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19th Century Gothic Inspiration: *Investigating the Next Generation of Poes*

By: Alexandra L. Horton

Research Thesis

Master of Arts in English from Governors State University

4 March 2016

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Governors State University

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~ **DEDICATION** ~



To My Husband,

For his unconditional love and support throughout every aspect of our lives, one in particular being my desire to continue my education. I want to thank you for standing by me during all of my endeavors without having any hesitation in doing so.

I love you.



To My Son and Daughter - Chase and Leigha,

Who have had many temper tantrums and melt downs throughout my schooling, but who have nonetheless unknowingly encouraged me to exceed my own standards and expectations so that I can give them a more fulfilling and adventurous childhood.

I am very proud of you both.



~ ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ~

~

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I would also like to thank **Dr. Rosemary Johnsen** for bestowing her knowledge onto me about the history of American Literature and about many Contemporary Literature pieces as well. It was in her History of American Literature course – that focused on Crime Fiction - where I truly became intrigued on studying Edgar Allan Poe more completely. It was also within several of her courses that I became more interested in learning about the progression of literature over time and how contemporary literature has been influenced by the great writers before them. I am firm in my belief that because of Dr. Johnsen I was able to develop a better understanding of what area I want to concentrate on for my PhD in the Literature field.

Dr. Bradley Smith is someone who I also owe credit to my successes. During my undergraduate and graduate years I took Dr. Smith's Rhetoric and Composition courses, always learning something new about how to better analyze and respond to a variety of texts. However, Dr. Smith has also helped me tremendously in the teaching and education portion of my schooling – always being readily available to give suggestions and advice on my professional development. Dr. Smith is definitely a professor that I am thankful for and can always depend on, which is why I am so appreciative of the time he spent reviewing my Thesis project. I know that because of Dr. Smith and the courses he teaches, my interest in obtaining my PhD has increased greatly.

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~ ABSTRACT ~

The objective of my study is to examine specific works by Edgar Allan Poe that best emulate his literary obsession with insanity and the grotesque, arguing that these elements of his literature serve as the source of inspiration for many 20th and 21st century gothic literature writers. Two of Poe's poems that will be analyzed and critiqued include, "The Sleeper" which was originally published in 1831 and "The Raven" published in 1845. There will also be two of Poe's shorter fiction pieces that will be analyzed and critiqued, which include, "Berenice" published in 1835 and "The Black Cat" which was published in 1843.

When discussing the development of Poe's earlier Gothic literature to his more current works, Andrew Smith suggests in his piece, *Victorian Gothic Death*, that, "there is either a view that the corruption of the body can be transcended (perhaps most clearly typified by the ghost story), or that there is the horror of dead undead bodies (as in the vampire, for example). However, there is a consistent theme which aligns images of death with models of subjectivity..." (Smith 159). The specific elements of death within Poe's literature that Smith analyzes are both recognized as common death related themes within more contemporary gothic literature as well. This knowledge indicates the idea that Poe still has a heavy influence on 20th and 21st century writers.

The three 20th century gothic writers that will be discussed in my study include Mary Wilkins Freeman and her short story published in 1903, "Shadows on the Wall," H.P. Lovecraft and his short story published in 1925, "In the Vault," and finally Stephen King's short story published in 1972, "Suffer the Little Children." An aspect of Poe's writing that is also a familiar theme within 20th century gothic literature is violence. As J.

Gerald Kennedy notes in his work, *A Historical Guide to Edgar Allan Poe*, "...a crucial component of American identity, the 'internal flaw of violence' has been traced...to the frontier ethos of standing one's ground and meting out personal justice...If Poe prefers European settings and avoids explicitly nationalistic subjects, his tales nevertheless render in graphic detail the quick American impulse to violence" (Kennedy 5). When making the connections of Poe's initial creations within gothic literature to more contemporary gothic writing, it is indicating that the themes revolving around the corruption of a body, dead yet undead bodies, and impulsive violence are vastly present. Kennedy continues his theory of Poe being the landmark of gothic literature by making the claim that, "Poe anatomizes the psychology of revenge, flaunts atrocity, and depicts the recrudescence of our national 'internal flaw'" (Kennedy 5). This accusation thus suggests the idea that any work containing these concepts that were written after Poe's publications, were subsequently inspired by Poe.

The implications I have made based on my study are important as they directly correlate to the increase of gothic literature over the past few centuries. Although my Thesis focuses directly on Poe's inspiration over other writers, his work has also had literary influence on musical lyrics, films, and television shows; implying that Poe has been an inspiration to many styles of contemporary artists in the later centuries. Understanding the level of persuasion that Poe's work has had on how other authors choose to write their gothic literature suggests just how important and powerful Poe is within American literary history.

~ Chapter I ~

Introduction

~

Edgar Allan Poe was seemingly obsessed with the notion of insanity as well as the grotesque, ultimately making his work stand out significantly against the heart of 19th century transcendentalism. Poe was one of the first writers to develop texts encompassing the becoming theme of Dark Romanticism. Unlike Transcendentalists, Dark Romantic writers focused on the innate evil within nature and society, thus forcing their audience into a state of horror over the realities that surrounded their every day lives. Though transcendentalist writers were more prevalent during the 19th century, Dark Romanticism began developing more of a popular culture literary style because of the terror and horrifying descriptions of grotesque realities that consumed its readers.

Poe was arguably one of the most popular gothic literature geniuses of his time, leading many writers in the centuries after him to not only study his work but also emulate it. His inspiration on these later writers is significant as he can be associated with the sudden rise of the gothic literature genre in the more contemporary arts. The writers that this Thesis claims to have been inspired by Poe include, H.P. Lovecraft, Mary Wilkins Freeman, and modern-day horror fiction writer Stephen King.

The second chapter of this study will be specifically and wholly devoted to Edgar Allan Poe himself, starting with a brief biography of his personal life and his role as a gothic literature writer in the 19th century. Poe's personal history is important in the aspect of this study because it allows the researcher and the reader alike to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the environment that Poe grew up in and the financially

unstable economy that threatened the careers of many; having an extremely negative impact on writers, journalists, and novelists. After the synopsis of Poe's personal background, the study will then progress into the critiques and analyses of two of his gothic genre poems including - in chronological order - his 1831 poem, "The Sleeper" and his most popular poem, from 1845, "The Raven." Following his two poems, two of Poe's gothic genre short fictional works will be addressed - in chronological order - including his 1835 short story, "Berenice," and his short story written in 1843, "The Black Cat".

The third chapter will be dedicated to studying, analyzing, and critiquing the work of three writers from the 20th and 21st century who were innately inspired by Poe's literature. The three authors will be presented in chronological order to best present the growth and development of gothic literature as a whole and how each writer applied their inspiration of Poe in connection with their time period. The first piece to be discussed will be Mary Wilkins Freeman's 1903 short story, "Shadows on the Wall". The second piece to be examined will be H.P. Lovecraft's 1925 short story, "In the Vault". The final piece to be analyzed will be Stephen King's 1972 short story, "Suffer the Little Children". The elements that transfer from Poe's work to the works of contemporary gothic authors that will be discussed include, but are not limited to: connecting with the dead, blackness, ghosts, eerie calmness within a cemetery, death of an innocent person, insanity, obsession, insatiable violence, and the need to have complete control over something or someone. These particular elements seem to have had an easier transfer into modern society because of the fear that is emulated within them. The concepts of death and afterlife are still questions that religious and non-religious persons are only capable

of answering with theory and not sufficient evidence, alluding to the feeling of fear of the unknown. Violence and the need for complete control are also aspects of the contemporary World – consider the dangerous street of Chicago and the power hungry politicians of the twenty and twenty-first centuries. Insanity and obsession can be transferred right into the media and their obsession with celebrities and establishing the idea of perfection of appearance and performance within countless magazines, television shows, and advertisements. The death of an innocent person is also easily transferrable into the modern era as the numerous Amber Alerts pop-up on cellphone devices, the deaths of innocent children are broadcasted over news stations, and the court cases such as Casey Anthony are publicized for all of the World to see; this element will be something that will forever be transferrable into the more contemporary World.

The fourth and final chapter of this study will be dedicated to the discussion of the conclusions and implications made based on the research that was conducted, referencing the variety of scholars that have studied similar aspects of this concept as well. There are many scholars that have devoted countless hours to studying and analyzing gothic literature and even more specifically, Edgar Allan Poe. Although there will be several scholars whose research will be mentioned, paraphrased, and cited within my study, there are some that will be referenced more than others. The main scholar that will be referenced is Dr. Andrew Smith.

Having thirty-seven publications to his name, Andrew Smith is currently the Director of Graduate Studies in the School of English and was previously elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He has written extensively on the topic of gothic literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, being the topic of both his MA thesis

and his PhD. His most recent work is titled “Gothic Death 1740-1914: *A Literary History*” which he wrote for Manchester University Press in 2016. He is also currently editing *The Cambridge Companion to Frankenstein* for Manchester University Press. Some of the more prestigious positions Smith has held include being the past president of the International Gothic Association and Executive Committee member of the IGA (International Gothic Association), being a member of the editorial board for journals including *Gothic Studies* and many more.

One of Smith’s works that will be addressed is his second edition of *Gothic Literature* (2007), which he wrote as part of the Edinburgh Critical Guides for the Edinburgh University Press. This text discusses the ways in which gothic literature should be critically read, examining “a range of Gothic texts and non-textual Gothic forms from the eighteenth century to the present day” (Smith 1). Smith uses a specific layout and strategy within this text to help guide readers into the proper mindset for analyzing a gothic text. The first part of each chapter is designated to discussing a concept or theme within the gothic, such as “Defining the Gothic,” “Gothic Mutations,” “Hidden Identities,” “Twentieth Century,” and “Contemporary Gothic.” The second and third parts of the chapter are then broken down into examples of texts that embody these concepts or themes along with the inclusion of other scholars who have studied those works, themes, and concepts. The fourth and final part of each chapter is then designed around one specific text that Smith guides the reader into analyzing – using the methods and strategies he previously laid out for them.

There is also, *The Victorian Gothic* (2012) that was edited by Andrew Smith and William Hughes as An Edinburgh Companion for the Edinburgh University Press.

Although co-edited with another scholar, Smith stands out most by not only being an editor of this edition, but also in providing one of the essays within it that focuses on “Victorian Gothic Death.” This text primarily seeks to,

Acknowledge the diverse ways in which the Victorian Gothic was manifested...exploring its presence on the stage, in poetry, and in specific textual formations such as the ghost story” as well as examining the, “contexts in which we can locate the Victorian Gothic, including the cultures of science, medicine, and the social, theological and psychological concerns about death and dying which seemed to haunt the Victorians (Smith et. al. 6-7).

Considering the focus of my study is connecting the gothic works of Edgar Allan Poe as the source of inspiration for more contemporary gothic writers, it is useful to have a collection of essays that regard specific topics, issues, and concerns that resonated with 19th century gothic literature.

Another scholar that will be highly referenced is, J. Gerald Kennedy, currently a Boyd Professor of English at Louisiana State University. Kennedy’s areas of interest include: American Literature, short fiction, literary nationalism, and modernism.

Although Kennedy’s interests may be on a broader spectrum, his work tends to focus on that of Edgar Allan Poe, considering that thirteen of his published texts surround Poe and his work.

One of the main texts by J. Gerald Kennedy that will be referenced is his, *A Historical Guide to Edgar Allan Poe* (2001), written for the Oxford University Press. Kennedy starts off his study by expressing the undying popularity of the beloved Edgar

Allan Poe stating that, “Apart from Frederick Douglass, [Poe] is the only American writer of his era yet featured on the popular Arts and Entertainment ‘Biography’ series” (Kennedy 3). He continues throughout the rest of this text to emphasize the ideals Poe places within his gothic literature and why it happens to draw millennial readers in still today. An important concept that Kennedy wants his readers to take away from his text is the understanding that Poe was not a writer of books, but instead, was a writer that was trapped in the magazine world due to the lack of publishing opportunities and abilities in his era. Like mentioned earlier, the difference between Romanticism and Dark Romanticism lies within the idea that there is evil in beauty and that humanity is naturally evil; Kennedy expresses this concept through examples of Poe’s writing;

Poe’s best horror stories represent sensory eruption as a mind-body crossing that leaves mastery enslaved. At the level of intellectual history, Poe’s sensationalism dramatizes the last flailings of Enlightenment Reason, when Reason confronts its own lack of individuality as well as ‘the passions and the interests’ becoming so ungovernable in the Jacksonian era...moments of crossing are moments of exposure, of knowing that your most basic self cannot possibly be loved, and deserves to be punished (Kennedy 97).

Kennedy’s text assists my study by giving thorough explanations of Poe’s contribution to the ever-evolving Gothic literature genre. He assimilates information about Edgar Allan Poe’s personal life in ways that connect with Poe’s many Gothic works, which is beneficial for my study and for Poe’s biography section within my own work.

Jarlath Killeen is another scholar that will be highly referenced within my study. Killeen is presently an associate professor for the School of English. Most of Killeen's teachings and studies are within the Victorian Gothic genre, with a special interest in eighteenth-century Ireland and the history and pre-history of Ireland's gothic literature. Having over 31 publications, his book, *History of the Gothic: Gothic Literature 1825-1914* (2009) written as a part of the Gothic Literary Studies for the University of Wales Press is one that will be duly noted within my study. One of the main arguments that Killeen proposes in this text is that,

For many influenced by the post-structuralist and postmodernist views of representation, the nineteenth century was dominated by the realist novel and a realist aesthetic which pushed more 'radical' kinds of literature, such as the Gothic, to the margins" and that, "...many writing on Gothic took the broad view that it operated as an alternative and a response to the dictates of realism (Killeen 6-7).

