


2022

Succubus Matters

Jeremy Chow
Bucknell University, j.chow@bucknell.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/abo>

 Part of the [Dramatic Literature, Criticism and Theory Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), and the [Literature in English, British Isles Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Chow, Jeremy (2022) "Succubus Matters," *ABO: Interactive Journal for Women in the Arts, 1640-1830*.
Vol.12: Iss.1, Article 1.

<http://doi.org/10.5038/2157-7129.12.1.1273>

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/abo/vol12/iss1/1>

This Scholarship is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in *ABO: Interactive Journal for Women in the Arts, 1640-1830* by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

Succubus Matters

Abstract

This essay argues that the Gothic succubus pioneers new frameworks for examining female sexuality, sexual violation, and consent in the eighteenth century. M. G. Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) reveals the Bleeding Nun as a demonic female ghost that is both sadistic and hypersexualized, especially in her tryst with Don Raymond. The spectrality of the succubus reimagines the displacement of the female body as something both material and ethereal, and in so doing, renders consequent displacements of consent, agency, and sexuality, which may characterize queer Gothic tropes. I interweave discussions of consent alongside representations and theories of ghosts throughout the eighteenth century to evaluate how the succubus muddies conceptions of sexual violation and gender. To see or narrate the succubus is to grapple with maligned forms of female empowerment and eroticism, which this essay seeks to recuperate.

Keywords

Matthew Gregory Lewis, *The Monk*, Bleeding Nun, Consent, Succubus, Gothic

Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

Cover Page Footnote

Thanks is owed to Mona Narain, Jolene Zigarovich, Kristen McCants Forbes, and the cohort of readers whose input and guidance have strengthened this work. I dedicate this article to my students who continue to open my eyes to *The Monk*'s queer pluripotentiality.

Ghostly introductions

Succubi and incubi—demonic and supernatural spirits hellbent on nocturnal disruption—figure largely throughout the eighteenth century. Indeed, eighteenth-century artists alongside their medical and literary counterparts weave together a collective visual and textual bricolage by which to grapple with the repeated attention to these demons (of unknown genders) sitting or lying on unsuspecting, sleeping subjects (usually women). Consider, for instance, two oil paintings by Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare* (1781) and *The Incubus Leaving Two Sleeping Women* (1793)—widely circulated images that appear contemporaneously with the explosion of Gothic fictions at the end of the century, on which this essay will primarily focus.¹



Figure 1: Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare* (1781). Public Domain. Courtesy of Detroit Institute of Arts.



Figure 2: Henry Fuseli, *The Incubus Leaving Two Sleeping Women* (1793). Public Domain.

In Figure 1, a bulbous-nosed supernatural entity crouches over a woman's outstretched body as she reclines arrested in somnolence. The ochre-colored spirit looks pointedly at the viewer; the gaze is both an invitation and a threat. This eldritch visitor is both an invitation and a threat. A black horse with milky eyes stares at the two figures. In Figure 2, an equine spirit leaps out an open window while two women recline in recollection, disturbed by their nocturnal interlocutor. Both images reveal a triangulation of relations: white women, a dark demon, and a frightening horse (a visual pun that is meant to emphasize the false etymology of "mare" in nightmare) in which human, more-than-human, and animal positions frame constructions of the nightmare.² The reclined woman in bleached-white gown in *The Nightmare* and the bare breasts in *The Incubus Leaving Two Sleeping Women* signal our attention to the erotic potentiality of demonic spirits who frequent, arouse, and malign our dreams. These are, by Fuseli's rendering, incubi. The incubus, writes John Waller, surgeon in the Royal Navy, "is expressive of the weight and oppression felt, and conveys the idea of some living being having taken its position on the breast, inspiring terror, impeding respiration, and paralysing all the voluntary muscles" (194).

While Fuseli offers an artistic depiction, Waller's treatise *The Incubus or Night-Mare, Disturbed Sleep, Terrific Dreams, and Nocturnal Visions* (1816) elucidates the medical mystery of incubi, which he argues are attended by epilepsy, flatulence, constipation, and priapism. Children, hypochondriacs, pregnant women, sailors, asthmatics, as well as those who tend towards "corpulency [and] lethargy," are especially vulnerable (194). As are, and this will dismay readers here, "Sedentary employments, confinement within doors, literary studies, &c," which "predispose to the attacks of Incubus" (194). Waller recommends drastic lifestyle changes: diet (no acid, no fat, no bad wine), a bedmate who will rouse the paroxysms (rife for further queer exploration), and a new way of sleeping that prohibits victims from resting on their backs. *The Incubus or Night-Mare* does not differentiate gender in Waller's symptomology of sleep and health disturbed. That is, all genders can be predisposed to nocturnal demons.

Despite Waller's implicit egalitarianism of who is affected by incubi, larger cultural constructions of incubi and succubi pend upon and reify heteronormative sex systems and bonds, which Lauren Berlant, Michael Warner, and Jonathan Ned Katz have pinpointed as emerging from the eighteenth century.³ Definitions of these demonic visitors, however, precede the eighteenth century. The *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the first usage of *incubus* one hundred years prior to the first usage of *succubus*, which surfaces at the end of the fourteenth century. Such etymological inquiries reveal how a preoccupation with nightly, demonic visitors prey upon women: a focus that reminds readers and historians of alleged purity

standards, the precarity of women's sexual autonomy, and bastardized visions of female pleasure. That succubus appears, at least within the *OED*, one hundred years later suggests a potential century in which only women are threatened by pernicious (male) ghosts that seek nonconsensual encounters.

Incubus evolves from the Latin verb *incubāre* meaning “to lie upon.” Succubus derives from a more female-gendered referent associated with whoredom; succubus retains the root *cub* observed in incubus and adds the prefix *suc* which means beneath or below. The heteronormative sex systems that these etymologies reveal reinforce the notion that, within frameworks of early modern and eighteenth-century hetero-reproductive sex, women are meant to receive men on their backs (for reproductive futurist purposes exclusively), lest their form of congress become sodomitical—an accusation throughout the eighteenth century that included sex acts in which a woman did *not* receive a man upon her back.⁴ Incubi lie upon the slumbering, aroused body; succubi lie beneath. By way of the succubus we realize how language culturally constructs sex (the act) and how sex (the act) culturally constructs gender.

