

---. *Identity*: *Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton, 1968. Print.

---. *Life History and the Historical Moment*. New York: Norton, 1975. Print.

Fielding, Henry. *Joseph Andrews*. 1742. *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*. Ed. Douglas Brooks-Davies. Oxford World Classics. Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford UP, 1999. Print.

---. *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*. 1749. Franklin Center, PA: Franklin Mint, 1980. Print.

Fludernik, Monika. "William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*: The Tarnishing of the Sublime." *ELH* 68 (2001): 857-96. Print.

Franta, Andrew. "Godwin's Handshake." *PMLA* 122.3 (2007): 696-710. Print.

Garofalo, Daniela. "'A Left-Handed Way': Modern Masters in William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*." *European Romantic Review* 17.2 (2006): 237-44. Print.

Gergen, Kenneth J. *The Concept of Self*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971. Print.

Godwin, William. *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*. 1793. Ed. K. Codell Carter. London: Oxford UP, 1971. Print.

---. Godwin's Account of the Composition of Caleb Williams. From Godwin's Preface to the 1832 'Standard Novels' edition of *Fleetwood*. Appendix II. *Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams*. Ed. Hindle.

---. Original Manuscript Ending of *Caleb Williams*. Appendix I. *Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams*. Ed. Hindle.

---. *Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams*. 1794. Ed. Maurice Hindle. New York: Penguin Books, 1988. Print.

Graafsma, Tobi L.G. "Psychoanalysis." Bosma 21-24.

---. "A Psychoanalytic Perspective on the Concept of Identity." Bosma 41-61.

Graham, Kenneth W. "The Gothic Unity of *Caleb Williams*." *Papers on Language and Literature* 20.1 (1984): 47-59. Print.

---. "Narrative and Ideology in Godwin's *Caleb Williams*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 2.3 (1990): 215-28. Print.

Grotevant, Harold D. et al. "Introduction." Bosma 1-20.

Haggerty, George. *Queer Gothic*. Urbana, IL: U of Illinois P, 2006. Print.

Handwerk, Gary. "Of Caleb's Guilt and Godwin's Truth: Ideology and Ethics in *Caleb Williams*." *ELH* 60 (1993): 939-60. Print.

Hansen, Jim. "The Wrong Marriage: Maturin and the Double-Logic of Masculinity in the Unionist Gothic." *Studies in Romanticism* 47.3 (2008): 351-69. *Academic Onefile*. Web. 11 July 2011.

Harvey, A.D. "The Nightmare of *Caleb Williams*." *Essays in Criticism* 26 (1976): 236-49. Print.

Hennelly, Mark M., Jr. "*Melmoth the Wanderer* and Gothic Existentialism." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 21.4 (1981): 665-79. Print.

Hindle, Maurice. Introduction. *Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams*. William Godwin. Ed. Hindle. New York: Penguin Books, 1988. ix-xlv. Print.

Hoeveler, Diane Long. *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontes*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State UP, 1998. Print.

Horrocks, Ingrid. "More Than a Gravestone: *Caleb Williams*, *Udolpho*, and the Politics of the Gothic." *Studies in the Novel* 39.1 (2007): 31-47. Print.

Hurley, Kelley. "Abject and Grotesque." Spooner and McEvoy 137-46.

Ishiguro, Kazuo. *Never Let Me Go*. New York: Vintage International, 2005. Print.

---. *The Remains of the Day*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989. Print.

Jones, Linda B. "'The Terror of a Guilty Sleep': Freud's Wolf Man and Dreams of Castration in *Melmoth the Wanderer*." *Gothic Studies* 2.1 (2000): 50-60. Print.

Josselson, Ruthellen. "Identity and Relatedness in the Life Cycle." Bosma 81-102.

Kahane, Claire. "The Gothic Mirror." *The (M)other Tongue: Essays in Feminist Psychoanalytic Interpretation*. Ed. Shirley Nelson Garner, Claire Kahane, and Madelon Sprengnether. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1985. 334-51. Print.

Kegan, Robert. *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1982. Print.

Kilgour, Maggie. *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*. London: Routledge, 1995. Print.