Throughout his text Killeen will also go on to comment on the problematic views that critics have on gothic literature. He claims that critics too often analyze only one aspect of the gothic and thus emphasize their lack of having a complete understanding that gothic literature is comprised of both "disgust and desire," not simply one or the other (Killeen 10). He further explains this idea by suggesting,

That we try to avoid designations of the Victorian or the Gothic as oriented by either conservatism or subversion, hypocrisy or liberation, and instead realize that part of the reason why Gothic migrated everywhere in the nineteenth century, and part of the reason why there is no 'pure'

Gothic or realist tradition in the Victorian period – since the Gothic and the realist cross-fertilise each other – is because the Gothic is not an aesthetically or ideologically stable mode (Killeen 10).

This suggestion by Killeen is important to note when studying gothic literature, because there is, in fact, no clear distinction as to what ‘true’ gothic is; there are many avenues and possibilities for a text to be considered gothic. One of the goals of this study is to narrow down and focus on a few of the more noticeable aspects of the gothic within Poe’s literature and recognize that these aspects were and are still being used within the twentieth and twenty-first century gothic and horror literature.

Michael Gamer’s, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation* (2000), is another text notably referenced within my study. Gamer has an extremely extensive curriculum vitae and is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania and has been since the year 2001. Gamer’s text focuses on the receptions of the gothic during the Romantic period, claiming that during this period the gothic was referred to as merely a popular genre. Gamer argues that,

One cannot conceive of particular genres as dynamic and heterogeneous without historicizing them, and that one cannot comprehend the developments and transformations of genres without also tracing the history of their reception...In spite of its centrality to British culture from 1790 to 1820 and its two centuries of success in popular print, film, and now computer media, it was widely considered until 1970 as at best a novel sideshow of romanticism, and at worst an embarrassing and

pervasive disease destructive to national culture and social fabric (Gamer 8).

Gamer is not only arguing a valid point about needing to understand the historical contexts of a genre before classifying it as merely 'pop-culture,' but his clarification that gothic literature was, in fact, not always popular is critical to this study and my research on this specific topic. It was not until the late twentieth century that gothic literature began to get recognized as more than its popularity with a generic audience and instead took on a more canon worthy presence that had scholars across the countries with a desire to study the gothic texts in more detail. This is an important facet to identify considering the contemporary authors and their heavily Poe-influenced gothic pieces.

The importance of studying Gothic Literature comes from the ability to recognize the fears and concerns of the eras in which the works were written. Gothic Literature encompasses many bizarre and unnatural occurrences within it, yet the purpose of those occurrences is to produce a form of symbolism of the dark and corrupt ways in which society is working and revolving around during that specific era. Occurrences of these sorts might relate specifically to governmental concerns or presidential concerns, the concerns of humanity as a whole, or even concerns and fears regarding the fall of a country or region. Although these Gothic Literature works may not exactly be an allegory for an era, it can be ensured that there are hidden symbolic meanings within them that are in reference to the World the writer is living in.

Why this is an essential concept to study is because of the Gothic Literature that is being produced in the modern World. Gothic works of all kinds – literature, film, music, tactile arts, etc. – are being heavily produced, as society is demanding it; as Smith states,

“the Gothic, in other words, mutates across historical, national, and generic boundaries as it reworks images drawn from different ages and places” (Smith 4). This can evidently be in connection with the fears that society has with the World that it is living in. Like previously stated, there is no one distinct concept that makes a piece of literature gothic, so one of the sole purposes of this study is to narrow down some of the most notable representations of the gothic within the works of Edgar Allan Poe. Imagining the popular forms of Gothic works in the modern era, one can instantly think of many “dooms day” related pieces such as popular television shows, “The Walking Dead” and “Fear the Walking Dead” and popular horror films such as, “Purge”, the “Saw” series, and the “Hostel” series. There are also numerous contemporary authors who revel in the genre of horror, often capitalizing on the most common fears or strange unknowingness of what rests beyond our World. However, the ones that will be focused on include, H.P. Lovecraft, Mary Wilkins Freeman, and Stephen King.

~ Chapter II ~

Edgar Allan Poe: A Biography

~

“Aristotle speculated that tragedy produced catharsis through an audience’s sympathetic identification with the doomed hero: the spectacle of agony and death on some level frightens us, yet we feel cleansed by the sacrificial scene we have witnessed. Symbolically someone else has suffered in our place” (Kennedy 4).

Edgar Allan Poe was born in 1809 on the nineteenth of January in Boston, Massachusetts. His parents were David Poe Jr. and Elizabeth Arnold Hopkins Poe. Poe had one older brother, Henry - who was born in 1802 - and a younger sister, Rosalie - who was born in 1810 - one year after Edgar. Poe’s father abandoned his family when Poe was only a year old. When Poe was around the age of two, Poe’s father and mother both died of what is believed to have been tuberculosis. To make a sad story even more desolate, the siblings were separated into different families; Henry was entrusted to relatives in Baltimore, Rosalie was adopted by the Mackenzie family, and Edgar was given a home with the Allan family - although they never officially adopted him.

Throughout his childhood the Allan family treated Poe as if he was their own. Poe excelled remarkably in elementary and middle school, but seemed to have taken a downward spiral once he reached his teen years. As a teenager, Poe started getting into mischief and aroused problems throughout the town, his grades began dropping, and his decision-making was that of a rascally young man. This behavior ultimately led to Poe’s

foster father kicking him out of their home because he felt Poe was unappreciative of what they had done for him and unworthy of their love and assistance any more.

However, prior to Poe's foster father's unabashed banishment of Poe, he sent him away to the University of Virginia with very high expectations of Poe's success. While at the University, Poe studied many different languages with no interest in any other subjects. During his schooling, Poe learned that his love interest back home became engaged to another man; shortly after, his studies were halted due to the death of the founder of the University – resulting in another negative turn in Poe's young life. Moving forward, Poe was forced to work at his foster father's business, where his relationship with his foster father reached its breaking point. Poe left his foster family and after some time registered for the army with a different name, to help keep his identity hidden to avoid creditors.

After some time, Poe returned to his foster father as his foster mother had passed away. Although he missed the funeral, Poe was still able to mend some broken ties with his foster father. After the mending of the relationship, Poe's foster father agreed to write and persuade West Point to allow Poe to attend the school to finish his studies. Although, what Poe did not know was that during this request, Poe's foster father had written, "Frankly Sir, do I declare that He is no relation to me whatever" (Kennedy 27). During his stay at West Point, the ties between Poe and his foster father began to break yet again, leaving Poe to be dismissed from the academy.

It was at that point that Poe took on the adventures of writing and the many attempts to publish his work with little to no credibility for the work he produced. He found employment at a publishing press, under Thomas W. White, where he would write

entries, articles, manuscripts, and short stories for their journal. His first short story published in the journal was titled, "Berenice." Poe later had to apologize and confirm that his next submissions would not be so gruesome in manner. Although his most gruesome work is more appreciated today,

...Poe's emphasis on murder, revenge, mutilation, and torture patently mirrors a deep-seated national disposition. We need to remind ourselves that he produced his violent fiction in the 1830's and 1840's, when the US government was either confining Indians to reservations, 'removing' them west of the Mississippi, or (in the case of the Seminoles) remorselessly decimating them; this was the same era when the perpetuation and extension of slavery were being defended by Southern apologists and challenged by abolitionists determined to expose the barbarities of the 'peculiar institution' (Kennedy 5).

Unfortunately, Poe's reign with this press did not last too long as a national bank crisis lead to Poe's dismissal because his employer was too broke to keep the business running. During the span of his unemployment and the lack of publishing opportunities, Poe decided to write a novel length piece, thus developing, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. The book was set to publish, but yet again, another national bank crisis ceased the publication process.

Fast-forwarding through several years of depression and barely making ends meet, Poe was finally reinstated to a publishing company where he took the position of an assistant editor for *Gentlemen's Magazine*. It was during his employment here that Poe regained notability for his work and was able to have a collection of his stories published

in a single volume called, *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*. However, yet again, financial issues caused Poe's dismissal from this position. The difference this time, however, was not that his employer did not have the money to pay Poe a salary he deserved, instead his employer was very wealthy and refused to pay Poe a decent salary. His employer was also in the process of building a theater and was even looking to sell the journal for a profit, thus potentially leaving Poe jobless. To deter this from happening, Poe decided to finally get into the work of establishing his own journal and magazine, only to have this found out by his employer who immediately fired Poe because he felt this new journal would be a threat to his own.

A National bank crisis, again, led to Poe being unable to begin his own journal and magazine so he decided to take up an editing position with the bought out version of his old employer, now called *Graham's Magazine*. There, Poe was given a steady and healthy salary where he was able to live reasonably without being constantly worried about making ends meet on a daily basis. Moreover, Poe began to partake in giving lectures in various cities to enlighten audiences about American Poetry, after his story "The Gold-Bug" won a prize by *Dollar Newspaper*,

Poe might have taken a perverse pleasure in this sad refrain, for in addition to the actual hardships of his life, he had at times sought to represent himself to the American public as a sort of dark visionary. Yet if we were to adopt the investigative method of 'The Philosophy of Composition,' we would discover that behind the veil of accursed genius, Poe had pursued a literary career of enormous vitality and breadth (Kennedy 64).

However, even with his new seemingly celebrity status, it was not until the publication of “The Raven,” in 1845 when Poe received national recognition and fame. After that point, Poe suffered depression and grief from the death of his wife, never truly regaining his popularity as a writer seeing as he practically ceased all writing efforts on his part. He fell in love with another woman, a wealthy woman, but unfortunately died before he was able to wed her. Poe passed away on October 7th, 1849 at the age of forty and “was buried ‘without ostentation’ in a Presbyterian cemetery” (Kennedy 58). Poe’s work continues to be some of America’s favorite fictional pieces, so much so that a full-length movie was created around Poe’s life that incorporated a collection of his work and an additional plot twist.

~ Poetry ~

Edgar Allan Poe: "The Sleeper"

~

“At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley”

(Poe 50).

Edgar Allan Poe’s, “The Sleeper,” was written to express the melancholy of death. Particularly speaking, Poe is symbolizing the death of a beautiful woman, someone who was loved and who loved freely; the portrayal of innocence at its finest. He begins the lyrical poem by describing the setting in which he is present – a late summer night where the moon is shining bright, the lake is completely still, and the evening fog is lolling upon the ground of the cemetery. Poe brings to life a female character that he calls, Irene. The way in which Poe describes the appearance of this woman alludes to the idea that she is a ghost simply floating through the cemetery with no fear. He claims that everything about her is strange – pallor, dress, the length of her hair, and how silent she is. It is within the next stanza that Poe comes to the conclusion that this woman is

deceased, ultimately making him pray to God that he may let her rest with closed eyes so that she may not witness the ghosts that surround her in the cemetery. The following stanza is what allows readers to understand the connection that Poe has to this character, he claims that this woman, Irene, is a love of his. He becomes more accepting of the death of this woman within the next stanza, stating that she is finally sleeping and how he wishes that the worms would creep quietly and cautiously around her body and tomb as to not wake her or cause her soul a disturbance. Poe again connects on a deeper level with the character Irene by reminiscing about when she would throw pebbles at these tombs as a child and now she is forever resting in one of those same tombs; creating a more ironic note to the lyrical poem.

The gothic symbols within this poem can be identified as ghosts, the feeling of an eerie calmness within a cemetery, and the death of an innocent person. Although there are other symbols of the gothic represented within this poem, these will be the three focused on within my analysis. One of the most common misconceptions of ghost stories is that the ghosts are described as, “shadowy, indistinct, featureless figures covered by a white sheet” (Beidler 84). However, the ghosts described in Poe’s work have very distinct features and characteristics described to the readers by the narrator. The narrator in this piece, for instance, actually believes that the ghost he is seeing is a woman who is wandering alone in the cemetery until he starts to recognize the strangeness of her mannerisms, clothing, the length of her hair, and how silent she is. Once he recognizes these distinct features of hers, he recognizes who she is as well as understands that the image before him is not of a woman who is alive but her ghost. Unlike the common misconceptions of ghost stories, ghosts within the original gothic literature are more

humanlike and given detailed features. Another misconception that readers have about ghost stories is that the ghosts that appear have no identity and are simply lost and wandering. However, original gothic literature seeks to expose, “the validity of ghosts: that the apparition be of someone the percipient has never seen but who is later identified by another person from the specific and definite description given by the percipient” (Beidler 87). Poe’s work is in agreement with this concept because at first, the narrator in this poem does not recognize the woman; it is not until the last stanza when he realizes who the woman is – as she was a child when he last knew her,

Some sepulcher, remote, alone,
 Against whose portals she hath thrown,
 In childhood, many an idle stone---
 Some tomb from out whose sounding door
 She ne’er shall force an echo more,
 Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!

It was the dead who groaned within (Poe 52).

This brief little memoir is the narrator recalling of when he knew the woman as a child; throwing stones at tombs. Now, he brings upon the irony of the situation that she is no longer throwing stones at the tomb but is forever resting within it.

The next gothic element is the eerie calmness that Poe describes the setting of the poem within. A ‘mystic moon,’ ‘midnight,’ ‘opiate vapor,’ ‘quiet mountain top,’ flowers ‘nodding upon the grave’ alluding to a calm breeze, a fog wrapping around the ground, and the stillness of the lake as if it were in ‘a conscious slumber’ (Poe 50). The aspects within this setting clearly set the tone and mood for the rest of the poem; preparing the

reader for the natural eeriness that one can imagine feeling if in a cemetery alone. Readers of contemporary gothic fiction can relate to this setting almost instantly as it is one of the most common settings for campfire ghost stories or the beginnings of classic ghost stories. The body of water that Poe describes is also common for ghost stories as the stillness that it portrays is strange, “we do, however, find cases in which ghosts appear near ponds, seated at tables, and on stairs” (Beidler 96). Beidler contends that the reason many cases of ghost sightings do not involve being on the tops of towers or other high points is because the, “distances involved would be so great as to rob any identifications of evidential significance” (95). This meaning that there would be no significant evidence to determine if a ghost was truly present or believable.