I open with artistic representations and pseudo-medical science not to conflate or flatten epistemological difference, but rather to pinpoint what I see as a cultural fascination with incubus and succubus figurations, especially in the latter half of the eighteenth century, which invariably runs alongside the ascendancy of the Gothic. This essay envisions a trajectory of what I will call “succubus matters”; that is, a literary Gothic trope in which female demons, spirits, and ghosts participate in a transgressive hauntology that reframes notions of consent and heteronormative sexual violence. My conception of succubus matters dialogues with the queer Gothic, especially as it informs queer gender, sexuality, and performance. Queer Gothic explorations within the eighteenth century—for example by George Haggerty, Max Fincher, William Brewer, Dale Townshend, Jolene Zigarovich, Jason Farr, and me elsewhere—elevate what Ellis Hanson identifies as “ambivalence and contradiction,” in that “the Gothic often reproduces the conventional paranoid structure of homophobia and other moral panics over sex, and yet it can also be a raucous site of sexual transgression and excess that undermines its own narrative efforts at erotic containment” (176). The succubus matters because she inhabits the fecund, liminal plot in which she embodies the constant excessive nature of the queer Gothic: she exceeds the boundaries of life and death; she exceeds gendered expectations of propriety, womanhood, and sisterhood; and she transgresses against sexual-social acceptability and norms. She cannot be contained. *She will not be contained.*

I centrally examine the subplot and eldritch appearance of the Bleeding Nun, who I read as a succubus, in Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk* (1796). If female and gender-bending ghosts and succubi are mainstays in Gothic and Gothic-analogue artistic and literary representations throughout the eighteenth century—for example, Defoe's "A True Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal" (1706), Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), Charles Churchill's "The Ghost" (1764), Anne Fuller's *Alan Fitz-Osborne* (1786), Eliza Parsons's *The Mysterious Warning* (1796), and Lewis's subsequent drama, *The Castle Spectre* (1797)—then how might we spotlight succubus matters as recuperations of these displaced revenants to better understanding female sexuality and maligned yet empowered female representation in the eighteenth century? In other words, I offer a reparative reading of the succubus that affords possibility rather than foreclosure. In so doing, I refuse to oblige the adamant rhetoric that only women positionalities must suffer under threats and realities of sexual violence.⁵

I will concede that neither the novel nor the characters identify the Bleeding Nun as a succubus. The novel likewise only records men (Ambrosio and Don Raymond) committing rape, despite the litany of sexual violences located therein.⁶ These careful omissions are telling, and I zero in on the conjoined and yet silent tethering of the Bleeding Nun and rape. Put simply, the Gothic succubus tests the fragile limits of sexual violence in *The Monk* to consider wider frameworks for consent, rape, and retributive justice. My efforts at recuperation then run directly parallel to a suspicious reading practice in which the succubus's name, effects, and preponderance must be sidelined, if not effaced, to keep female sexual agency in abeyance. This essay suspects that the Bleeding Nun signals something more, and in that suspicion lies the recuperative project.

"Succubus Matters" recasts the vilified fear of the female ghost who possesses unrepentant sexual appetites and enacts retributive justice through her own threat of sexual violence. This inquiry into the succubus's excessive placement realizes that she (the Bleeding Nun, in particular) is an archetypal figure whose eroticism and non-conforming notions of gender resist the constraints and violence of heteronormativity, thus further problematizing issues of consent and their gendered referents. If, as George Haggerty has proffered, the Gothic novel performs countless failures of heteronormativity, then Lewis's Bleeding Nun represents yet another *desirable queer failure*—one wherein she outwardly refuses to abide heteronormativity's demand that she serve exclusively as the recipient of violence.⁷ To be clear, I'm not interested in reclaiming the succubus's enactment of sexual violence as somehow a better or beneficent form of violence; it's not. Rape and sexual violence cannot and will not be hierarchized or justified here. But the Bleeding Nun does require that we reevaluate how considerations of

consent and sexual violence reveal themselves in the Gothic, and the succubus's queer failure is one (different than that theorized by Jack Halberstam) in which an upheaval of heteronorms explicitly through invocations of violence break the ghostly chains of wayward women whose sexual appetites are their undoing. The succubus, quite oppositely, participates in unraveling the threads of heteronormativity that seek to keep her simultaneously bound and on the periphery.

Consent, rape, and the Gothic

Succubus iconography reimagines the displacement of the female body as something both material and ethereal, and in so doing, renders additional and alternative displacements of consent, agency, and sexuality. The Bleeding Nun, Nancy Caplan Mellerski claims, is “an intruder—literally and figuratively—or both metonymically and metaphorically” (47). Extending Mellerski, I argue that the Bleeding Nun *intrudes* upon systems of sexual violence in the novel that are otherwise only perpetrated by men against women. The episode in which her history is animated highlights the recurrent forms of illicit and nonconsensual sexual encounter that are triangulated and layered among the Bleeding Nun, Raymond, and Agnes. Along one vertex, Raymond becomes dis/possessed by his encounter with the phantasmagorical Bleeding Nun because he does not consent to her icy kisses and enduring harassment. Along another vertex, the Wandering Jew, through his own occult translation that I also take up below, reveals of the Bleeding Nun, ““Though to you only visible for one hour in the twenty-four, neither day or night does She ever quit you; Nor will She ever quit you till you have granted her request”” (131). Because the Wandering Jew mediates and exorcises the succubus, he becomes enfolded in a misogynistic fraternity that sets out to expel rancorous femininity. Put another way, the Wandering Jew is paired alongside the Bleeding Nun and Raymond because he alone can correct the Bleeding Nun's insatiability.

Along a third vertex, Raymond discloses that his overwhelming passion for Agnes—in the convent's garden no less—forces him “in an unguarded moment” to “sacrifice” Agnes's “honour” (144). This ironically follows his “solemn” promise that “her virtue and innocence would be safe in my keeping, and that till the church had made her my lawful Wife, her honour should be held by me as sacred as a Sister's” (116). Raymond's disclosure here (made to Lorenzo, Agnes's brother) of his nonconsensual contact with the Bleeding Nun serves to preempt and justify his rape of Agnes so as to prevent reprisal. Implicitly enfolded in Raymond's interpolated history is a skewed rationale that intends to minimize the

sexual violence he enacts against Agnes, who ultimately becomes his bride at novel's end. Raymond details the yoking of Agnes (soon to be nun) and the Bleeding Nun (wayward Sister)—a doppelgänger theatre that Lewis and the novel's artistic mementos exploit and which I explore more fully below. Raymond's violation effects Agnes's pregnancy, her consequent duration and torture in St. Clare's dungeon, and the premature death of her malnourished infant. The Bleeding Nun's non-consensual violation of Raymond operates as an inverted echo of Agnes's rape and remains the only record of sexual violence not exhibited by a man within *The Monk*. The novel, as I show, endeavors to curb this obdurate behavior and demonize—literally—female sexuality.

My point here is not that two sexual violences (wrongs) somehow make a right in Lewis's magnum opus. They do not merely cancel one another out and I do not minimize Agnes's sexual violence as somehow a mimetic behavior Raymond learns from the Bleeding Nun, which might only further perpetuate the novel's misogyny and pair the Bleeding Nun as an originator of novel rape. Experiences of sexual violence (literary, historical, or lived) cannot be equalized. However, the Bleeding Nun's predation of Raymond allows for a more capacious reading of systems of interconnected sexual violation in *The Monk*, and thus further opens up discussions of sexual violence in the eighteenth century so as to better assess rape's complex, multifarious textures and imports, which I briefly survey. Lewis plants the succubus narrative as one that troubles what has, in Frances Ferguson's words, "historically been depicted as a crime committed by a man upon the person of a woman" (88). The representation of the succubus, true to its definition, then plays with concepts of consent and its parameters for understanding gender, its expression and performance, in the Gothic novel.

Consent and its connection with sexual violence and assault embroil eighteenth-century legal, political, and literary quandaries—and in many ways anticipate and are incommensurate with the legal and social frameworks consent currently occupies in the contemporary. I'll note, though, that despite any incommensurabilities, notions of affirmative and informed consent, the #MeToo movement, and systemic experiences of sexual harassment and violence in the academy that operate with impunity deeply inform my inquiry here. Indeed, when I teach *The Monk* (a regular occurrence), conversations about the failures of consent and the novel repeatedly surface and generate robust dialogue. As Sharon Block and Frances Dolan have questioned from different historical, geographic, and generic standpoints: does rape have a history? And how might the pernicious transhistoricity of sexual violence, coercion, and assault make any historicizing of rape that relies on extant archives a Sisyphean (or Cassandran) feat?