Lew, Joseph W. "'Unprepared for Sudden Transformations': Identity and Politics in *Melmoth the Wanderer*." Studies in the Novel 26.2 (1994): 173-95. Print.

London, April. "Ann Radcliffe in Context: Marking the Boundaries of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*." *Eighteenth Century Life* 10.1 (1986): 35-47. Print.

Marcia, James E. "The Empirical Study of Ego Identity." Bosma 67-80.

Marshall, Ashley. "Melmoth Affirmed: Maturin's Defense of Sacred History." *Studies in Romanticism* 47.2 (2008): 121-45. *Academic Onefile*. Web. 11 July 2011.

Maturin, Charles Robert. *Melmoth the Wanderer*. 1820. Ed. Victor Sage. New York: Penguin Books, 2000. Print.

McEvoy, Emma. "Gothic and the Romantics." Spooner and McEvoy 19-28.

McKeon, Michael. *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987. Print.

Milbank, Alison. "Gothic Femininities." Spooner and McEvoy 155-63.

Miles, Robert. "Eighteenth-Century Gothic." Spooner and McEvoy 10-18.

---. *Gothic Writing 1750-1820: A Geneology*. 2nd ed. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002. Print.

Moers, Ellen. *Literary Women*. London: W.H. Allen, 1977. Print.

Poovey, Mary. "Ideology and 'The Mysteries of Udolpho'." *Criticism* 21 (1979): 307-30. Print.

Punter, David. *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day*. Vol. 1. Essex: Longman, 1996. Print.

---. "The Uncanny." Spooner and McEvoy 129-36.

Radcliffe, Ann. *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. 1794. Ed. Jacqueline Howard. New York: Penguin Books, 2001. Print.

Rajan, Tilottama. *Romantic Narrative: Shelley, Hays, Godwin, Wollstonecraft*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2010. Print.

Rangell, Leo. “Identity and the Human Core: The View from Psychoanalytic Theory.” Bosma 25-40.

Reitz, Caroline. “Bad Cop/Good Cop: Godwin, Mill and the Imperial Origins of the English Detective.” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 33 (2000): 175-95. Print.

Richardson, Samuel. *Clarissa; or, the History of a Young Lady*. 1747-48. Ed. Angus Ross. London: Penguin Books, 1985. Print.

---. *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. 1740-41. Ed. T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel. Riverside Editions. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971. Print.

Rizzo, Betty. “The Gothic *Caleb Williams*.” *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 305 (1992): 1387-89. Print.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*. New York: Methuen, 1986. Print.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818. Bantam Classics. New York: Bantam Books, 1991. Print.

Smith, Amy Elizabeth. “Experimentation and ‘Horrid Curiosity’ in Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer*.” *English Studies* 6 (1993): 524-35. Print.

Spooner, Catherine and Emma McEvoy, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*. London: Routledge, 2007. Print.

Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto*. 1764. *Three Gothic Novels*. Ed. Peter Fairclough. New York: Penguin, 1986. Print.

Wehrs, Donald R. "Rhetoric, History, Rebellion: *Caleb Williams* and the Subversion of Eighteenth-Century Fiction." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 28.3 (1988): 497-511. Print.

Williams, Anne. *Art of Darkness: A Poetics of Gothic*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995. Print.

Zomchick, John P. *Family and the Law in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: The Public Conscience in the Private Sphere*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993. Print.

Vita

Jerry Jennings Alexander was born in York, South Carolina, to the parents of A.J. and Virginia Alexander. He has one sister, Carol Lathan, a niece, Wendy Catledge, and a great-nephew, Garret Catledge. He attended Hickory Grove Elementary School, Harold C. Johnson Middle School, and York Comprehensive High School. After graduation from high school in 1984, he attended Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina, completing his B.A. in English in 1988 and his M.A. in English in 1994. He served as an Instructor of English at Horry-Georgetown Technical College in Conway, South Carolina, for two years and then as an Instructor of English at Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina. He returned to graduate school at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and received the PhD in English in December 2011. He continues to teach in the Presbyterian College English Department.