The death of an innocent person is the third element of gothic literature that is in direct correlation with the stylistic gothic writing of Poe. Poe’s gothic prose and fiction revolve around the idea that innocence and youth are one of the most precious aspects of human life. When one, or both, of those elements are taken away, it becomes a completely tragic event that the narrator struggles to overcome. Within this poem, the cause of death of the young woman is undetermined, but with the melancholy yet peaceful tone in which the narrator speaks, it may be assumed that the cause of death was from natural or illness related incidents. The narrator then attempts to overcome this revelation of the young woman’s death by praying to God that, “she may lie / Forever with unopened eye” (Poe 51). In this instance, the narrator seeks comfort and condolence in the death of the woman and hopes that she is able to rest.

The presence of ghosts, the eerie cemetery setting, and the death of an innocent person are all active elements within Poe’s gothic literature that have been carried on into

contemporary horror fiction. Moving on through the rest of this study, these aspects and elements of classic gothic literature that stemmed from Poe's fictional works will be re-evaluated and compared to the works of the contemporary gothic and horror literature writers, Mary Wilkins Freeman, H.P. Lovecraft, and Stephen King.

~ Poetry ~

Edgar Allan Poe: "The Raven"

~

“And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, *still* is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted --- nevermore!”

(Poe 71).

“The Raven,” Poe’s most popular poem, begins with the sudden awakening of Poe by a quiet tapping, from what he believes is coming from his door. He calls out to the visitor and apologizes for keeping them waiting, but when he opens the door, there is no one there. He becomes weary of the origin of the noise, assuring himself that it must be the wind tapping something against his window. However, when he opens up his window, it is not the wind, but instead a Raven who perches itself right on the windowsill. This bird startles Poe, but he is also in awe that this creature would bless him with his presence at such a close encounter. When Poe asks the creature what its name is, he is again taken aback when the Raven clearly recites the word ‘nevermore’. Within the ongoing stanzas Poe is attempting to figure out why this Raven is at his windowsill, how it is able to speak – which he initially assumes he picked up the word from a neglectful owner, and finally what this bird means by its use of the word ‘nevermore’. Once stanza

sixteen – of eighteen stanzas - is reached Poe determines that this Raven is at his window to remind him of Lenore or to send him a message from Lenore – a woman he once loved dearly but passed away. Poe becomes infuriated with the Raven because his only response is ‘nevermore’, making Poe believe that the Raven is mocking his deepest desire to be reunited with his long lost lover. Poe claims that his soul was reinstated with such a grief due to the speaking Raven that it can be lifted ‘nevermore.’

Although this poem is not a typical ghost story, it does enlist some similar elements of traditional gothic literature; one being the attempt at connecting with the deceased – whether the deceased is trying to communicate with the living or the living is trying to communicate with the deceased. In Poe’s, “The Sleeper,” the narrator did not try to speak with the ghost he saw but he did see her on a visual level, meaning that there was some kind of connection being brought upon the two of them. The actual speaking to or attempting to relay a message from one dimension to another is the next step in Poe’s attempt to combine the living and the dead within the gothic. The connection between Poe’s elements of the ghost story can be described as,

Supernatural fiction, which developed alongside Spiritualism in the United States and England – and likely drew inspiration from it – also can be viewed as a response to or backlash against nineteenth-century materialism and the legacy of Enlightenment rationalism. The ubiquity of Victorian ghost stories in this context can be interpreted as articulating a displaced desire or need for spiritual faith in an era of increasing scientism and skepticism (Weinstock 6-7).

The importance of understanding that the inclusion of ghosts and afterlife within gothic literature of the nineteenth century is because of its connection to the lack of spiritual quality the new world was embracing. The nineteenth century was expanding its horizons with new inventions, machines, and the more materialistic side of humanity – almost completely avoiding spirituality, humility, and God. One may argue that gothic literature seems to be portraying ghosts as evil beings, misinterpreting the symbolism of spirituality to be more of an atheistic or anti-Christ view; but this is not always the case. For Poe, his sensitivities to the changing world and the loss of many of his loved ones developed a more spiritualistic approach to life, more likely helping to ease the pain he held within his heart. Poe portrays this message clearly through the symbolism of the Raven. He observes that this Raven is attempting to connect with him and he soon approaches the idea that it is his long lost lover trying to message him from the afterlife. This recognition of who the messenger truly is eases his pain by knowing she is okay, but then creates a new and deeper pain because he longs for her even more.

Another gothic element within this poem is the color black. The color black is prominent, seeing as it is the color of the Raven. Although the Raven does not necessarily come to harm Poe, he is still represented as evil because of his relation to the dead and the afterlife. The Raven represents everything that causes Poe torment on an emotional level, thus alluding to the idea that the Raven was chosen as a majestic yet evil symbol. Poe is disturbed when he hears the knocking on the door, yet finds no one there; he becomes curious and slightly frightful when he then hears the same tapping but coming from his window; when he goes to the window he is startled by the approach of the large bird; he is then shocked when the bird speaks; becomes angry and agitated when the only

response the bird gives is 'nevermore;' finally, he becomes deeply heart broken and saddened realizing how lonely he is without his lover. Poe even describes the Raven with, "eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming" (Poe 71). This is the final remark about the Raven that leaves readers with the impression that the Raven did more damage to Poe than it did good.

The gothic elements used by Poe - connecting with the dead and blackness - will be analyzed and compared within the more contemporary pieces of gothic literature by Freeman, Lovecraft, and King. Both of these specific elements are represented within each of the more modernized works, allowing readers and gothic literature enthusiasts to develop the awareness of how Poe's work has had a drastic influence on the gothic writing of modern day horror authors.

~ Short Story Fiction ~

Edgar Allan Poe: "Berenice"

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“Yet its memory was replete with horror – horror more horrible from being vague, and terror more terrible from ambiguity. It was a fearful page in the record of my existence, written all over with dim, and hideous, and unintelligible recollections. I strived to decipher them, but in vain; while ever and anon, like the spirit of a departed sound, the shrill and piercing shriek of a female voice seemed to be ringing in my ears. I had done a deed – what was it” (Poe 232)?

The short story, “Berenice,” traces the life and thoughts of a deranged and mentally ill narrator named, Egeus. Poe does not instantly present the narrator as mad, however, he does provide hints and details of madness through the voice and thoughts of the narrator, which gives readers the illusion that the narrator may be suffering from depression, obsession, and insanity. One of the more prominent themes within this story is Egeus’ love for his cousin. The narrator describes his cousin as the complete opposite of him; loving, free, caring, and always seems to be happy and with a smile on her face. Growing up, the narrator claims that they were very close, until he got older and began closing himself off from the world and keeping to himself with books. He explains how he feels like he has moments where he is present but not mentally present – alluding to the idea of possible seizures, day dreaming, or even more dramatic a split personality becoming someone he does not associate himself with yet is physically and presently involved with.

Egeus, however distant he has become with the world was able to keep a notable relationship with his cousin, so much so that they grew in love with one another and he proposed to marry her. However, as their wedding was approaching, his cousin came down ill with a sickness that was slowly deteriorating her body and youth. It was with this deterioration of her that he began to describe her as a different person, nothing like she was before; the illness had stolen all of her beauty – until he saw her teeth. The point in which Egeus notices his cousin's teeth he instantly becomes obsessed and is startled that he had never noticed them before. His obsession with her teeth is expressed when he describes his first vision of them as,

...the white and ghastly spectrum of the teeth. Not a speck on their surface – not a shade on their enamel – not an indenture in their edges – but what that period of her smile had sufficed to brand in upon my memory. I saw them now even more unequivocally than I beheld them then. The teeth! – the teeth! – they were here, and there, and everywhere, and visibly and palpably before me; long, narrow, and excessively white, with pale lips writhing about them, as in the very moment of their first terrible development (Poe 231).

Readers can assume that her teeth may have stood out more prominently to Egeus due to the natural condition of her illness; they seemed whiter than before because the rest of her body and face has lost the color and luster of her youth. Yet, because of Egeus' mental instability, he becomes fixated on them and ends up growing more and more mad over them as the minutes go by. All he can seem to think about and dream about are her teeth;

his love for her has completely vanished and the only love remaining is the one he has with her teeth.

The next scene that is described is the most gruesome. Poe instills an image into the readers' mind by describing a horrible event where Egaeus' cousin had her teeth ripped and pulled out of her mouth in the middle of the night while she was still alive. It is explained to us that she did not survive the torture, but that the servants who found her knew she was alive when it happened because they had heard horrifying screams that had awoken them. The next few passages describe the narrator as remembering a dream he had, leading him to question his own whereabouts and if he had been the one to do this terrible deed. At this point he happens to look around the room and notices a small box, then a servant comes in frightened and show Egaeus the spade on the table, points to his gory clothes, his fingernail indented hands, and finally Egaeus opens up the box and out spill thirty-two teeth.

One of the most prominent gothic elements that is presented within Poe's short story is insanity. However, Poe uses insanity in a different light within this piece than he does within some of his other works. For instance, Poe expresses Egaeus' insanity as a sympathizing fault, not a fault created out of anger or crude behavior in which the audience would develop a distinctive hatred towards the character. Instead, as Kennedy mentions,

With 'Berenice' and 'Morella' (both 1835), Poe turns from his experiments with conventional modes of Gothic and satire, particularly his send-ups of the peculiarly Southern fascination with nose-pulling. Instead of presenting shameful gentry males as neoclassic figures of mockery, Poe

links sensationalism with self-torture to make them romantic figures of sympathy. He discovers that male abjection sells (Kennedy 97).

Poe uses this strategy as a way to draw a more horrifying experience for the readers. He allows readers to become frightened at the thought about what happened to Egaeus' cousin, he allows his readers to grieve for Egaeus as his soon-to-be wife was just brutally murdered, then he allows the readers to feel alarmed when they discover – along side Egaeus – that he was the one who committed the terrible crime. In another light, some readers might even sympathize with Egaeus even more when they recognize that he is just as perturbed as they are over his actions.

Another gothic element that Poe utilizes within this short story is obsession. Obsession is shown clearly through Egaeus' strong urges he has to have his cousin's teeth in his possession or in his sights at all times. He fantasizes about her teeth, dreams about her teeth, and even pulls her teeth out while she is alive and awake, ultimately leading to her death. Although Egaeus was not mentally present while committing this crime, his illness and obsession drove him to extreme madness and uncontrollable behavior. Poe makes Egaeus' obsession with his cousin's teeth evident to the reader when the narrator describes how,

In the multiplied objects of the external world I had no thoughts but for the teeth. For these I longed with a frenzied desire. All other matters and all different interests became absorbed in their single contemplation. They-they alone were present to the mental eye, and they, in their sole individuality, became the essence of my mental life. I held them in every light. I turned them in every attitude. I surveyed their characteristics. I

dwelt upon their peculiarities. I pondered upon their conformation. I mused upon the alternation in their nature (Poe 231-232).

It is evident that Poe wants his readers to understand the instability that obsession brings to a person. He wants readers to know that Egaeus has completely turned off the rest of the world around him due to the amount of sheer attention he is giving his cousin's teeth. Egaeus is not in his right mind, he has changed – he is no longer the person who proposed to his cousin but is instead a prisoner within his obsession – his mental illness has finally taken over him.

When Poe enlists insanity and obsession as gothic elements within his work, the themes can become connected and distorted within that connection. The purpose of incorporating these two elements within this study is to show that these are separate pieces of gothic literature; a writer can include one without the other – which is a concept that is often overlooked. The modern day horror fiction writers incorporate these elements within their work, however, they do not use both within the same work – they simply extract one of these two elements and use it within their stories. Thus, it can be presumed that these contemporary gothic fiction writers have used Poe's gothic elements as inspiration for their own pieces of literature.

~ Short Story Fiction ~

Edgar Allan Poe: "The Black Cat"

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“One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth. The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fiber of my frame. I took from my waistcoat pocket a pen-knife, opening it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity” (Poe 532).

The tale of Edgar Allan Poe’s, “The Black Cat,” is one that many have heard about or have even read during their young adult school years. One of the capital texts, right alongside Poe’s “The Tell Tale Heart,” “The Black Cat” is taught to many grade levels within their English curriculum. A tale so disturbingly gruesome may not seem appropriate to belong in the curriculum of American middle schools and high schools, yet, the argument is that the Dark Romantic period is a large part of American literary history, and in order to expose our nation’s youth to this history, educators must pull from the works of the most notable authors. One of Poe’s most recognizable trends of his writing is how, “in stories like ‘The Tell Tale Heart’ and ‘The Black Cat,’ he portrayed brutality from the subject position of the perpetrator, fetishizing the desire for power or ‘ascendancy’ over an adversary” (Kennedy 4).

This fetishizing of power streams along the idea of man being more powerful than what he is deemed capable of. In the shadows of the 1800s, the American nation was struggling predominately with financial insecurities and had to close down many banks. This ultimately lead many business owners and other American citizens becoming broke because their money had been lost with the downfall of the nation's leading banks. Like Poe during his financial hardships, the narrator in this story is struggling to identify with himself and cope with the issues that are arising in his daily life. The narrator turned to alcohol, much like Poe, and became aggravated and aggressive, becoming – what he believed – to be what a 'man in charge' is supposed to behave like. Primitively speaking, American men are portrayed to be the breadwinners of the family, along with having physical strength and mental stamina in a way that would easily over power a woman. The narrator, before his primitiveness was acted upon, was naturally a gentle and caring man, often being routinely feminine in his actions.