Much of the extant work on consent by scholars of the eighteenth-century hinges upon juridical contexts, which runs the risk of legitimating accounts of sexual violence only through legal pathways.⁸ Rape and consent, as we know, do not strictly operate under the letter of the law; in truth, too often the law does not provide recourse for those who survive rape and non-consensual violation. Reinvigorated attention to consent and rape in the eighteenth century, which spans interdisciplinary fields, methods, and archives, coincides with what Erin Spampinato and Doreen Thierauf call “The New Rape Studies.” For instance, Melissa Sanchez’s *Erotic Subjects* notices the glorification of male domination and female submission throughout early modernity as indicating the opacity between rape and consent. In other words, to yield to sexual violence was to de facto consent—a horrific rhetoric that continues to rear its head in contemporary politics with the erosion of women’s rights to bodily autonomy.⁹ And if there were a glimmer of legal recourse, Sanchez continues, to determine the credibility of a victim’s claim that her consent was violated, it was her moral status that was put under microscope. Ferguson’s “Rape and the Rise of the Novel” likewise reads the victim’s body as textually marked, “having become the text that bespeaks not only her intention to have consented but also the perpetrator’s intention to have overridden that refusal to consent” (91). Competing notions of consent and intention, Ferguson further argues, inevitably illegitimate the woman’s experience by spuriously questioning the nature of her experience and mental state. In concert, Sanchez observes, the etymology of consent (*consentire*), “can mean both to think together and to feel together” (93). My understanding of consent as navigated by Agnes, Raymond, and the Bleeding Nun is similarly invested in textual evidence, but not the textual evidence that the woman’s body must exclusively own. I instead pinpoint murky depictions of consent and violation in *The Monk* that realize the discomfort, unwillingness, and coercion of sexual engagement. In so doing, I seek to expand the historical sinews of consent and the ways in which Gothic fictions play with and become entangled within these sinews.

Double double

Lewis’s succubus story—the episode of the Bleeding Nun—is nestled within Don Raymond’s long history of journeys around the continent. His oral history hinges on his repeated non-consensual congress with this cursed, bawdy demon whose violent past demands her liminal placement between life and death. Lewis’s advertisement to the second edition of *The Monk* acknowledges that the Bleeding Nun appears out of willful plagiarism: “The *Bleeding Nun* is a tradition still credited in many parts of Germany; and I have been told, that the ruins of the

castle of *Lauenstein*, which she is supposed to haunt, may yet be seen upon the borders of *Thuringia* [central Germany]" (n.p.). Lewis conjures the Bleeding Nun as a mythical pastiche that threads Germanic folklore, persistent hauntings, and his own fictional imaginings. Jennifer Airey and Marie Mulvey-Roberts have attempted to locate Lewis's source for the Bleeding Nun, which further reveals a broader currency of female apparition narratives—a genre that Jayne Lewis identifies as a "cash cow" for publishing print materials in the early eighteenth century (114).¹⁰ I see the female apparition narrative and accounts of succubi to be co-constitutive though not identical: not all female apparitions are succubi but all succubi are female apparitions.

The Bleeding Nun—a sobriquet for Beatrice de las Cisternas, Raymond's great, great Aunt—emerges from the love polygon of Raymond, Agnes, and her aunt, Donna Rodolpha. But the succubus's history is never revealed from her own lips; she is constantly mediated by familial and occult interlocutors. Initially, Agnes reveals the mythos of the Bleeding Nun to Raymond—a ghost story that is both erotic and eroticizing: "All of my knowledge of her History comes from an old tradition in this family, which has been handed down from Father to Son" (108). Agnes both perpetuates and perverts this oral history of the Bleeding Nun: she breaks the patrilineality by which tradition is purportedly passed, and ironically centralizes her own voice as the mouthpiece for the Bleeding Nun's history. The irony of such a recuperation is that the Bleeding Nun is in fact Raymond's distant relation. In this powerful recuperation of women's voices and stories, Agnes frays the tradition of father-to-son oral history while, simultaneously, connecting herself to the Bleeding Nun and portending their doubleness. Such a twinning reasons why artistic representations of the two, like this 1823 illustration following the novel's success, render them doppelgangers.



Figures 3 and 4: *The Bleeding Nun, of the Castle of Lindenberg; or, the history of Raymond & Agnes* (1823). Courtesy of the British Library. Public Domain

Despite her sallow, waxen countenance (perhaps an intertextual moment that blends Lewis's vision with the wax figure in Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794)) the Bleeding Nun visualized here is indistinguishable from Agnes. Corinna Wagner contends, the veil, which characterizes both in the illustration, "causes mistaken identity, obfuscates truth and obscures the wearer's personhood" (89). The white habit recognizes the two as belonging to religious orders and reminds us of their putative purity (harkening back to Fuseli's *The Nightmare*)—a purity that the Bleeding Nun actively maligns and a purity, for Agnes, that is "sacrificed" by Raymond's uncontrollable lust (a euphemism that stands in for his enactment of rape). Eve Sedgwick wagers that the veil metonymizes sexuality and metaphorizes "the system of prohibitions by which sexual desire is enhanced and specified" (256). To visualize the veil and religious habit mapped onto Agnes and the Bleeding Nun, as the illustration models, is to emphasize their sexualized doubleness and double-down on their triangulated relationship with Raymond. Whereas Adriana Craciun has explored the doubleness of Romantic femme fatale figures (of which the Bleeding Nun is a minor example), the doubling of nuns, in particular, in the illustration above requires further attention.¹¹ The Gothic nun, Diane Long Hoeveler argues like Sedgwick before her, inheres with erotic and pornographic potentiality. "Sexualized in ways that bespeak their tabooed uncanniness," Hoeveler writes, "Gothic nuns are unclean, perverse and aggressive in a variety of horrific and vaguely (and not so vaguely) pornographic ways" (57). The Bleeding Nun's apparitional state and anti-Catholic sentiments thus reestablish what Hoeveler calls "the familiar trope of profligate nun, the unchaste and undead Sister who continues to seek out male victims for insatiate lust" (111).

This is precisely what the Bleeding Nun recreates in stalking Raymond. As Agnes reports, the Bleeding Nun quinquennially appears at the strike of one on 5 May, descends from her tower with lamp and dagger in hand, exits the castle, and "always returns after an hour's absence. The Lady then retires to her chamber and is quiet for another five years" (110). Raymond seeks to capitalize on this folklore to consummate his passion for Agnes and plots to help Agnes abscond from the castle masquerading as the Bleeding Nun. With the getaway carriage prepared, the plan commences, but instead of Agnes in Bleeding Nun drag, Raymond finds himself situated aside the succubus herself. He, unaware of this ludic situational irony, initiates the sestet that the Bleeding Nun will, in turn, repeat to him during her nightly haunting. Raymond cries:

Agnes! Agnes! Thou art mine!
 Agnes! Agnes! I am thine!
 In thy veins while blood shall roll,

I am thine!
 Thou art mine!
 Mine thy body! Mine thy soul! — (121)

The Bleeding Nun's aural terrorism develops out of her repetition of Raymond's misattributed vows. The promise of possession binds Raymond and the Bleeding Nun together, as it does Raymond and Agnes.