During what Kennedy calls the 'crossing,' "the beast's voice now seems the narrator's maker, witness, and judge, a three-in-one God, as well as the witch suggested earlier by his wife. The cat's instability of identity is really the narrator's" (Kennedy 119). The beast, in this instance, is referring to the second black cat, the one that the narrator is accusing for his murderous act. The idea of the desire for power and obtaining that power through murder is one of the themes that is represented within this short story. As quoted from Poe's story earlier, murder was not the first violent deed that the narrator had done; instead, it was one of the ending results of an accumulation of violent acts. First, the narrator took out cruel and unusual acts upon small and helpless animals – his own pet cat – it was not until after that moment,

When the narrator of 'The Black Cat' buries an ax in his wife's brain...Poe anatomizes the psychology of revenge, flaunts atrocity, and depicts the recrudescence of our national 'internal flaw' (Kennedy 5).

What Kennedy is expressing through this statement is that America has an insatiable desire for violence and Poe decided to capitalize on that aspect. One of the reasons why Poe is so popular in today's society is due in probability because of this obsession within the American values system. Poe produced a story that centered on violence and revenge, using a main character that the average American could relate to. The narrator was a typically domestic and well-mannered man, yet when he was finally pushed over the edge mentally, he became delirious, mad, and spiteful towards those he previously loved and held of high value in his life.

Poe created this story to resonate with the power struggles that American men were dealing with on a daily basis. During the 1800s, jobs were being lost and men were becoming broke due to the lack of financial stability and misfortunes that the nation was bringing to its banks. Many men turned to alcohol to avoid going home and facing their families who were now struggling to be fed and clothed. Trying to hide their depression and the disappointment they felt with themselves not being able to provide for their wives and children they consequently made their situations worse. It is not too difficult to imagine the many families that were torn apart due to these financial struggles, as it has already been learned that Poe experienced these issues first hand,

The most complex of Poe's sensational black-white crossings occurs in 'The Black Cat' (1843). Here the narrator interprets his experience of sensations as a fall from godlike Reason into

perverse impulses...he ends as a brute, not only by brutally killing his cats and wife but also by being afflicted with 'the rabid desire to say something' (Kennedy 119).

The pivotal moment in the story comes when the narrator not only realizes the violent acts that he has committed, but he has a strong desire to brag about what he did. Having completely lost control of his docile way of life, the narrator has welcomed the innate evil that resides within him with a sense of pride. He no longer feels guilty for his actions like he had when he first carved out the eyeball of his cat, but instead is reveling in the thought that he has gotten away with murder. Poe's short story represents those who are power hungry and desire complete control over every aspect of not only their life but in the lives of others as well as the remorselessness of committing a horrendous crime to those of innocence.

The gothic element of having total control is represented within the more modern gothic horror fiction writers. It can be viewed that although the narrator in Poe's short story is striving to have complete control over his life, he actually begins losing it. The narrator believes he is gaining control by harming innocent creatures and killing his wife, thus his ending pride in his deed; however, he allows his rage and anger to consume him, ultimately taking away the control he has over his actions. Pride is the second element represented within this piece. Briefly but duly noted, the extreme pride the narrator feels after realizing the vicious crime he committed is an example of how horrifically sublime he feels over his actions. This thematic set-up is evident within the more contemporary gothic literature, specifically Stephen King's short story, "Suffer the Little Children."

~ Chapter III ~

20th Century Writers Inspired by Poe

Mary Wilkins Freeman: "Shadows on the Wall"

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"Henry Glynn stood and stared a moment longer. His face showed a gamut of emotions – horror, conviction, then furious incredulity. Suddenly he began hastening hither and thither about the room. He moved the furniture with fierce jerks, turning ever to see the effect upon the shadow on the wall. Not a line of its terrible outlines wavered"

(Freeman 241).

"Shadows on the Wall," is an earlier piece that revolves around the traditional ghost story and mystery story. The story begins with a conversation between three sisters about how their brother, Edward, had died so unexpectedly the night before. One of the sisters mentions how she heard her two brothers, Henry and Edward arguing in the study that night, with Henry saying harsh words to Edward. The sister explains how their brother Henry always seems to be upset about something, but this situation was about how Edward was living at their place for free after wasting away all of the money their father left behind for him. Two of the sisters jump to a rash conclusion that perhaps Henry had killed their brother out of anger, or that somehow he knew that Edward was going to die that night, yet they cautiously dismiss the idea thinking that their brother would never go so far as that.

As the story continues and the siblings are grieving and preparing for the upcoming funeral service, they happen to notice an eerie shadow on the wall that seems

to be watching and taunting them. It never fails that no matter what objects they move in the room or whoever tries to block the shadow, it remains in the same spot. All of the siblings begin to become terrified of what the shadow might be and insist on not entering that room again before the funeral service. The brother Henry grows a little insane and obsessed with the shadow over the course of the next few days, taking the lamp out of the room and placing it in other rooms, where the shadow instantly jumps to life on whatever wall is before it. Henry then decides to leave the house with the lamp and though he claims to be visiting another doctor friend of his, he does not return within the usual time frame when visiting this friend. Thus, leaving the sisters worrying about their missing brother. One evening as the sisters are in the study, they heard the doorbell ring; going to answer it, one sister follows the other with a lamp to light the way. When they return and place the lamp back onto the table, there jump two shadows on the wall that seem to be watching them. It is at this moment in time that one of the sisters reads the telegram they received stating how their other brother Henry is now dead as well; alluding to the idea that the shadows on the wall are the shadows or spirits of their dead brothers. This ghost story resembles Poe's writing with the combination of mystery, suspicion, taunting, and obsession, as seen in, "Berenice."

Although lacking the more gruesome aspects of Poe's short story, "Berenice," Freeman's, "Shadows on the Wall," closely resembles this mysterious murder mystery. One of the gothic elements that Freeman borrows from Poe is the mystery that is brought into the deaths of seemingly innocent people. For instance, the remaining siblings in Freeman's story have no clue as to how their youngest brother had died, leaving them victims to the terribly creativity of their own minds over the cause of death. At one point

the three sisters end up raising the thought that their other brother could have murdered their youngest brother by recalling the events between the two from the previous night, “I suppose Henry was mad, as he always was, because Edward was living on here for nothing, when he had wasted all the money father left him” and then remembering another time when Henry was mad, “Do you remember that time he killed the cat because she had scratched him?” (Freeman 233-234). These passages represent a progression of thought between the characters in the short story; their way of figuring out the mystery to the death of their brother. There is a similar progression within Poe’s, “Berenice,” when Egaeus is trying to figure out the mysterious death of his beloved cousin.

On the table beside me burned a lamp, and near it lay a little box. It was of no remarkable character, and I had seen it frequently before, for it was the property of the family physician; but how can it *there*, upon my table, and why did I shudder in regarding it? These things were in no manner to be accounted for, and my eyes at length dropped to the open pages of a book, and to a sentence underscored therein. The words were the singular but simple ones of the poet Ebn Zaiat: “*Dicebant mihi sodales si sepulchrum amicae visitarem, curas meas aliquantulum fore levatas.*”¹ Why then, as I perused them, did the hairs of my head erect themselves on end, and the blood of my body become congealed within my veins. (Poe 232-233)

Poe emphasizes this progression of thought as a way to connect the character to the reader; almost as if he is attempting to draw out the reader’s own thoughts and put them on paper. By doing this, the reader may be able to obtain more pieces to the puzzle and

¹ Latin translation: “My companions said to me, if I would visit the grave of my friend, I might somewhat alleviate my worries”.

stay on the same – or close to the same – wavelength that the main character is on when figuring out the murder mystery. Just like Poe, Freeman incorporates this same progression of thought within her characters to better connect the pieces of the puzzle for the reader.

There is also an evident connection within the passage in Freeman's work to a passage in Poe's, "The Black Cat." It is discussed by the sisters how Henry had killed a cat because it had accidentally scratched him, which is an extremely similar situation to that of Poe's narrator when he gouges the eye out of his cat for biting him. The narrator claims, "I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth...I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket!" (Poe 532). The event in Freeman's piece so closely resembles the event in Poe's, "The Black Cat" that it is an obvious transfer of an element of horror from Poe's work into the more modern twentieth century gothic works. Thematically, this connection can relate to the murder-mystery gothic element because it sets up a character persona that foreshadows the violent future that lies ahead.

Being an earlier short story within the twentieth century, the gruesomeness of gothic literature was not quite as daring as Poe's work, considering the amount of flack Poe received during his lifetime for this specific type of writing. However, it is evident that other gothic elements within Poe's work was inspiring to other writers, hence the extreme similarities between Poe's work and the work of more contemporary authors such as Freeman. The gothic element of murder mystery may be one of the most

prominent elements within Freeman's work that closely resembles the work of Poe, however, the elements of insanity and obsession are also prevalent.

Insanity is represented through the character Henry within Freeman's short story – the older brother of the siblings. Henry is described as a man who always seems to be angry about something and is not afraid to speak his mind when he disagrees with someone or something on an issue. He is spoken of in a way that alludes to the idea that the other siblings are afraid of him, “‘I think Henry ought to be ashamed of himself for talking as he did to Edward,’ said Mrs. Brigham abruptly, but in an almost inaudible voice. ‘Hush!’ said Caroline, with a glance of actual fear at the closed door” (Freeman 235). The fear that the other characters have of Henry is important to note in reference to the gothic element insanity, because it hints to the reader that there is something eerie about the disposition of Henry that the reader and the other characters should be cautious of. The exact moment in time when Henry's insanity is exposed to the reader is when he becomes so infatuated with the unmoving shadow on the wall,

His face changed. The inmost secrecy of his nature seemed evident until one almost lost sight of his lineaments. Rebecca stood close to her sofa, regarding him with woeful, fascinated eyes. Mrs. Brigham clutched Caroline's hand. They both stood in a corner out of his way. For a few moments he raged about the room like a caged wild animal. He moved every piece of furniture; when the moving of a piece did not affect the shadow, he flung it to the floor, the sisters watching (Freeman 241).

The simile used to describe Henry like a wild animal trapped in a cage is interesting because that is another way of describing manic beings – hence the direct

correlation to the element of insanity. Another instance of insanity is represented through Henry with his un-relinquished desire to determine what is casting the shadow on the wall,

Henry Glynn, evidently reasoning that the source of the strange shadow must be between the table on which the lamp stood and the wall, was making systematic passes and thrusts all over and through the intervening space with an old sword which had belonged to his father. Not an inch was left unpierced. He seemed to have divided the space into mathematical sections. He brandished the sword with a sort of cold fury and calculation; the blade gave out flashes of light, the shadow remained unmoved. Mrs. Bringham, watching, felt herself cold with horror” (Freeman 243).

As represented through both excerpts of the short story, it is evident that Henry is becoming more enraged and infatuated with the shadow on the wall – leading him to partake in more erratic and insane actions against it. Unlike the fear that the sisters had of Henry earlier in the short story, they are now more fearful of his behavior and his loss of sane thoughts. It is being made clear from the language and descriptions of the sisters’ reactions of Henry’s behavior that they are no longer simply fearing what Henry might say if he becomes upset, but are now fearing what Henry might do if they upset him. This is an important aspect of the element of insanity to recognize because an individual with a sane mind is able to think and act logically, regardless of how upset they might become. Once a person has reached the level of insanity, they are no longer able to distinguish between logical and illogical actions towards or against someone or something. Henry’s behavior is much like the behavior and actions that Egaeus, in Poe’s short story, enacted

upon. One of the similar instances of this type of behavior shown through Egaeus is when he explains his 'episodes',

To muse for long unwearied hours with my attention riveted to some frivolous device on the margin, or in the typography of a book; to become absorbed, for the better part of a summer's day in a quaint shadow falling aslant upon the tapestry, or upon the floor; to lose myself for an entire night in watching the steady flame of a lamp, or the embers of a fire; to dream away whole days over the perfume of a flower; to repeat monotonously some common word, until the sound, by dint of frequent repetition, ceased to convey any idea whatever to the mind... (Poe 229).

It is evident through the description of Egaeus' episodes that his behavior is erratic and bizarre; behavior in which a person with a sane mind would not be found partaking in. The connection between Poe's insane character and Freeman's insane character is that they both behave in ways that are unnatural and allow the reader to speculate what the character might be capable of doing later on in the story.

The representation of gothic elements continues in Freeman's story when Henry is no longer concerned about the unmoving shadow but instead becomes obsessed with the shadow. Obsession is shown through Henry's behavior and attitude toward the shadow and the lamp when he,

...set [the lamp] on the table and waited a few minutes, pacing up and down. His face was terrible, his fair complexion showed livid; his blue eyes seemed dark blanks of awful reflections. Then he took the lamp up and returned to the library. He set the lamp on the centre table, and the

shadow sprang out on the wall. Again he studied the furniture and moved it about, but deliberately, with none of his former frenzy...It was midnight before he went upstairs (Freeman 243-244).

The new attitude that is portrayed by Henry shows that he has settled into his obsession with the shadow and is determined and relentless with trying to figure out where the shadow is coming from. His repeated moving of the lamp to different rooms to see if the shadow springs upon the wall as it does in the study proves to the reader just how fixated he is on discovering its cause. Freeman later incorporates the notion that Henry decides to leave to visit another Doctor friend of his; leaving his own patients doctor-less for a minimum of three days. This is recognized by the sisters as strange behavior for Henry when they mention,

The third day Henry was expected home, but he did not arrive and the last train from the city had come. 'I call it pretty queer work,' said Mrs. Brigham. 'The idea of a doctor leaving his patients for three days anyhow, at such a time as this, and I know he has some very sick ones; he said so. And the idea of a consultation lasting three days! There is no sense in it, and *now* he has not come. I don't understand it, for my part.' 'I don't either,' said Rebecca (Freeman 244).

Evidently, the obsession that Henry has over this shadow on the wall has reached such an extreme that he is willing to leave his sick patients alone, knowing that they could possibly become even more ill while he is away and they would be rendered helpless. The sisters express their concern with the matter amongst themselves, claiming that this is very unlike his natural tendencies and his stance over the entire prospect of the

shadow is senseless. Much like Freeman's character Henry, Egaeus' obsession grows stronger throughout the procession of Poe's short story, causing him to develop more senseless actions and behaviors. The increased obsessive behavior episode that Egaeus makes evident to the reader is when he describes his visions of his cousins teeth,

And now the evening closed in upon me thus – and then the darkness came, and tarried, and went – and the day again dawned – and the mists of a second night were now gathering around – and still I sat motionless in that solitary room, and still I sat buried in meditation, and still the *phantasma* of the teeth maintained its terrible ascendancy as, with the most vivid and hideous distinctness, it floated about amid the changing lights and shadows of the chamber (Poe 232).

Unmistakably so, the reader becomes aware that Egaeus' obsession with his cousin's teeth is interfering with his daily life, much like Henry's obsession with the shadow began interfering with his day job. This becomes a clear sign that the obsession that once started as a mere fascination, for both characters, is wreaking havoc on the lives of the people who are closest to them. Henry's self-dismissal from his patients to consult with another doctor friend over the matter of the shadow proved to be dangerous for his patients as they could become deathly ill during his absence with no access to professional care. Egaeus' self-dismissal from the rest of the tenants in the mansion left everyone vulnerable to the dangers of his mental instability; hence him being the cause to Berenice's gruesome death.

H.P. Lovecraft: "In the Vault"

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“I’ll never get the picture out of my head as long as I live. You kicked hard, for Asaph’s coffin was on the floor. His head was broken in, and everything was tumbled about. I’ve seen sights before, but there was one thing too much here. An eye for an eye! Great heavens, Birch, but you got what you deserved. The skull turned my stomach, but the other was worse – *those ankles cut neatly off to fit Matt Fenner’s cast-aside coffin!*”

(Lovecraft 135).

S.T. Joshi explains that this story is actually mentioned to be one of, “Lovecraft’s most conventional supernatural tales” and was actually “rejected by *Weird Tales* because the editor feared that its gruesomeness might cause the magazine to be banned from the newsstands” (Lovecraft 129). The Lovecraft piece that will be examined revolves around vengeance and evil spirits, something that is all too familiar in regard to the works of Poe such as in, “The Black Cat,” “The Sleeper,” and “The Raven.” The narrator of, “In the Vault,” is a friend of an undertaker named Birch, and is telling Birch’s horrifying tale of the night he became entrapped in a tomb vault. Birch had previously been approached to make a casket for a man who was extremely vengeful, spiteful, and truly disliked by the community. However, instead of making this man a new casket, he decided to use a previously made one that he had cast to the side. Not only was this a little disturbing to find out, but what is meant to disturb the reader more is the fact that Birch had to cut off this man’s feet at the ankles so that he could fit him into this poorly made casket.

The story continues to tell of Birch's eventful weekend by beginning at the moment Birch decided to take a ride out to the vault on a Friday evening after having a few drinks. The purpose of this trip to the vault was to remove one of the caskets from the vault and transfer it to the deceased's final resting place in the cemetery. Unfortunately, as Birch had entered the vault to get the casket, a strong wind picked up and slammed the door behind him locking down the broken latch with no way of reopening from the inside. After a few hours of panicking, Birch realizes there is a small window at the highest peak of the vault, so he carefully decides to stack the caskets on top of one another in hopes to climb up them and reach the window to escape. As Birch begins to reach the top he notices something seems to be pulling his feet down; when he looks below he believes he saw a dark shadow holding his ankles while an intense pain bolted through him. Frightened and almost faint Birch is able to struggle and break free through the transom at the top of the vault. Once he finished getting his wounds addressed by the doctor, it is discovered that Birch's tendons have been sliced at the ankles, leaving him forever lame. The story concludes with the notion that it was the vengeful spirit of the deceased man who Birch cut the feet off at the ankles who cut through Birch's tendons.

When discussing the gothic elements that Lovecraft was inspired to incorporate within his texts from Poe's work, the two that instantly come to mind are the connection to the dead and blackness represented as evil. Revenge is also a very prominent theme within this Lovecraft work, but considering the poems and short stories referenced within this study, it is best to leave revenge as a separate entity to be discussed in a more dense capacity within another work.

The first piece of information the reader receives in regard to a character in the story having a connection with the dead is the fact that the main character is an undertaker. Much like Poe's poem, "The Sleeper," the narrator in Lovecraft's work begins the story by describing the setting as being in a cemetery, "One the afternoon of Friday, April 15th, then Birch set out for the tomb with horse and wagon to transfer the body of Matthew Fenner...The day was clear, but a high wind had sprung up; and Birch was glad to get to shelter as he unlocked the iron door and entered the side-hill vault" (Lovecraft 130). Connecting with the dead on a spiritual level is one of the first steps in the process of creating a deeper connection with the dead, such as on a physical or vocal level. In Poe's, "The Sleeper," this initial connection with the dead is made in a similar way, but instead of the narrator being an undertaker, he is just a man alone sitting in a cemetery; much like Birch, in Lovecraft's piece, is alone in a cemetery.

The next step in creating a connection with the dead is after the character in Lovecraft's piece gets his ankle wounds bandaged by the doctor. The doctor describes to Birch that his ankles have been sliced at the tendons rendering him forever lame. It is not until after the narrator discovers that Birch had cut off the feet of a body in one of the caskets in the tomb, that he realizes it was the ghost who had sliced Birch's ankles. This discovery is shown when,

I've seen sights before, but there was one thing too much here. An eye for an Eye! Great heavens, Birch, but you got what you deserved. The skill turned my stomach, but the other was worse – *those ankles cut neatly off to fit Matt Fenner's cast-aside coffin!* (Lovecraft 135)

The notion that the ghost had sought revenge on Birch is evident. However, what goes overlooked is the concept that the progress of the character's connection with the dead had grown drastically. Now, instead of merely being connected with the dead on a spiritual level - such as taking the courtesy to creating coffins for the deceased and placing them in their correct and final resting place – Birch has connected with the dead on a physical level. This same idea is evident within Poe's "The Sleeper," when the narrator sitting alone in the cemetery realizes there is a woman there with him.

The narrator at first is shocked that there is a woman wandering alone in the cemetery, until he realizes that something about her is strange. At this point he recognizes that the woman is a ghost; thus allowing the reader to understand that there is something about this situation that is unlike any other. This ghost has presented itself to the narrator, resulting in this type of physical connection between the living and the dead. However, an even more prominent example within Poe's work that encompasses the idea of connecting with the dead is within his poem, "The Raven." In this poem, the narrator is approached by a Raven. This is not an ordinary Raven though, this one can speak and communicate with the narrator on what seems to be in a simplistic manner; the Raven only responds with the phrase 'nevermore.' The connection with the dead is established when the narrator realizes why this Raven has come to him,

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer

Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee – by these angels he hath sent thee

Respite – respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore; (Poe 70)

It becomes evident to the reader that Poe has developed a deeper connection with the narrator and the dead. Previously, the narrator had only been aware that he had a strange talking Raven sitting on his windowsill, but once he began probing the Raven with questions he understood that he was not talking to a Raven at all, but that a message was being relayed to him from his deceased loved one, Lenore.

Poe's poems, "The Sleeper" and "The Raven" both emulate a progression of a deeper connection being built between the living and the dead, starting on a spiritual level and developing into a physical or vocal level – the narrator in one poem literally seeing the ghost whereas the narrator in the other poem is being spoken to by the ghost. Much like these two poems of Poe's, Lovecraft's character in "In the Vault" develops this same kind of deeper connection with the ghost who undoubtedly sliced the tendons in his ankles. The theory that Poe's work is in direct connection with the work of H.P. Lovecraft is proven through the awareness of the stark similarities in their connections between the living and the dead.

Another gothic element that Lovecraft adopted from Poe's work is the idea of blackness being portrayed as evil. In the piece by Lovecraft, he first represents blackness as evil when Birch becomes trapped within the tomb,

It was just as he had recognized old Matt Fenner's coffin that the door slammed to in the wind, leaving him in a dusk even deeper than before. The narrow transom admitted only the feeblest of rays, and the overhead ventilation funnel virtually none at all; so that he was reduced to a profane fumbling as he made his halting way among the long boxes toward the latch. In this funeral twilight he rattled the rusty handles, pushed at the

iron panels, and wondered why the massive portal had grown so suddenly recalcitrant (Lovecraft 131).

The idea that the blackness of the tomb is entrapping Birch is evident. He can no longer easily find his way around the vault and instead must rely on his memory of the layout of its insides. The blackness is also consuming Birch in an evil way because he is becoming frantic at the thought that he will be trapped within this vault until someone finds him, which may be too long away before he perishes by lack of ventilation and air quality. This same evilness is portrayed through the blackness within the vault when the vengeful ghost takes action in slitting Birch's ankle tendons,

Clutching the edges of the aperture, he sought to pull himself up, when he noticed a queer retardation in the form of an apparent drag on both of his ankles. In another moment he knew fear for the first time that night; for struggle as he would, he could not shake clear of the unknown grasp which held his feet in relentless captivity. Horrible pains, as of savage wounds, shot through his calves; and in his mind was a vortex of fright mixed with an unquenchable materialism that suggested splinters, loose nails, or some other attribute of a breaking wooden box (Lovecraft 133).

It is apparent that evilness resides within the darkness of the vault because this is the first negative incident that Birch has expressed within his career as an undertaker. It was only when he became fully entrapped within the blackness of the tomb that the evil spirits that resided within it took their revenge on him. Just like Lovecraft's work, Poe uses the symbolism of the color black to represent the gothic element of evilness within blackness.

One of Poe's works that is most apparent with the representation of blackness as evil is his short story, "The Black Cat." It can be argued by the reader that the cat itself is not the evil antagonist within the story, however, when reviewed closely it can be determined that the black cat is evil through the eyes of the main character.

Stephen King: "Suffer the Little Children"

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"Before she could speak, Robert's face began to shimmer into the grotesqueness beneath and Miss Sidley shot him. Once. In the head. He fell back against the paper-lined shelves and slid down to the floor, a little dead boy with a round black hole above his right eye...She went back up to the room and began to lead them down, one by one. She killed twelve of them and would have killed them all if Mrs. Crossen hadn't come down for a package of composition paper" (King 91).

This short story has the ability to pull on the reader's heart strings more effectively than some other Gothic Literature pieces, however, the effect this story has on its readers mirrors that of some of Poe's more dramatic plots such as in "The Sleeper," "The Black Cat" or "Berenice." King's story begins with the description of an elderly elementary school teacher who is nearing her retirement. The teacher is described as strict and runs her class very routinely on a day-to-day basis. Not allowing any student of hers to be disrespectful or talk out of turn, she carefully relies on the reflection of her classroom that is displayed in the lenses of her glasses to catch any such behavior while her back is turned to the board. One afternoon, while she has her back turned she believes that she saw one of the young boys in the front row make a most horrifying face at her. Unable to comprehend the vision that crossed her mind, she decides not to act upon it and instead wait until the boy does something more easily noticed. As the boy leaves school for the day, he smiles at her slyly, knowing that she saw something in him that he must keep secret. As the week goes on, she experiences a similar situation while she is in the

girls' bathroom, where she over hears young schoolgirls talking about her. Waiting for them to come into sight, she realizes that they already know she is there and begin to laugh at her, but their shadows turn from little girls into the shadows of monsters, causing her to scream and faint. Resuming school the next day, she decides to keep the boy for a few minutes after school and doing so causes him to confirm that what she has been seeing is real and that there are more of these creatures every day, taking over the bodies of real children.

Frightened and feeling threatened, the school teacher decides to bring a gun to school, planning on killing all of the 'children' who are truly these monstrous creatures. She takes each student down the hall to a sound proof room and shoots them in the head one-by-one, only to get caught - after killing twelve of them – by another teacher. Grieving parents and faculty could not fathom what went wrong with the schoolteacher and why she would ever enact such a terrible offense towards the young children. The schoolteacher was sent to a mental hospital and was used in an encounter-therapy experiment to see what triggered this behavior in her or if she had shown any improvement. A lead psychiatrist was conducting the experiment and while at first he thought the schoolteacher had improved, he noticed that somewhere within the interaction of the schoolteacher and the children, something turned for the worst and she asked to be taken away from the children. Not certain of what officially triggered this negative reaction to the children, he began focusing on them, recognizing that some of them had sly smiles on their face as she was leaving the room, two little girls were snickering at her, and another little boy was coyly making the “shh-ing” finger to lips motion at the other children. It was discovered the next morning that the schoolteacher

had cut her own throat with a piece of broken mirror after her encounter with the children; leaving the psychiatrist even more suspicious and concerned about children from that day on.

The sheer grotesqueness of King's short story emulates Poe's writing drastically. Both Poe and King are masters at the task of contorting their readers' faces at the grimness of the situation and experiences within the story they have in their hands. It can be identified that gruesome plot lines are one of Poe's most recognized attributes to gothic literature, something in which King upholds within his work as well. But, when taking an analysis of Poe's work and comparing it to gothic literature of the contemporary periods, the more finite elements of the gothic are what need to be addressed more developmentally than what is already plain for the eye to see. That being said, the gothic elements represented in Poe's work that have been transferred into this short story by King consist of a combination of the narrator having a strong desire for total control, having a great amount of pride in her actions, and even a glimpse of insanity.