Shortly after the vows are uttered, a supernatural tempest emerges and the carriage crashes; everyone dies but Raymond. He convalesces at a nearby inn. The Bleeding Nun returns every evening to repeat the unfulfilled vows that Raymond originally utters. Her vows then are an echo chamber of his, thus adding further layers of doubleness in which the succubus is enmeshed. As "an animated Corse" [sic], the Bleeding Nun repeats the poetic sestet with unsatisfactory meter:

Raymond! Raymond! Thou art mine!
 Raymond! Raymond! I am thine!
 In thy veins while blood shall roll,
 I am thine!
 Thou art mine!
 Mine thy body! Mine thy soul! — (124)

The Bleeding Nun's AABAAB sestet serves to make good on Raymond's misattributed promise: namely to consummate the vows. Raymond assures us this never happens—a point that seems to safeguard his masculine patina as impenetrable and likewise position the Bleeding Nun outside the realm of sexual desirability, despite her horny adamance. Because he cannot shake the succubus, Raymond defers to another occult figure, the Wandering Jew, who reveals that this nocturnal stalker will only relent when Raymond has properly interred her remains. As her relative, this ill is Raymond's to right. Lewis locates The Bleeding Nun (through the Wandering Jew's translation at least) as desiring of both erotic fulfillment and final rest (perhaps one and the same); the two desires work in tandem in that the promise of erotic contact precedes the interment of her desecrated corpse. In the passionate sex between a succubus and a bachelor-cum-rapist lies peaceful finality for a female demon.

As the 1823 engraving signals, *The Monk* doubles Agnes and the Bleeding Nun, which ultimately envisions both their physical and sexual similitude. Raymond's history ventriloquizes both the narrative of the Bleeding Nun and the fall of Agnes, and so it is Raymond on which their doubleness hinges. He testifies to this mirroring: "Agnes and the Bleeding Nun presented themselves by turns to my

fancy, and combined to harass and torment me” (125). While Agnes and the Bleeding Nun work in conjunction, according to Raymond, their harassment and torment operate differently: with the former, Raymond speaks metaphorically—it is the idea of losing Agnes and her commitment to the convent—with the latter, Raymond speaks literally. The Bleeding Nun visits him nightly to physically enact what he experiences as malicious violation under the threat of sexual congress to which he does not consent. But the torment that Raymond encounters with the Bleeding Nun eerily becomes transformed into the torment he enacts against Agnes. That is, the Bleeding Nun, Raymond, and Agnes embody a topsy-turvy triptych wherein torment and violation are passed as if a baton, which has the consequence of reframing sexual encounters and the parameters of consent within the novel itself.

In his nightly trials with the Bleeding Nun, Raymond narrates his experience much like the anecdotes found in eighteenth-century medical treatises that synonymize the incubus with sleep paralysis. For example, in *An essay on the incubus, or, the night-mare* (1753), John Bond elucidates the physiological manifestations of the incubus. The fact that Bond and other pseudo-physicians like him repeatedly attend to the incubus, not the succubus, is not lost on me. The rise of the nightmare (a synonym for the incubus) and its diagnostic prevalence reveals, yet again, the minimized role that female ghosts played as fictions or myths rather than the alleged medical veracity of incubi.¹² Bond’s new scientific approach revises the ignorance of “ancient Physicians” from whom no rational account could be expected because “they were unacquainted with the circulation of the Blood” (n.p.). The nightmare, Bond reasons, is a sanguineous “Disease” or “Disorder,” which induces sleep paralysis:

[The incubus] generally seizes people sleeping on their backs, and often begins with frightful dreams, which are soon succeeded by a difficult respiration, a violent oppression on the breast, and a total privation of voluntary motion. In this agony they sigh, groan, utter indistinct sounds, and remain in the jaws of death, till, by the utmost efforts of nature, or some external assistance, they escape out of that dreadful torpid state. (2)

Bond’s solution? Bloodletting. Despite the malpractical advice, Bond’s recommendation of bloodletting similarly becomes mapped onto the Bleeding Nun’s body and her sobriquet. She is called the Bleeding Nun precisely because her external aesthetic—a pronouncement of her own ghastly murder and homicidal penchant—is saturated with blood splatter. She paradoxically embodies

both Bond's incubus and its victim; she is both Raymond's sleep paralyzer and the paralyzed in her bloody appearance.

In Lewis's literary translation of this sleep paralysis, Raymond recounts:

I gazed upon the Spectre with horror too great to be described. My blood was frozen in my veins. I would have called for aid, but the sound expired, ere it could pass my lips. My nerves were bound up in impotence, and I remained in the same attitude inanimate as a Statue. The visionary Nun looked upon me for some minutes in silence. There was something petrifying in her regard. (124)

The phenomenologically stiling encounter incapacitates Raymond by rendering him impotent—a description that magnifies both his inability to stave off the succubus and his inability to sexually engage the succubus. If the succubus brings about carnal knowledge, Raymond cannot fully partake. Myths of the succubus purport that she works in conjunction with the incubus to pilfer semen from unsuspecting and unwilling male victims, inseminate the incubus ghost-in-arms, and thereafter impregnate an unwilling female victim with the stolen seed. Such myths reflect a layering of consensual problems. These myths, likewise, contribute to the establishment of heteronormative reproduction but expand that system to queerly incorporate more than two partners, some of whom are alive and others dead. Lewis does not repurpose this mythos and instead discloses the succubus's impotence-inducing potentiality, which reveals the failure of the heteronormative reproductive system the succubus putatively aids. The Bleeding Nun then performs a further queering of hetero-reproduction in that her ghastly visage renders Raymond flaccid; reproduction, as a result, becomes all but impossible. The queer Gothicism that emerges here anticipates Lee Edelman's thesis in *No Future* wherein the manifold queer possibilities staged between The Bleeding Nun and Raymond counter reproductive futurity. Lewis's Bleeding Nun vignette showcases variegated textures of Edelman's provocation: one, she exists outside the parameters of hetero-reproduction due to her ghostly appearance and age; that her body is characterized as "rotting," we understand her exclusion from hetero-reproductive spheres because of an explicit lack of fecundity (126). Two, Raymond's flaccidity renders him incapable of participating in hetero-reproductive sex. And, three, the Bleeding Nun is not, from my reading, remotely interested in hetero-reproductive sex. She appears for a lustful night of sex that precludes reproductivity.