From the very beginning of King's short story, readers are presented with a protagonist whose personality is that of a strict grade school teacher. This teacher is described as, "Behind her, none of the children giggled or whispered or munched on secret sweets held in cupped hands. They all knew Miss Sidley's deadly instincts too well...they feared her. Her tongue was a school-yard legend" (King 81). It becomes evident early on that this teacher does not let her students get away with misbehaving or being disrespectful on any level or on any occasion. This is the first clue to the reader that King is portraying a character that already has a disciplined lifestyle; she likes to be in

control in her classroom and does not let any child get in the way of her having that sense of total control. Harmless as it may seem, with this immediate and negative-seeming description of the first introduced character, it is easy to assume that this characteristic is going to carry on throughout the rest of the story, leading to a potential horrifying event or disaster. This same set up is recognized within Poe's "The Black Cat" when the narrator describes how he was once known,

From my infancy I was noted for the docility and humanity of my disposition. My tenderness of heart was even so conspicuous as to make me the jest of my companions. I was especially fond of animals, and was indulged by my parents with a great variety of pets (Poe 531).

Although the descriptions of these two characters differ, it is the style in which they are told that is similar. The presentation of the character allows the reader to have the allusion that something bad is going to happen with these specific characters and the traits that they are describing. Readers will find that as the story moves on the traits that were specifically mentioned start to change in a way that allows the character to feel like they are gaining more control over their lives and the lives of others. For instance, in King's short story the teacher was already controlling within her classroom, but after discovering that the children were not children at all, she became more determined to prove that she had full control over the situation by attempting to murder them all and get rid of them for good. King establishes this notion when he writes how,

By moving slightly she could see their shadows, made fuzzy and ill-defined by the diffuse light filtering through the frosted windows, holding onto each other with girlish glee. Another thought crawled up out of her

mind. *They knew she was there.* Yes. Yes they did. The little bitches knew. She would shake them. Shake them until their teeth rattled and their giggles turned to wails, she would thump their heads against the tile walls and she would make them *admit* that they knew (King 85).

King is attempting to prove to the reader that with the teacher's naturally controlling behavior, she is actually beginning to lose composure and control over her life. The teacher is allowing these students to command negative attention from her to the point where she is resulting to violent thoughts and behavior to try and remain in control over her students. However, as King desires, the teacher believes she is regaining control over her students but the reader knows that it is the students who are truly gaining control over her. This is the same type of behavior that is relinquished in the narrator of Poe's, "The Black Cat." Previously, the narrator was known to be naturally submissive and caring, however, as he submitted himself to alcohol during a rough patch in his life, he became more violent with his thoughts and with his actions. Poe shows the transition in behavior patterns first when the narrator explains how,

One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth. The fury of a demon possessed me...I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket (Poe 532)!

It is evident that both of these characters experienced a drastic change in disposition all for the sake of gaining control over their lives. The teacher refused to be

the pun of any joke a child had to say, resulting in her day dreaming about bashing their skulls into the walls of the bathroom and shaking them so violently that their teeth chattered against one another. The narrator in “The Black Cat” had a similar transition into a more violent disposition when he actually acted upon his hurt feelings when his beloved pet cat scratched him, thus cutting out his eye.

It is no question that Poe’s short story had an influence over the way that King set up his character in “Suffer the Little Children.” Both of these characters sought to have total control over their lives and refused to be rejected or degraded by a being that they felt was a lesser than them; the young children and the cat. What makes this connection and influence even more notable is the way in which both of these characters are portrayed as being proud of the gruesome deeds they committed within these stories.

In King’s piece, once the teacher realizes that she must regain control over these students, she makes the violent decision to bring a gun to school and shoot them all to their death. Horrifyingly enough, she ends up succeeding in killing majority of the children in her classroom, “She went back up to the room and began to lead them down, one by one. She killed twelve of them and would have killed them all if Mrs. Crossen hadn’t come down for a package of composition paper” (King 91). Not only does this show how the teacher had planned on killing them all, mentioning that she would have succeeded had another teacher not come down to the room searching for more writing paper, but what she says next shows how proud she is of her deed, “It had to be done...It’s terrible but it had to. They are all monsters” and continues to tell the little girl she has in the room to show the other teacher the kind of monster she is, “damn you, change!...dirty bitch, dirty crawling, filthy unnatural bitch! Change! God damn you,

change!...She raised the gun” (King 91). This piece of evidence proves the pride in which the teacher had in her decision to shoot the children because not only does she admit that although the crime looks bad, the kids are monsters and had to be killed, she was also willing and ready to continue killing them right in front of another teacher having no remorse at all.

This same sense of pride is witnessed within the character of Poe’s, “The Black Cat” after committing his most horrendous crime; the brutal murder of his wife. The narrator explains how even though he had just killed his wife, he was able to sleep soundly and without remorse, something in which is natural disposition would have never been capable of handling. After neighbors started to notice the disappearance of his wife, police authorities were requested to search the narrator’s home. When the authorities arrive, the narrator gleefully shows them around the house and to the cellar,

“I may say an *excellently* well constructed house. These walls – are you going, gentlemen? – these walls are solidly put together” ; and here, through the mere frenzy of bravado, I rapped heavily, with a cane which I held in my hand, upon that very portion of the brick-work behind which stood the corpse of the wife of my bosom (Poe 537).

The mere fact that the narrator expresses that he had bravado about the situation that the police would never discover his wife’s hidden body is evidence enough that he was very proud of his violent accomplishment.

Studying the outlines of both of the character’s dispositions at the beginning of the stories versus the end, reviewing their transitions into a more violent character, and recognizing the style in which King and Poe presented this information, it can be

determined that Poe's work had a great influence over the work that King published. The character in King's short story, "Suffer the Little Children," discovered that she was losing control over her classroom, thus she began to act in a violent way in order to regain the control she once had. Once she felt she obtained this newfound control, regardless of how violently she acted to do so, she was proud of her actions and was unabashed in her attempt to convince a co-worker that what she did was the right thing. The narrator in Poe's, "The Black Cat," began losing control over his life when he turned to alcohol, which resulted in the ways he tried regaining control over his life being more violent. Again, like King's character, the narrator in Poe's short story was extremely proud of his violent act because he felt that what he did was a result of him establishing control in his life once again.

~ Chapter IV ~

Implications and Reflections

Through careful observation and research it is evident that many contemporary twentieth century writers have been inspired by the gothic literature of Edgar Allan Poe. Although there are many other gothic elements, themes, and symbolism within Poe's work, the six discussed within my study – connecting to the dead, blackness represented as evil, character needing total control, extreme pride, insanity, and obsession – are some of the more prominently used elements within contemporary gothic literature. Edgar Allan Poe's work was completely unique to the nineteenth century era, often leading to criticism of his work during his lifetime. It was not until years after Poe's death that his work began to raise in popularity due to the fact that America lives,

In a culture of hate crimes, automatic weapons, high school slaughter, and gang wars, violence seems ubiquitous and contagious, the handiest form of instant self-empowerment. Violence has now perhaps become so commonplace in American life that many cannot perceive its strangeness or singularity as a cultural trait (Kennedy 6).

Violence is no longer disapproved of like it was in the nineteenth century. Like Kennedy mentions, American culture has become numb to the types of violent acts that occur on a daily basis; almost feeding into each individual's own sense of self-empowerment. One of the reasons why Poe's work has become so influential to many is the fact that he stepped out of his culture's boundaries by expressing,

...His fascination with madness and perverseness resonates with our heightened Western, post-Freudian awareness of the unconscious and the

irrational. From the Holocaust to Jonestown and Kosovo, much of the century's history seems inspired by mass insanity." (Kennedy 6)

Kennedy contends that Poe's work highlights the Western ideals of understanding what our unconscious minds are capable of dreaming up – but instead of literally acting on those irrational thoughts, Poe created characters that acted upon those demonic thoughts. This allowed readers to not only cringe at some of the gruesome acts that Poe's characters enacted upon, but also feel like they committed the crime with them or understood why that character committed such a terrible crime. Poe was able to expertly develop characters of insanity that his readers could sympathize with; he made sure that the reader did not despise the evil character but instead would feel bad for him and feel compelled to provide a logical reason as to why what he did was understandable.

This type of writing is what drew in so many contemporary writers and created the many fans of Poe's gothic fiction. Mary Wilkins Freeman was one of the first contemporary authors discussed within this study – comparing her short story, "Shadows on the Wall," to Poe's work, "Berenice." The gothic elements that Freeman borrowed from Poe consisted of 'mystery,' 'insanity,' and 'obsession.' Poe derived much of his character's obsession off of his mental instability, which was hinted at to the reader in the earlier passages of the short story. It was not until the end of the story where Poe's main character truly shows how insane he is and how obsessed he had become with the teeth of his cousin. Poe takes his readers through the progression of this character's insanity and how his irrational thoughts became violent actions. Poe was able to incorporate mystery into this piece by leaving out important information through the 'black outs' of the main character. When the character would have a 'black out,' so would the reader. The only

information that was given to the reader is what the main character knew - nothing more and nothing less.

Freeman encompasses this same stylistic writing within her short gothic fiction story by keeping her readers on the inside and not allowing them to obtain any more information than the main characters know. Although this story was not told in first person like Poe's story was, the readers are observing the events happening in the story as if they were another character within the room. She develops the progression of the main character's insanity through the eyes of the sisters within the study. Freeman uses the observations of all three sisters to describe the growing insanity of their brother; thus allowing the reader to inherit the information that the sisters possess. Freeman carefully creates a mysterious backdrop for the cause of the shadow starting from the beginning of the short story and carries it out to the very end. Through careful examination and re-reading of the text, the reader is able to interpret and discover the origins of the shadow that is cast upon the wall in the very study that the death of the youngest brother took place. Unlike Poe's story, where obsession stemmed from insanity, the main character in Freeman's story becomes insane from his obsession with discovering what is casting the shadow upon the wall of the study. Seemingly enough, it becomes evident through careful research that contemporary writers are greatly inspired by the works of Poe, so much so that they are able to practically recreate the outlines of his stories – being cautious to use different and new characters and setting.

H.P. Lovecraft is another contemporary gothic writer that used much of Poe's work as inspiration for his own creations. Lovecraft is known most for his alien-like representations and high regards for the supernatural within his gothic literature,

however, many of his short stories stem from the same gothic elements that Poe used in his original work. It is noted that within Lovecraft's short story, "In the Vault," he incorporates the gothic elements, 'blackness as evil' and 'connecting with the dead' which are two elements that are used multiple times within Poe's gothic literature. Comparing this Lovecraft story to Poe's, "The Black Cat," "The Sleeper," and "The Raven," research implies that Lovecraft's piece may not be as original as it may seem. Poe represents blackness as evil within "The Black Cat" and "The Raven" as one of the main themes and also relies heavily on this connection with the dead in almost all of his works, specifically noted in, "The Sleeper" and "The Raven" for this study. Death is one of the key components to all of Poe's writing, making his work stand out in comparison to the writers of his century. Lovecraft exposed his reliance on Poe's literature when he wrote, "In the Vault" because he focused the entire story around some of the most prominent and key gothic elements that Poe developed within his original stories.

When outlining Lovecraft's short story, the reader can practically visualize a piece written by Poe. The story starts off with the introduction of a character who is not recognized as evil but who causes suspicion of his moral judgments due to his behavior, the setting is within a cemetery, the character finds himself in a panic induced predicament caused by his irrational behavior that leads to more bad decisions, he encounters a physical connection with the deceased that is portrayed as evil due to the blackness of his surroundings, and ends up being forever impaired both physically and mentally. All of these factors are important when referencing the specific gothic elements discussed within the study because they go hand-in-hand when it comes to the comparison of Lovecraft's short story and the work of Poe.

Stephen King was the final contemporary author to be discussed when studying the influence Poe's gothic literature has on contemporary writers. King is well known for his multitude of gothic and horror fiction novels but also has a large amount of short story gothic fiction as well – one of which was used within this study. King is an important author to study when it comes to gothic fiction because his work is currently still being produced and published. King is able to create story after story because many of the gothic elements he uses have already been developed, so he is simply incorporating different characters and different settings. Considering King's short story that was studied within this thesis, "Suffer the Little Children," it can be implied that the gothic elements of 'a character needing total control' and 'pride' stemmed from the original works of Poe.

King's main character – the schoolteacher – can be aligned with the same attitudes, behaviors, and ideals as the main character in Poe's, "The Black Cat." Both characters are described as caring individuals seeing as King's main character is an elementary school schoolteacher and Poe's character is described as a nurturing man who loves to take care of animals and is in a pleasant marriage with his wife, however, when things begin to get out of their control they start to develop more violent behavior to regain that control. Poe's main character begins to turn to alcohol and mutilating his beloved pet black cat later leading to him killing the animal. King's main character begins to turn violent towards her young students, ultimately killing majority of them by shooting them in the head with a gun. Much like King's main character, Poe's main character bluntly kills his wife but instead of a gun shot to the head he uses an axe.

Through all of the examples and comparisons of a few pieces of Poe's work and some work by more contemporary gothic writers, it can be implied that Poe has a strong

influence on the gothic literature that is developed today. Poe's work is classic in the sense that it is original to his century and is still of high regard to the literature and gothic studies of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. With further consideration it would be interesting to study in more depth the variety of multimodal versions in which Edgar Allan Poe's work has influenced and inspired. It is duly noted that,

Those conversant with contemporary music will recognize the similarities between Poe's phantasms and the gruesome themes explored by hard rock and 'heavy,' 'black,' or 'death metal' groups such as Autopsy, Carcass, My Dying Bride, Black Sabbath, and Judas Priest. Without hyperbole, we may speak of a postmodern cult of death that revels in fantasies of sadism, masochism, and annihilation; in place of a loving God, it reveres a hypostatized figure of universal destruction, similar to the one evoked in the closing sentence of 'The Masque of the Red Death' (Kennedy 12-13).

Poe's work has gone beyond the usual norm of popularity in one's own century and culture by expanding the horizons of many genres and areas of artistic value in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Studying the influence of Poe's work on the contemporary arts would lead to the development of a more profound knowledge in the construction and evolution of the contemporary gothic.

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Auerbach, Jonathan. *The Romance Of Failure : First-Person Fictions Of Poe,*

Hawthorne, And James. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. *eBook*

Collection (EBSCOhost). Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- This book focuses on the intense intimacy between author and first-person narrator in the fictions of Poe, Hawthorne, and James. Auerbach shows how fictions come to be made, and the relation between these plots and the people who make them. This source can be useful to me in the sense that it narrows down the texts to specific characters – the narrator – to help connect the reason for its use by the author.

Bani-Khair, Baker. "Gothic Masks In Stevenson's A Strange Case Of Dr. Jekyll And Mr.

Hyde, And Wilde's The Picture Of Dorian Gray." *Dissertation Abstracts*

International 74.9 (2014): *MLA International Bibliography.* Web. 15 Feb.

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- This study analyzed the Gothic masks that relate to the structure of identity in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1892), and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). It discussed the main character's 'idealized' identities versus their 'realized' ones through underlying issues of the struggle of good versus evil and the loss of identity and self-destruction. Although I have decided not to use these specific texts that are referenced, the ideas and implications made about identity and its relation to the gothic make this something that could serve as useful within my own study.

Bliss, Ann V. "Household Horror: Domestic Masculinity In Poe's The Black Cat."

Explicator 67.2 (2009): 96-99. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

- This criticism critiques the manliness of the main character in "The Black Cat". It continues to prove that the violence within this story did not stem from normal or conventional reasons but instead stemmed from the realization and partly denial of the main character and his more feminine and unmanly qualities, thus resulting in over-masculine violent behavior and anger. I think this critique offers a great opportunity to understand the complex personalities that Poe gives his characters and how that inspired the writers after him to do the same with their characters – or attempt to at least.

Bohm, Arnd. "A German Source for Edgar Allan Poe's The Raven." *Comparative*

Literature Studies 23, 4 (Winter 1986) pp 310-323 [free at jstor, click "Preview" or "Read Online"].

- This was an interesting criticism to read about Poe's writing. It went so far as to establish the idea that Poe derived inspiration from German writers, although it is unknown whether he could speak and write in German. It was mentioned that he did read many German texts though, which was a fun fact to learn. This could be used within Poe's biography, or even when discussing some criticism over "The Raven" as more background information.

Booth, Wayne C. "GHOSTS, DEMONS, AND HENRY JAMES (Book)." *American*

Literature 62.1 (1990): 128. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.

- Beidler analyzes sources for Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*, rebutting the two standard interpretations of the novel, the "crazy-governess" and the "evil-ghost" readings.. He reports on the rise of spiritualism and psychical research in England and America during the latter half of the 19th century. In the last two chapters Beidler rejects both of the standard readings of *The Turn of the Screw*: he argues that the governess is sane though not necessarily astute and that the children are possessed by the demons of Miss Jessel and Peter Quint (ultimately Flora is lost and damned; Miles is saved though he dies). Although I am no longer writing about this specific story, this study's reference to research in England and America during the 19th century could absolutely serve as a good source of information for my own study.

Botting, Fred. *Limits Of Horror : Technology, Bodies, Gothic*. Manchester: Manchester

University Press, 2008. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- *Limits of Horror*, critically examines the changes and the questions those changes pose for understanding contemporary culture and subjectivity portrayed through gothic literature. This study re-examines concepts such as the uncanny, the sublime, terror, shock and abjection in terms of their bodily and technological implications within gothic literature. I think that this could serve as a good source to include within my analyses of how gothic literature has changed over the course of a few centuries yet still maintains common themes and concepts regardless of the era the work was written and published in.

Brown, Arthur A. "Literature and the Impossibility of Death: Poe's 'Berenice.'"

Nineteenth Century Literature 50, 4 (March 1996) pp 448-63 [free at jstor, click "Preview" or "Read Online"].

- This article discusses the elements of mortality and death that Poe claims is the most horrifying. He uses examples from Poe's short story "Berenice" to explain that it is the life in death that Poe finds is most horrifying. I will absolutely reference this source within my paper because there are not many criticisms on this short story of Poe's, yet it is one of my favorites that I will be writing about.

Burleson, Donald R. *Lovecraft : Disturbing The Universe*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1990. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- In this volume, Burleson (Rivier College) applies deconstructionism to the dark fantasy of H.P. Lovecraft. Beginning with the concept that language is inherently indeterminate, he argues that efforts to extract true meanings from texts impose unsustainable boundaries. He then applies this methodology to 13 of Lovecraft's works in loosely chronological order from "The Statement of Randolph Carter" (1919) to "The Haunter of the Dark" (1935). Working from the titles or a few selected phrases in each work, he teases out contradictory elements to show how every one eludes sure interpretation. This text is definitely one I plan on using within my studies because it has direct reference to one of the works I will be writing about as well as the fact that it breaks down specific passages within it. This will primarily – if only – be used within my section discussing Poe's influence on Lovecraft's work.

Cavallaro, Dani. *The Gothic Vision: Three Centuries Of Horror, Terror And Fear*.

London: Continuum, 2002. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- The Gothic Vision examines a broad range of tales of horror spanning the late-eighteenth century to the present, and of related theoretical approaches to the realm of dark writing. It argues that such narratives are objects for historical analysis, due to their implication in specific ideologies, while also focusing on the recurrence over time of themes of physical and psychological disintegration. This source will work great within my Thesis because it not only discusses a variety of gothic texts within the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but also because it digs deeper into the historical contexts within these centuries and connecting it back to the literature; something I would like to do with the development of gothic literature portion of my study.

Dill, Elizabeth. "James's Gothic In THE TURN OF THE SCREW." *Explicator* 69.2

(2011): 64-67. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.

- A literary criticism of the novel "The **Turn** of the **Screw**" by **Henry James** is presented. Particular focus is given to ways in which the novel reflects themes common to gothic fiction such as vision and doubt. Ways in which it addresses the act of reading in both a literal and figurative sense is explored along with the author's use of metaphors. I am no longer choosing this specific text for my study, but it still might be useful in the sense that it discusses common themes of gothic fiction.

Edwards, Justin D. *Gothic Passages : Racial Ambiguity And The American Gothic*. Iowa City: University Of Iowa Press, 2003. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- This study analyzes the development of American gothic literature alongside nineteenth-century discourses of passing and racial ambiguity. Works of gothic literature by Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, Frances Harper, and Charles Chesnutt, are referenced. Edwards examines how nineteenth-century writers gothicized biracial and passing figures in order to frame them within the rubric of a “demonization of difference.” I think this source is useful to my studies because it digs into the historical issues of the periods in which Poe was writing, which is something that can be used within my Introduction or even within his biography portion of my Thesis.

Evans, Timothy H. "A Last Defense Against The Dark: Folklore, Horror, And The Uses Of Tradition In The Works Of H. P. Lovecraft." *Journal Of Folklore Research* 42.1 (2005): 99-135. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

- This text is basically an entire critique of Lovecraft’s life as a writer, his travels, his high interest in architecture, as well as other miscellaneous facts and information about his life. Midway it discusses his work and the influences that lead him to creating those scientific horror stories, Poe being one of his inspirations. I think that this information could definitely be used when discussing Poe’s influence on Lovecraft’s work.

Freedman, William. "Poe's 'Raven': The Word That Is an Answer 'Nevermore.'" In *Poe Studies/Dark Romanticism: History Theory, Interpretation* 31, 1 (1998) [sub ser, enotes].

- This criticism discusses the hidden meaning behind the word "Nevermore" in The Raven. It suggests the symbolism that this word has over the narrator as well as the reader; a meaning of loss. I believe that I might be able to use some of the things that Freedman states about Poe's poem within my study, although it might be more paraphrasing rather than quote pulling.

Freeman, Mary E. Wilkins. "The Shadows on the Wall." *Classic Horror Stories*. New York, NY: Barnes & Noble, 2015. 232-245. Print.

- This short story will be used within my study for my Thesis; it resides within a collection of Horror and Gothic Literature works.

Gamer, Michael. *Romanticism And The Gothic : Genre, Reception, And Canon Formation*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 2000. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- Michael Gamer offers a sharply focused analysis of how and why Romantic writers drew on Gothic conventions whilst, at the same time, denying their influence in order to claim critical respectability. He shows how the reception of Gothic literature played a fundamental role in the development of Romanticism as an ideology. This was an interesting read and will definitely contribute to my paper in the development of gothic literature over the centuries. Poe wrote in very romantic ways, which are expressed in this study, and I will definitely be able to use it within the comparisons of his work and the contemporary writer's work.

Garrison, Joseph M.. "The Function of Terror in the Work of Edgar Allan Poe".

American Quarterly 18.2 (1966): 136–150.

- Garrison makes a point to establish not only the popularity of Poe's work but also his importance and his genius as a writer of his century. He gives claim that Poe was the creator of crime fiction and inspired many writers to emulate his patterns and themes in his work. This is definitely a good critique to use because it references the themes that have continued over into more contemporary literature and the importance and impact that Poe had on making that happen. I will be able to find any place to input this information within my thesis.

Grasso, Linda. "'Thwarted Life, Mighty Hunger, Unfinished Work': The Legacy Of Nineteenth-Century Women Writing.." *Atq* 8.2 (1994): 97. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

- This work critiques Mary Wilkins Freeman and a few other female writers on their use of male characters, the use of needing to help others, along with some other underlying themes and motifs. I think that this will be useful to include within my study on "Shadows on the Wall" and how Poe inspired her writing. Some of the underlying messages within the work definitely allude to some "Poe-tic" references.

Gutleben, Christian, and Marie-Luise Kohlke. *Neo-Victorian Gothic : Horror, Violence And Degeneration In The Re-Imagined Nineteenth Century*. Amsterdam: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- This study expresses how neo-Victorian works not only reflect our contemporary Gothic culture but also reactivate it and even enrich it. The Gothic forms of neo-Victorianism demonstrate their fundamentally ethical goal of interrogating the uncertain limits between self and other, orthodoxy and heterodoxy, past and present. This text definitely contains information that I can use all throughout my Thesis, especially the portion revolving around Poe's work, because of the heavy referencing of nineteenth century history and literature.

Hayes, Kevin J. *Poe And The Printed Word*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- In *Poe and the Printed Word*, Kevin Hayes explores the relationship between various facets of print culture and Poe's writings. His study provides a fuller picture of Poe's life and works by examining how the publishing opportunities of his time influenced his development as a writer. Hayes demonstrates how Poe employed different methods of publication as a showcase for his verse, criticism and fiction. This text will definitely be referenced within my Thesis paper, more than likely in the biography portion, due to it being solely about Poe and his life growing up and as a writer.

Hughes, William, and Andrew Smith. *The Victorian Gothic : An Edinburgh Companion*.

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*.

Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- Covering a range of diverse contexts, the chapters focus on science, medicine, Queer theory, imperialism, nationalism, and gender within gothic literature of the nineteenth century. Although this study covers a lot of various material within gothic literature, it may be useful to include within the introduction portion of my Thesis or perhaps even weave into the development of the twentieth century writers while sticking with common nineteenth century literature themes.

Hurley, Kelly. *The Gothic Body : Sexuality, Materialism, And Degeneration At The Fin*

De Siècle. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. *eBook Collection*

(EBSCOhost). Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- Kelly Hurley explores a key scenario that haunts the genre: the loss of a unified and stable human identity, and the emergence of a chaotic and transformative "abhuman" identity in its place. She shows that such representations of gothic bodies are strongly indebted to those found in nineteenth-century biology and social medicine, evolutionism, criminal anthropology, and degeneration theory. Gothic is revealed as a highly productive and speculative genre, standing in opportunistic relation to nineteenth-century scientific and social theories. I believe that this source may also be useful to include within my discussion of nineteenth century gothic literature and its relation to the events that were happening during that time period. I will probably use it within my Introduction or during my discourse over Poe and his work.

Jackson, Joseph. "Poe's Signature to 'The Raven.'" Why Poe used the pseudonym

"Quarles" with this, and no other, poem. *The Sewanee Review* 26, 3 (1918) pp 272-5 [free at jstor].

- This criticism discusses the relationship between Poe and Dickens, giving the readers the indication that Poe's "The Raven" was actually inspired by a work of Dickens'. This was an interesting read because I was unfamiliar with the particular work of Dickens that was being referenced, so it was neat to read about the pet raven in that work and how it was more than likely the inspiration for Poe's ever popular poem. I think this information could be used within Poe's biography or even the introduction, since it would a clever way to discuss who inspired Poe to write and because of that he was able to inspire so many other writers.

Jirousek, Lori. "Haunting Hysteria: Wharton, Freeman, And The Ghosts Of

Masculinity." *American Literary Realism* 32.1 (1999): 51-68. *America: History and Life with Full Text*. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.

- The image of the hysterical male in Mary Wilkins Freeman's and Edith Wharton's supernatural stories - specifically, Freeman's "The Shadows on the Wall" (1903), "The Hall Bedroom" (1903), and "The Jade Bracelet" (1918), and Wharton's "Afterward" (1910), "The Eyes" (1910), and "The Triumph of Night" (1914) - criticizes and challenges early-20th-century models of masculinity. Although the contents within this study do not specifically relate to "gothic" literature in the ways I am referencing - though it does hint at the concept - I still believe this source could be used in my discussion of Freeman and how Poe inspired her.

Jones, Gavin. "Poor Poe: On The Literature Of Revulsion." *American Literary History* 23.1 (2011): 1-18. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

- This article critiques Poe's financial situations in regard to his personality, his writing, and his publications. It discusses friends of Poe's whom he would ask for money so he could publish his work and potentially earn money to pay them back and then some. Poe's life was interesting and I think that some of the information mentioned within this article could be useful to include within his biography portion of my thesis.