Even more, in his incapacitated state, the Bleeding Nun objectifies Raymond; he becomes "inanimate as a Statue." Such a characterization corresponds with the

understanding of sleep paralysis but further situates Raymond's inability to consent to his nightly visitor. Put simply, in his inanimation lies his violation. This violation worsens when after repeating the sestet—"Breathless with fear, I listened while She repeated my own expressions"—the Bleeding Nun, in her habit and habituation, ensconces herself on Raymond's bed for an hour (124). He complains: "In this attitude She remained for a whole long hour without speaking or moving; nor was I able to do either" (125). The hallmark rape that succubi are known for is again disrupted here. Rather than a moment of semen stealing, the Bleeding Nun and Raymond remain arrested, for an hour each night, in uncomfortable intimacy. We read: "Her eyes were fixed earnestly upon mine: They seemed endowed with the property of the Rattle-snake's, for I strove in vain to look off her. My eyes were fascinated, and I had not the power of withdrawing them from the Spectre's" (124-125).¹³ As with Fuseli's paintings, once again, the nonhuman animal is brought to the fore to further arrange the triangulation of human, more-than-human, and animal as an index of succubi and incubi relations. Such a description would afford Freud a heyday in that the succubus's impotence-inducing powers accompany her visceral stare—a castration that again refines the succubus narrative in which Raymond's seed cannot be stolen. *He cannot rise to the occasion.*

But this mutual paralysis—this discomfiting intimacy—is broken before the Bleeding Nun departs and physical touch becomes uncomfortably forced upon Raymond. The nonconsensual violation reaches its apogee when the Bleeding Nun grasps Raymond "with her icy fingers" and "pressing her cold lips to mine, again repeated, 'Raymond! Raymond! Thou art mine!/ Raymond! Raymond! I am thine! &c—'" (125). Immobilized, Raymond is unable to avoid the glacial touch of the succubus who peppers him with kisses and casts a possessive incantation. The Bleeding Nun's kiss seals the performative speech act, which again echoes a forced marriage ceremony.¹⁴ Her words intend to perform what his actions cannot. But these are Raymond's words transmuted: a vow that he originally intends to bestow on Agnes. Raymond's intended possession of Agnes becomes contorted by the Bleeding Nun, and therein gives Raymond a taste of his own medicine—caresses, touches, and passions that are unwanted. In this substitutive, retributive plan, the possessive sestet prefigures the confirmation of unwanted physical contact. To hear these lines in *The Monk* is to acknowledge illicit touch; they are a synesthetic, sonic reminder.

Raymond's narration of violating Agnes follows similar suit and places the invocation of handholding and kissing—embodied by the Bleeding Nun encounter—as a means to make amends for sexual violence. Upon sacrificing Agnes to his "passion," Raymond details his victim's reaction:

Scarcely was the first burst of passion past, when Agnes recovering herself started from my arms with horror. She called me infamous Seducer, loaded me with the bitterest reproaches, and beat her bosom in all the wildness of delirium. Ashamed of my imprudence, I with difficulty found words to excuse myself. I endeavoured to console her; I threw myself at her feet, and entreated her forgiveness. She forced her hand from me, which I had taken, and would have prest to my lips. (144)

To her attacker, Agnes shouts, “Touch me not” (144).¹⁵ While here Raymond relays his assault of Agnes, in his subsequent encounters with the Bleeding Nun, he is the recipient of icy kisses and unwanted touching: “The Spectre again pressed her lips to mine, again touched me with her rotting fingers, and as on her first appearance, quitted the chamber as soon as the Clock told ‘Two’” (126). Whereas the 1823 engraving’s representation of the Bleeding Nun and Agnes reflect their interchangeability, I see the experience and infliction of sexual violence as another means by which to envision their connection. The limits of Raymond’s narration are legion, and my suspicious reading here hypothesizes that while he may narrate the rape of his lover, he is less inclined to realize his own sexual violence at the hands of the Bleeding Nun. Raymond concludes his violation of Agnes by grasping her hand (which she “forces” away) and the desire to kiss it—a form of exculpation.

Despite his unwillingness to disclose his own sexual violation, the narrative leaves a bread trail by which to read these moments in a patterned fashion. Raymond’s encounter with the Bleeding Nun details these same behaviors—her icy touch and kiss—which similarly suggest that what transpires in the immobilized hour can also be read as rape. In his words, “I uttered a deep groan, and sank lifeless upon my pillow” (125). As Laura Miller argues, the invocation of lifelessness (again, Raymond characterizes himself as “inanimate”) remains a static trope within the Gothic and in *The Monk* that metastasizes as necrophilia; lifelessness “as a space of dissolution” then epitomizes “a dangerously erotic” territory (204). Or as Jolene Zigarovich underscores, throughout the eighteenth-century novel, rape is either courted (as in Richardson’s *Clarissa* (1748)) or enacted (as in Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740)) with the invocation of lifelessness and deathliness. This trend, Zigarovich notes, typically features a sadistic male and masochistic heroine, and Lewis both conforms to and subverts this trope. The Raymond, Agnes, Bleeding Nun triad confirms the sadistic male and masochistic heroine (Raymond to Agnes) trope and simultaneously inverts it (Bleeding Nun to Raymond) to reveal a layering of different sadisms rather than, in this instance,

the pairing of sadism and masochism. Ergo, another one of the Bleeding Nun's queer failures is to make messy the heteronormative pairing of sado-masochism by demonstrating that sadism is not strictly something enacted by men—a repurposing of defined gendered roles and their sexual accompaniments in the Gothic novel.

Eldritch coupling

To purge himself of the Bleeding Nun, Raymond recruits the Wandering Jew who serves to expand the occult, ghostly presence in the novel and remedy these figures all together.¹⁶ Lewis situates the Bleeding Nun and the Wandering Jew as extreme, tangential figures whose collective addition results in their mutual subtraction. Put simply, the Wandering Jew operates as the Semitic implement by which Raymond can dispossess himself of the Bleeding Nun, and at the same time, translate the Bleeding Nun's oral history—replete with anti-Catholic rhetoric, sexual deviance, and homicide. Icons of Judaism and Catholicism speak to one another and succeed in mutual displacement: the Wandering Jew continues his Sisyphean roving and the Bleeding Nun can be properly laid to rest. By focusing on the pairing of the Wandering Jew and the Bleeding Nun, this section argues that the latter's history becomes doubly supernatural and filtered through alternative subaltern perspectives. This mediation, though, is predicated on a misogynistic brotherhood in which the Wandering Jew and Raymond collude to eradicate the Bleeding Nun. If in the previous section, I located plural representations of sexual violence and consent, then here, the inclusion of the Wandering Jew demonstrates a fraternal commitment to erasing that plurality.

Just as the Bleeding Nun mediates the peripheries of life and death, so too is this the case for the Wandering Jew. He details his enduring torment to Raymond:

Fate obliges me to be constantly in movement: I am not permitted to pass more than a fortnight in the same place. I have no Friend in the world, and from the restlessness of my destiny I never can acquire one. Fain would I lie down my miserable life, for I envy those who enjoy the quiet of the Grave: But Death eludes me, and flies from my embrace. In vain do I throw myself in the way of danger. (131)

The Wandering Jew's envy of the "quiet of the Grave" is precisely what the Bleeding Nun seeks in binding herself to Raymond; she too knows the pain of an evasive sweet death that "flies from my embrace." He continues, "I am doomed to

inspire all who look on me with terror and detestation. You already feel the influence of the charm, and with every succeeding moment will feel it more. I will not add to your suffering by my presence” (131). The Bleeding Nun, by Raymond’s account, seems to possess a similar charm (he uses this identical word to describe her), one that dispossesses men by filling them with inescapable terror and flaccidity, namely sadism. Yet Lewis martyrs the Wandering Jew in ways unavailable to the Bleeding Nun. The Wandering Jew becomes a constantly mobile figure whose alleged empathy becomes the skeleton key by which to exorcise the Bleeding Nun. Whereas the Bleeding Nun enacts further suffering upon Raymond, the Wandering Jew explicitly seeks to alleviate the suffering and in so doing martyr himself for the sake of a fraternity predicated on the extermination of wayward women. The Wandering Jew confirms, “I have been the means of releasing you from your visionary Tormentor; and amidst all the sorrows which oppress me, to think that I have been of use to you, is some consolation” (136). This allocentric behavior founds brotherly attachment on the “release” of female torment and sexual expression.