Jones, Joseph. "The Raven' and 'The Raven': Another Source of Poe's Poem." *American Literature* 30, 2 (May 1958) pp 185-93.

- This is another criticism that discusses the connection between Poe's "The Raven" and Dickens pet raven in one of his works. Although, unlike the other criticism that discusses this same similarity, this one stands behind Poe a little more by explaining the extreme differences between Poe's raven and the raven in Dickens work. I enjoyed reading this criticism, but am not sure if it will be directly used within my Thesis.

Joshi, S. T. *A Dreamer And A Visionary : H.P. Lovecraft In His Time*. Liverpool: Oxford University Press USA, 2001. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- This book traces Lovecraft's work and life, spent largely in Providence, Rhode Island, and shows how Lovecraft was engaged in the political, economic, social and intellectual currents of his time, and how his thought influenced his writings. This is a great source to use in my section pertaining to Lovecraft and how Poe influenced his work. It digs into his personal life and allowed me to see what he was thinking about and doing when he wrote "In the Vault."

Kennedy, J. Gerald. *A Historical Guide To Edgar Allan Poe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- This Historical Guide contains an introduction that considers the tensions between Poe's 'other worldly' settings and his historically marked representations of violence, as well as a capsule biography situating Poe in his historical context. This is the perfect source for my Thesis because I can use a good portion of this information within my Abstract, Introduction, and even the biography portion of Poe.

Kennedy, J. Gerald, and Liliane Weissberg. *Romancing The Shadow : Poe And Race*.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- In this tightly organized volume, a handful of leading Americanists revisit the Poe issue, re-examining what it means to speak of an author and his work as racist, and where the critic's responsibility lies. Although this source does not particularly discuss issues that are relevant to my study, I do believe that some claims and comments made within it could be briefly referenced.

Killeen, Jarlath. *History Of The Gothic : Gothic Literature, 1825-1914*. Cardiff:

University of Wales Press, 2009. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- This volume provides a detailed yet accessible study of Gothic literature in the nineteenth century. It examines how themes and trends associated with the early Gothic novels were diffused widely in many different genres in the Victorian period, including the ghost story, the detective story and the adventure story. The relationship between the child and horror is examined, and the book demonstrates that far from a simple rejection or acceptance of secularization, the Gothic attempts to articulate an entirely different way of being modern. This source could be used within my study to discuss the different themes of gothic literature and how they have changed over time.

Kohno, Tomoko. *Fetishism and Recollections: A Psychoanalytic Reading of Poe's*

"Berenice". Ochanomizu University, 2005. *Web Library*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- This criticism is about the fantasizing and fetishizing that the main character in "Berenice" has over his cousin's teeth. It goes on to explain how these teeth could be symbolizing the mental instability of the main character and how his brain is working or how scattered and confused his thoughts are. This could be a useful source because it is one of few that I have been able to locate in reference to this specific short story.

Lovecraft, H. P. *Great Tales of Horror*. New York: Fall River, 2012. Print.

- This is a collection of works written by H.P. Lovecraft; it contains the main Lovecraft piece that I will be studying within my Thesis.

McAleer, Patrick. "I Have The Whole World In My Hands ... Now What?: Power, Control, Responsibility And The Baby Boomers In Stephen King's Fiction." *Journal Of Popular Culture* 44.6 (2011): 1209-1227. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

- This text critiques King's characters within several of his novels and how they are put in awe inspiring predicaments that sometimes they are unable to overcome. It critiques the use of King's ideals on not allowing his characters to overcome their flaws but instead how their flaws effect their decision making, often for the worse. I think that this is definitely a good read to include information on within my thesis. It was difficult finding criticism on Stephen King because he is a very contemporary writer and there is not much critique on him.

Nyman, Jopi. *Hard-Boiled Fiction And Dark Romanticism*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang AG, 1998. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- This source discusses how romance is always prevalent within dark literature and gothic literature. It embodies the idea that gothic literature and dark romanticism set a contrast to the ideal hero of romanticism, true individualism, and manhood. I think this source could be useful when discussing a couple of the texts I chose, primarily because they relate to murder and the characters are naturally thought of to be innocent – until otherwise noted.

Poe, Edgar Allan. *Edgar Allan Poe: Complete Tales and Poems*. New York: Fall River, 2012. Print.

- This source is a complete collection of works written by Edgar Allan Poe. It contains the main poems and short story fictional pieces that I will be referencing throughout my Thesis.

Pruette, Lorine. "A Psycho-analytical Study of Edgar Allan Poe". *The American Journal of Psychology* 31.4 (1920): 370-402.

- This is a study of Edgar Allan Poe's life where it researches and discusses the events in his life that may have caused for his serious case of being entranced with death, the grotesque, and dark romanticism. I think this is a good read and there is some information that would be beneficial to include within my thesis. Most, if not all, of the information pulled from this source will probably go into my introduction, Poe's biography, or when analyzing Poe's work.

Rachman, Stephen. "Subterranean Homesick Poe: Lou Reed's 'The Raven.'" *The Influence of Poe on '60s rock*. *The Edgar Allan Poe Review* 4, 1 (Spring 2003) pp 28-41.

- This was absolutely a very informative and intriguing criticism to read. This text, unlike the others, discusses Poe's influence on the music industry and his entrance into the pop culture world. I think there are some fascinating pieces of information that could be applied within my thesis, maybe during the introduction, or even within my implications and conclusions portion.

Rigal Aragón, Margarita, and Beatriz González Moreno. *A Descent Into Edgar Allan Poe And His Works : The Bicentennial*. New York: Peter Lang AG, 2010. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- This volume brings together a wide range of scholars with varied critical approaches and succeeds in shedding new light on E. A. Poe on the occasion of his Bicentenary. The book is organized into three principal sections; the first part focuses on the reception of Poe in Great Britain, France, and Spain; the second revisits some of Poe's main legacies, such as his stories of detection, the Gothic, and Science Fiction; and the third deals with the aesthetic quality of his narratives. This information will be useful throughout my entire Thesis when regarding Poe and his influence on the twentieth century writers.

Robbins, Ruth, and Julian Wolfreys. *Victorian Gothic: Literary And Cultural Manifestations In The Nineteenth Century*. New York, NY: Palgrave, 2000. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.

- This source contains a variety of scholarly essays in regard to the Victorian Gothic genre in the nineteenth century. Although I may not use pieces from all of the essays included, there are a few that might serve as useful when discussing gothic literature within the nineteenth century and using that information to compare and contrast it with twentieth century gothic literature.

Ross, Donald H. "The Grotesque: A Speculation." *Poe Studies* 4 (June 1971).

- This critique discusses the growth of the "grotesque" in literature, mainly using Poe as an example. It begins when the grotesque was once thought of as merely an artistic form but then it progressed into becoming an intellectual interest, resulting in many academics writing and researching this concept. I think this would be useful within my Thesis. I could essentially weave this information into any portion of my studies.

Scheick, William J. "The Shadow Narrative In Mary Wilkins Freeman's 'Silence'." *Atq* 13.3 (1999): 233. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

- This critique criticizes and studies a work of Freeman called, "Silence." Although I am not writing about this story in particular, it could still be used and referenced when discussing "Shadows on the Wall" because there are common elements within each.

Shen, Dan. "Edgar Allan Poe's Aesthetic Theory, the Insanity Debate, and the Ethically Oriented Dynamics of "the Tell-tale Heart"". *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 63.3 (2008): 321–345. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.

- This critique discusses the difference of subject matter that Poe places on Prose Fiction versus Poetry. I think this could be useful because it might determine some factors of inspiration for the gothic writers after him, depending on their works. It states that Poe uses truth when writing in Prose Fiction, which gives it a completely different air of writing style than he does with his poetry. I could also see myself using some of this information within my introduction or even within the biography portion of Poe.

Smith, Andrew. *Gothic Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

eBook Collection (EBSCOhost). Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- The text examines how the Gothic has developed in different national contexts and in different forms, including novels, novellas, poems, and films. I believe I can use a lot of what Smith addresses in his study within my own study. Although the texts he uses as examples within his study are not the same as what I am using within mine, the concepts he discusses are very similar and can be used with what I am trying to say about the development of gothic literature. I personally enjoy reading work by Andrew Smith, he seems to share many of the same ideas that I do about gothic literature and even as specifically as Poe, so I will definitely be looking for his work in future endeavors as well.

Thompson, G.R. "Unity, Death, and Nothingness. Poe's 'Romantic Skepticism.'" *PMLA* 85, 2 (March 1970) pp 297-300.

- This critique discusses the tensions that Poe creates within his writing. Tension meaning the constant battle between good and evil, hope and despair, and madness and sanity. I think this information will be included within my thesis during the portion discussing Poe and his works. I may be able to find a way to weave this in within the other contemporary writers, but I will not know for sure until I start writing.

Tracy, Ann Blaisdell. *The Gothic Novel 1790-1830 : Plot Summaries And Index To Motifs*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1981. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 4 Feb. 2016.

- A research guide for specialists in the Gothic novel, the Romantic movement, the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novel, and popular culture, this work contains summaries of more than two hundred novels, reputed to be Gothic, published in English between 1790 and 1830. Also included are indexes of titles and characters and an extensive index of characteristic objects, motifs, and themes that recur in the novels -- such as corpses, bloody and otherwise, dungeons, secret passageways, filicide, fratricide, infanticide, matricide, patricide, and suicide. I believe what is said in this text can be useful to my research. I probably will not quote directly out of it, but I feel like some of the ideas addressed within it might be used at some point within my research. I thought this was a decent source to use because of the vast majority of texts it references and the easier read accompanied by the brief summaries and indexes.

Turkes, Doris J. "Must Age Equal Failure?: Sociology Looks At Mary Wilkins Freeman's Old Women." *Atq* 13.3 (1999): 197. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

- This article discusses the earlier critiques of Freeman's writing and how critics dismissed her work as uninteresting and that her old female protagonists were even more uninteresting. However, the critique continues by stating that these earlier critics were wrong in their accusations and that there was more feminist and powerful energy being portrayed through these old female protagonists than they realized. I think that some information used within this study could be placed within my critique of her work as well. It may not directly relate to what my main point is, but it could definitely add more in-depth background information to her style of work.

Vines, Lois. *Poe Abroad : Influence, Reputation, Affinities*. Iowa City: University Of Iowa Press, 1999. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- Over twenty scholars demonstrate how and why Poe has significantly influenced many of the major literary figures of the last 150 years. Part One includes studies of Poe's popularity among general readers, his influence on literary movements, and his reputation as a poet, fiction writer, and literary critic. Part Two presents analyses of the role Poe played in the literary development of specific writers representing many different cultures. Poe died knowing only that some of his stories had been translated into French. *Poe Abroad* brings together a timely one-volume assessment of Poe's influence throughout the world. This text is a perfect source for me to use within my thesis because of the direct correlation of the topic with my own; Poe's influence on more contemporary writers. I plan to use some of the concepts, ideas, and maybe even pull a few quotes from this source to include in my study.

Weinstock, Jeffrey Andrew. *Scare Tactics : Supernatural Fiction By American Women*.

New York: Fordham University Press, 2008. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*.

Web. 10 Feb. 2016.

- Scare Tactics identifies an important but overlooked tradition of supernatural writing by American women. Jeffrey Weinstock analyzes this tradition as an essentially feminist attempt to imagine alternatives to a world of limited possibilities. This study includes stories by familiar figures such as Edith Wharton, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, as well as by authors almost wholly unknown to twenty-first-century readers, such as Josephine Dodge Bacon, Alice Brown, Emma Frances Dawson, and Harriet Prescott Spofford. Focusing on this tradition of female writing offers a corrective to the prevailing belief within American literary scholarship that the uncanny tale, exemplified by the literary productions of Irving, Poe, and Hawthorne, was displaced after the Civil War by literary realism. Paying attention to these overlooked authors helps us better understand not only the literary marketplace of their time, but also more familiar American Gothicists from Edgar Allan Poe to Shirley Jackson to Stephen King. This was definitely interesting to read because of the emphasis on the female writers and more importantly the female writers of gothic literature. Although Freeman is not directly mentioned, the ideas and concepts of female gothic literature writers and how Poe influenced them could absolutely be used in my thesis. The text also references Stephen King, which is another good passage to incorporate within my thesis. This is a useful source and could definitely be used by someone who is studying feminist theory or queer theory instead of gothic literature. There are many avenues in which this source could be properly used.

Womack, Kenneth. "'Withered, Wrinkled, And Loathsome Of Visage': Reading The Ethics Of The Soul And The Late-Victorian Gothic In The Picture Of Dorian Gray." *Victorian Gothic: Literary and Cultural Manifestations in the Nineteenth Century*. 168-181. New York, NY: Palgrave, 2000. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.

- This source is specifically referencing *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and the type of gothic qualities that inhabit it. Many of the ideas and concepts I could use within my thesis, but have more or less been mentioned in the other Victorian Gothic sources I have obtained. Although this is a well-written source, I do not see myself using it within my study now that I have eliminated *The Picture of Dorian Gray* from my study.

Yewdale, Merton S.. "Edgar Allan Poe, Pathologically". *The North American Review* 212.780 (1920): 686–696. Web

- This criticism discusses Poe's life as a writer and the mystery he was able to obtain during his lifespan, which assisted his popularity as a writer. I think that there is some interesting comments and assertions made about Poe as a writer and as a person that could be used within the biography portion of my thesis.

Zimmerman, Brett. "A Catalogue of Selected Rhetorical Devices Used in the Works of Edgar Allan Poe." *Style*, Winter 1999.

- This is a critique referencing around two hundred different rhetorical techniques that Poe used in his writing. It includes definitions and examples of each rhetorical device listed in this catalogue. I believe that this could be useful when discussing the influence Poe's writing has on contemporary writers, so I would most likely use terms and quotes from this source within those portions of my thesis.