The recurrence of the Wandering Jew communicates additional displacements that are both biblically situated and also popularized among cheap print in the long early modern period. Hosea 9:17, for example, excoriates the Jews for their complicity in Jesus’s death and has spawned one justification for the Wandering Jew’s recurrent appearance throughout literature: “My God will cast them away, Because they did not obey Him; And they shall be wanderers among the nations.” This mythos also accompanies readings of the Wandering Jew as Jesus’s ridiculer on the cross who gets his just desserts in the form of eternal nomadism. The Wandering Jew, then, metonymizes anti-Semitism just as the succubus metonymizes erotically-charged (and deathly) women. Wandering, roaming, and becoming perpetually stateless thus emblemize a meted punishment that the Wandering Jew must face as a mark of his faithlessness.

Eighteenth-century broadside ballads likewise corroborate this stateless figuration. The English Broadside Ballad Archive holds digitized facsimiles of eleven ballads from the late seventeenth to early eighteenth century wherein the Wandering Jew is centrally invoked. The eleven fit within two renderings of the Wandering Jew and thus situate a characterizing diptych: in one, the Wandering Jew embodies either a call for England’s repentance (wherein the Wandering Jew is the scapegoat) and, in the second, he provides an eye-witness account of English monarchical succession (from William the Conqueror to Queen Caroline). It is this latter characterization of the Wandering Jew as translator and historian that Lewis taps into by pairing him alongside the Bleeding Nun.

Consider this example undated from the mid-eighteenth century (though post 1737 because Queen Caroline's death is recorded) entitled, "The WANDERING JEW's CHRONICLE./ Or, a Brief HISTORY of the Remarkable Passages from William the Conqueror to this present Reign." While this representation of the Wandering Jew bears no resemblance to Lewis's rendering, the ballad reveals the Wandering Jew's monarchist leanings as he documents the crown's succession. The anaphora of "I saw" invokes a first-hand account by the Wandering Jew—the broadside is allegedly his chronicle—which legitimates monarchical rule and positions the Semitic wanderer as the English monarchy's amanuensis. Positioned in the same trajectory as the broadside ballad, Lewis unwittingly illustrates a Wandering Jew whose transmission and translation of the Bleeding Nun's story aligns the succubus with monarchical powers. That is, if the ballad is only invested in narrating the stories of regal succession, so too does the Bleeding Nun become elevated, which signals our attention to her exceptional potential.



Figure 5: The WANDERING JEW'S CHRONICLE./ Or, a Brief HISTORY of the Remarkable Passages from William the Conqueror to this present Reign (ca. 1737-1763?). Facsimile courtesy of the English Broadside Ballad Archive. © British Library Board [Shelf Number: C.20.f.9.733]

The Wandering Jew identifies Beatrice de las Cisternas as an unrepentant sinner whose “impudent and abandoned conduct” characterizes her unwillingness to conform to religious and gendered norms (134). When forced into taking the veil—yet another parallel between Agnes and the Bleeding Nun—Beatrice flouts the convent’s orders, becomes an atheist, elopes with the Baron of Lindenberg, and, in another exciting twist, beds his younger brother. In their collusion, this younger brother, Otto, sexually goads Beatrice into murdering the Baron to usurp the baronage. She complies with a dagger to the Baron’s heart. With the dagger still damp with his brother’s blood, Otto pierces her bosom “and put an end to her existence by repeated blows” (135). Otto exacerbates this disrespect by leaving Beatrice’s bones unburied, which has the unintended consequence of allowing her to roam the castle each night.¹⁷ As a ghost, Beatrice’s persistent, nightly harassment forces Otto to succumb to a heart attack. The baronage subsequently passes to a distant relative who hires an exorcist to limit Beatrice’s visible haunting to once every five years. She is sentenced to a century-long term. Raymond enters at the end of her sentence.

In his characteristic lack of self-awareness, Raymond remains ignorant to the similarities between his own experiences with the Bleeding Nun and those of Otto. Just as the Bleeding Nun visits Raymond each evening, we are told that “Drest in her religious habit in memory of her vows broken to heaven, furnished with the dagger which had drank the blood of her Paramour, and holding the Lamp which had guided her flying steps, every night did She stand before the Bed of Otto”; “Its horror,” the Wandering Jew continues, “increased with every succeeding appearance” (136). Raymond articulates this identical phrase: “Far from growing accustomed to the Ghost, every succeeding visit inspired me with greater horror” (126). To offer this parallelism, I do not intend to suggest that Raymond is Otto reincarnated, despite their genealogical connection. Rather, in this narrative repetition, the Bleeding Nun’s juxtaposition with both Raymond and Otto tells us, yes, about who she is, but more importantly, about who these men are. Both are entitled gentlemen of social standing who sacrifice women for their own hedonistic pleasures, which as I’ve suggested above the Bleeding Nun, on some level, rejects and warps.

The novel’s implicit fear in realizing this and doubling Agnes and the Bleeding Nun is that the former may very well become a Bleeding Nun incarnate. Or as Craciun suggests, “The horrifying outcome of Agnes’ masquerade as a murderous and sexually transgressive ghost attests to the ability of all women’s bodies to metamorphose into unnatural (because unfemininely large) bodies through the enactment of unnatural desires” (118-119). In a cruel twist of fate, it is these female interlocutors who are forced to reckon with the consequences of passion.

While the novel's ending positions the marriage of Agnes to her rapist, it is her trial, the loss of her infant, and the masochism she is subjected to by the Prioress that demonstrates the plight women face who, in accepting the veil, tarnish its alleged purity standard. The tragedy of the Bleeding Nun, however, seeks to level her hypersexualization. Her lover, Otto, "to free himself from a Woman, whose violent and atrocious character made him tremble with reason for this own safety [...] resolved on the destruction of the wretched Agent" (135). To remedy women who make men question their own safety, Otto demonstrates, is to murder them in cold blood. Raymond and the Wandering Jew's exorcism intends to do the same. But the Bleeding Nun holds onto these assertive qualities even after death. The Bleeding Nun as ghostly succubus reveals that even in death, empowered, unrepentant women can check masculine impunity.

Excavating the queer Gothic

By envisioning the various manifestations of the succubus and her portents, I have sought here to elucidate forms of erotic agency ghosts assume. The succubus's erotic autonomy lies in her abilities to rework and contort systemic and institutionalized representations of sexual violence in literature, generally, and the Gothic novel, specifically. The Bleeding Nun demonstrates that to plague Raymond is to offer a premonitory retribution that levels modes of non-consensual encounter through other forms of non-consent. Heather Harper argues that the apparitional narrative—a genre that in its coincident gothicism we may readily find the succubus—rends "the female ghost the unearthly power to expose and avenge the verbal, physical, and sexual abuse experienced in life, and especially in marriage" (427). *The Monk's* internal justice system is predicated on this unsettling eye-for-an-eye rhetoric.

However, the Bleeding Nun is vilified in ways that Raymond is not. The Gothic tradition assures us that these female erotic agencies, forms, and appetites are to be feared; Raymond's are to be rewarded at novel's end with his marriage to the survivor of his assault—indeed the fruit of that violation is rendered necrotic flesh through neglect and torture. But how, I ask, can we unsettle these anxieties about female power and insatiable lusts to visualize and apprehend how the strictures of gender performance demand both the erasure of these lusts in the living and their amplification in the undead because of "unfinished business"? As with Fuseli's ambiguous artistic iterations, can we hold both fear and eroticism in adjacent generative tension—one emboldening the other? In what ways might we recuperate *The Monk* as endowing necrophilic, sadomasochistic, and other fetishes that are, on the surface, horrific and ghastly, but, in their excavated form,

opportunities for reconsidering the boundaries of consensual intimacy? That is, how might the Bleeding Nun perform both retributive justice in the novel as well as a fetishistic burlesque that endows erotic preponderance in the (old, dead) woman's body?

In imagining what else the queer Gothic might unfurl, "Succubus Matters" plays with representations of demonic ghosts, female agency, and textures of consent to invite further *excavation*. If the queer Gothic has long favored forms of queer excavation that interrogate interior recesses of Gothic architectures, Gothic minds, and Gothic intimacies, then a queer excavation of the Gothic succubus figure dives deeper into the convoluted morass that might constitute issues of consent in the eighteenth-century Gothic novel. In so doing, we might honor the etymology of excavate (from the Latin *excavare* meaning "to make or become hollow") and reject readings of the Bleeding Nun as a hollow figuration who is exclusively a cautionary semaphore. Perhaps we should better recognize the Bleeding Nun as a *hallowed* icon who, despite *The Monk's* warped justice schemata, recuperates maligned female eroticisms and compels revised and more complicated frameworks for understanding sexual violence within the eighteenth-century literary imaginary.

The Bleeding Nun as hallowed icon has staying power, even in her phantom appearance. For example, while Lewis's advertisement to the second edition of *The Monk* proposes that the Bleeding Nun myth circulates widely through the continent, and Germany in particular, it is his rendering of her that spawned literary and artistic replicants throughout the last years of the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth. The Bleeding Nun's narrative, in its recycled nature, became subordinated to Agnes and Raymond's tragic love story—one that often effaces the sexual violence apparent. Consider, for instance, *The Castle Lindenberg, or the History of Raymond and Agnes* (1798), which is also attributed to Lewis since it is an abridged copy-and-paste of *The Monk*, and two operas, Charles Gounod's *La Nonne Sanglante* (1854) and Edward Loder's *Raymond and Agnes* (1855), both of which failed. In these influenced recreations, the Bleeding Nun is forced into a cameo; her importance then lies in name or title rather than visibility—perhaps a metanarration of her ghostliness. She leaves at best a trace. This in turn only doubles-down on her hauntological presence and persistence. But perhaps this visual and aural trace can be read as a ghostly reminder that systems of sexual violence that operate with impunity must reckon with the threat of a Bleeding Nun, whose erotic appetites cannot be sated and whose threats to rapists remind them that "neither day or night [does She] ever quit you" (131).

¹ “Fuseli’s art,” D.H. Weinglass writes, “always remains deeply rooted in literature,” despite, what Martin Myrone suggests was Fuseli’s aversion to these writers (xii).

² The “mare” in nightmare comes from the blending of “night” and “mara,” the latter of which Samuel Johnson defines as “a spiriting in the northern mythology [who] was related to torment or suffocate sleepers.”

³ Following Foucault, Berlant and Warner renounce heterosexuality (“heterosexuality is not a thing”) in that under the sign of heteronormativity, “a complex cluster of sexual practices gets confused, in heterosexual culture, with the love plot of intimacy and familialism that signifies belonging to society in a deep and normal way” (552; 554). This emerges, they argue, precisely because of the eighteenth-century’s bequeathal of a modern public sphere (following Habermas) and sexual epistemologies (following Foucault). Katz, in conversation, questions the ahistoricity of presumed heterosexuality, which begins to congeal as a social and cultural expectation in the eighteenth century.

⁴ In their introduction to *Heteronormativity in Eighteenth-Century Literature and Culture*, Ana De Freitas Boe and Abby Coykendall define heteronormativity as, “the entire array of polarized taxonomies that organize compulsory heterosexuality and generate its aura of obviousness. [...] Not only does heteronormativity pervade overtly sexual imaginaries and institutions such as romance or reproduction— validating some feelings, relationships, or communities as appropriate, honorable, and lasting while rendering others invisible, if not verging on inhuman— it conduces as well to the predominantly heterofamilial distributions of wealth and status, endowing disproportionate socioeconomic clout generation after generation to the procreative married couple and its offspring” (7-8).

⁵ Patricia Murphy offers “the New Woman Gothic” to explore how women in the Gothic must mediate binarized peripheries such as victim-villain, sufferer-aggressor, virgin-whore, etc. Murphy is especially interested in doleful representations of women’s “real exigences” of “frustration, apprehension, and pain” (30).

⁶ In looking to digitally transcribed versions of *The Monk*, I have found that the word “rape” appears only three times in the novel and all three describe Ambrosio’s sexual violation of his sister, Antonia. Rape and incest thus become co-implicated, and again suggests the limitations of defining an archive of rape when the word itself is erased or absent.

⁷ Haggerty focuses primarily on the endings of three Gothic novels (*The Mysteries of Udolpho*, *Zofloya*, and *Melmoth the Wanderer*), though his description of the Gothic ending’s subversion of heteronormativity—“These novels refuse heteronormativity, even when they sometimes seem to bow down to it, because their gothic project has catapulted them beyond the confines of polite fiction”—is apposite here (149).

⁸ Jonathan Krannick, for example, turns to Locke for frameworks of consent. Aaron Hanlon and Nicole Wright engage marriage acts and court proceedings, especially Lord Hardwicke’s 1753 Marriage Act. Hana Lyson examines Wollstonecraft’s juridical ethos in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

⁹ My use of women here and throughout is not a biological determinate. I do not exclude trans women (*who are women*) or others who identify as women.

¹⁰ Airey notes that at least one source for the Bleeding Nun comes from Maria Elizabeth Robinson’s *The Shrine of Bertha* (1794). Mulvey-Roberts offers Johann Karl August Musäus’s “The Elopement” (1782-6) as the Bleeding Nun’s source.

¹¹ See *Fatal Women of Romanticism*.

¹² I’ll add that for Bond it appears that all peoples can be plagued by the incubus, which extends another queer Gothic trajectory in which incubi predate on other genders, not exclusively women.

¹³ Rattlesnakes (an American species) were believed to be, throughout the eighteenth century, the most venomous of all snakes. See Peter Hobbins.

¹⁴ For another reading of The Monk's queer marriage performances see my forthcoming book, *The Queerness of Water: Violent Entanglements in Troubled Ecologies*, especially the chapter "Aqueous Punishment."

¹⁵ Carolyn Dinshaw explores the queer temporal and affective resonances of this phrase, which is an English transliteration of the Latin phrase *noli me tangere*. Biblically, at least according to the Gospel of John, Jesus utters this phrase to Mary Magdalene following his crucifixion.

¹⁶ Lewis's elision of Wandering Jew and Great Mogul is a curious one and seems to reflect some sort of Gothic orientalism, which limited space here does not allow for proper exploration. The conflation disregards their long early modern histories as distinct figures, the latter of whom, for eighteenth-century audiences, is best captured in Dryden's, *Aureng-Zebe; or, the Great Mogul* (1675). Because of their varied histories and representations, I refer to and trace Lewis's rendering of the Wandering Jew.

¹⁷ Diana Wallace recognizes that in the mid-eighteenth century, women were "civilly dead" and subordinated to the identity of their husbands. Women thus become "ghostly creature[s] too shadowy to even be real" (2). This notion is doubly amplified here: not only is the Bleeding Nun left unmarried to either the Baron or Otto, but she literally becomes a "ghostly creature" as a result of her murder.

Works Cited

- Airey, Jennifer. "The 'English Sappho's' Daughter: Reading the Words of Maria Elizabeth Robinson," *The Future of Feminist Eighteenth-Century Scholarship: Beyond Recovery*, edited by Robin Runia. Routledge, 2017, pp. 143-156.
- Berlant, Lauren and Michael Warner. "Sex in Public." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 24, no. 2, 1998, pp. 547-566.
- Block, Sharon. *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America*. University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- Bond, John. *An essay on the incubus, or, the night-mare*. London: Printed for D. Wilson and T. Durham, 1753.
- Brewer, William. "Transgendering in The Monk." *Gothic Studies*, vol. 6, no.2, 2004, pp. 192-207.
- Craciun, Adriana. *Fatal Women of Romanticism*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Chow, Jeremy. "Snaking into the Gothic: Serpentine Sensuousness in Lewis and Coleridge." *Humanities*, vol. 10, no.52, 2021, pp. 1-19.
- De Freitas Boe, Ana and Abby Coykendall. *Heteronormativity in Eighteenth-Century Literature and Culture*. Routledge, 2015.
- Dinshaw, Carolyn. *How Soon is Now?: Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time*. Duke University Press, 2012.
- Dolan, Frances. "Re-Reading Rape in *The Changeling*." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, vol. 11, no.1, 2011, pp. 4-29.
- Edelman, Lee. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. Duke University Press, 2004.
- Farr, Jason. *Novel Bodies: Disability and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century British Literature*. Bucknell University Press, 2019.

- Fincher, Max. *Queering Gothic in the Romantic Age*. Palgrave, 2007.
- Ferguson, Frances. "Rape and the Rise of the Novel." *Representations*, no. 20, 1987, pp.88-112.
- Haggerty, George. "The Failure of Heteronormativity in the Gothic Novel." *Heteronormativity in Eighteenth-Century Literature and Culture*, edited by Ana De Freitas Boe and Abby Coykendall. Routledge, 2016, pp. 131-149.
- Haggerty, George. *Queer Gothic*. University of Illinois Press, 2006.
- Halberstam, Jack. *The Queer Art of Failure*. Duke University Press, 2011.
- Hanlon, Aaron. "Fanny Hill and the Legibility of Consent." *English Literary History* vol. 86, no.4, 2019, pp. 941-966.
- Hanson, Ellis. "Queer Gothic." *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*, edited by Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy. Routledge, 2007, pp. 174-182.
- Harper, Heather. "'Matchless Sufferings': Intimate Violence in the Early Modern Apparition Narratives of Daniel Defoe and Elizabeth Boyd." *Women's Writing*, vol. 16, no.3, 2009, pp. 425-444.
- Hobbins, Peter. *Venomous Encounters: Snakes, Vivisection and Scientific Medicine in Colonial Australia*. Manchester University Press, 2017.
- Hoeveler, Diane Long. *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and Anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780-1880*. University of Wales Press, 2014.
- Johnson, Samuel. *Dictionary of the English Language (1756): Online Edition*. Edited by Jesse Karjalainen. <http://www.whichenglish.com/Johnsons-Dictionary/index.html>. Accessed 22 April 2022.
- Katz, Jonathan Ned. *The Invention of Heterosexuality*. Dutton, 1995.
- Kramnick, Jonathan. "Locke, Haywood, and Consent." *English Literary History*, vol. 72, no.2, 2005, pp. 453-470.

- Layson, Hana. "Rape and Revolution: Feminism, Antijacobism, and the Politics of Injured Innocence in Brockden Brown's 'Ormond.'" *Early American Studies*, vol. 2, no.1, 2004, pp. 160-191.
- Lewis, Jayne. *Air's Appearance: Literary Atmosphere in British Fiction, 1660-1794*. University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Lewis, Matthew Gregory. *The Monk*, edited by Howard Anderson. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Lewis, M. G. *The Monk: A Romance*. Second Edition. London: J.Bell, 1796. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433074874300&view=1up&seq=8>. Accessed 22 April 2022.
- Mellerski, Nancy Caplan. "The Exploding Matrix: The Episode of the Bleeding Nun in M. G. Lewis's *Monk*." *Forms of the Fantastic: Selected Essays*, edited by Jan Hokenson and Howard Pearce. Greenwood Press, 1986, pp. 41-47.
- Miller, Laura. "Between Life and Death: Representing Necrophilia, Medicine, and the Figure of the Intercessor in M.G. Lewis's *The Monk*." *Sex and Death in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, edited Jolene Zigarovich. Routledge, 2013, pp. 203-223.
- Mulvey-Roberts, Marie. *Dangerous Bodies: Historicising the Gothic Corporeal*. Manchester University Press, 2016.
- Murphy, Patricia. *The New Woman Gothic: Reconfigurations of Distress*. University of Missouri Press, 2016.
- Myrone, Martin. *Gothic Nightmares*. Tate Publishing, 2006.
- Sanchez, Melissa. *Erotic Subjects: The Sexuality of Politics in Early Modern English Literature*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Sedgwick, Eve. "The Character in the Veil: Imagery of the Surface in the Gothic Novel." *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, vol. 96, no. 2, 1981, pp. 255-270.

- Spampinato, Erin and Doreen Thierauf. *The New Rape Studies*.
<https://www.erinspampinato.com/theorizing-the-new-rape-studies>.
Accessed 22 April 2022.
- Townshend, Dale. “‘Love in a Convent’: or, Gothic and the Perverse Father of Queer Enjoyment.” *Queering the Gothic*, edited by William Hughes and Andrew Smith. Manchester University Press, 2009, pp. 11-35.
- Wagner, Corinna. “The Dream of a Transparent Body: Identity, Science and the Gothic Novel.” *Gothic Studies*, vol. 14, no.1, 2012, pp. 74-92.
- Wallace, Diana. *Female Gothic Histories: Gender, History, and the Gothic*. University of Wales Press, 2013.
- Waller, John. *A Treatise on the Incubus, or Night-Mare, Disturbed Sleep, Terrific Dreams, & Nocturnal Visions*. London: Printed for E. Cox and Son, 1816.
- Weinglass, D.H. *Prints and Engraved Illustrations by and after Henry Fuseli*. Scholar Press, 1994.
- Wright, Nicole. “‘Willing Victims’?: Disavowed Consent and Formal Deviance in Fielding’s *Amelia*.” *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 58, no. 4, 2017, pp. 469-487.
- Zigarovich, Jolene. “Courting Death: Necrophilia in Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa*.” *Sex and Death in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, edited by Jolene Zigarovich, Routledge, 2013, pp. 76-102.
- Zigarovich, Jolene, ed. *TransGothic in Literature and Culture*. Routledge, 2018.