

To what extent do Charlotte Bronte and Daphne du Maurier use Gothic mansions as sites in which female gender roles are explored and challenged in their texts *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca*?

Throughout Gothic literature's emergence, the establishment of Gothic architecture has given its authors a sense of agency. This agency has advocated for the questioning of the treatment of women within these Gothic spaces, and more widely, the roles of women in society. Critic Ellen Ledoux states that Gothic buildings have "provided an imaginative venue in which multiple domestic scenarios could be imagined.", and it is this imagination that has created avenues of exploration for authors like Bronte and du Maurier, to investigate the female role, what this ultimately means and how it is embedded in hegemonic ideology.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to discuss female dilemma in the literary-domestic sphere without introducing its pioneer, Ann Radcliffe. Through the creation of Radcliffe's 'Female Gothic' tradition, she introduced metaphorical dialogue into her texts that acted as a way of questioning a women's role in society. Critic Robert Miles explains the basic premise of the Female Gothic, and states that it "encodes displaced expressions of female experience."<sup>2</sup> The exploration of female displacement takes place and adopts numerous creative forms in Radcliffe's works, however the most prevalent form within her Gothic mode that aids in her proto-feminist expression, was her use of Gothic architecture. Ledoux identifies this Gothic trope, and explains that women-authored texts in the 1790s used "castles as standard places where women are imprisoned, and 'gothic' is almost invariably a pejorative term."<sup>3</sup> Radcliffe used this motif within her own Gothic Romance to focalise her texts around "the heroines (that) are wracked by a longing for home, for family, for connection"; however, they are instead, oppressed and merely living for the men who silence them with their patriarchal power.<sup>4</sup> An example of this exists in Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), when "true social order" is only restored by marriage of Alleyn and Mary, a main device that subjugates in Gothic heroines.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after this, Radcliffe subverted her literary genre to embody, what we would now interpret as, a true 'Female Gothic' stance. With the publication of her novel *A Sicilian Romance* in 1790, Robert Miles now notes that we not only see the overt contrast between "a modern family unit, based on love, choice and mutual respect, with a dysfunctional, feudal one exclusively devoted to enhancing the patriarchal order.", but also "the central figure is now a heroine; and while her lover endeavours to help her, he often proves ineffectual."<sup>6</sup> The co-existence of these two attributes in Radcliffe's novel urges us to ask why men and their material possessions have the right to securely prescribe women to one role that they will never be able to venture out of, whether that be in the literary world, or real, eighteenth century life as we understand it from such texts.

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen Malenas Ledoux, "Defiant Damsels: Gothic Space and Female Agency in Emmeline, the Mysteries of Udolpho and Secresy." *Women's Writing* 18, no. 2 (July 2011): 333.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Miles, "Ann Radcliffe", in *The Handbook of Gothic Literature*, ed. Marie Mulvey Roberts (New York: New York University Press), 184.

<sup>3</sup> Ledoux, "Defiant Damsels", 310.

<sup>4</sup> Ann B. Tracy, "Gothic Romance", in *The Handbook of Gothic Literature*, ed. Marie Mulvey Roberts (New York: New York University Press), 104.

<sup>5</sup> Miles, "Ann Radcliffe", 185.

<sup>6</sup> Miles, "Ann Radcliffe", 185.

It is then, the combination of Radcliffe's Gothic tradition and the gendered implications of Gothic architecture, that authors of the Female Gothic genre, like Charlotte Bronte and Daphne du Maurier, can use this Gothic tradition to explore and challenge gender roles in their texts, *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Rebecca* (1938). Jerrod Hogle points out that, "Once Gothic fiction fully entered the Victorian period in novels, plays and short stories, the haunted house [...] often displaced the haunted castle as the central setting."<sup>7</sup>, and although we see this shift from Radcliffian castles to a more modernised version, either in the form of a haunted house or mansion, Jerrod Hoyle highlights that "Romantic haunted houses keep being lured back towards the systems of belief once connected to castles."<sup>8</sup> Whilst Gothic castles did evoke a sense of terror, we see that haunted mansions possess a strengthened version of this all-encompassing horror; one that creatively embodies the sinister ideals they are founded upon. From the main bodies of Gothic buildings, with their deceiving beauty and unknown secrets, to the hidden rooms that are rooted in male supremacy and as a result, female disenfranchisement, both authors use their Gothic space to investigate and explore the socially ascribed roles of women.

In both texts, we see that Gothic architecture is a device used to "give villains psychological leverage over their victims and provides a convenient place for committing crimes."<sup>9</sup> Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* depicts "a story of female rebellion and search for identity."<sup>10</sup>, wherein the narrator's naivety enables her to become a victim of Mr Rochester's patriarchal control. From Thornfield Hall to the Moor House, Jane's narrative travels through different Gothic spheres and articulates "the constrictions placed on the female body and the fear of female incarceration in the domestic sphere."<sup>11</sup> An exaggerated form of the female role is also depicted to us through the characterisation of Bertha Mason, who is "malevolently enraged with all the violence of a temper which deformity made sometimes daemonic."<sup>12</sup> The "wild animal covered in clothing"<sup>13</sup> trapped in the hidden heights of Thornfield Hall represents to us a stark image of "the free, uninhibited, criminal" version of femininity that is Jane's 'other' self, whom we are supposed to sympathise with as she embodies a frightening avenue for the female potential. Both females in the text become a victim of Mr Rochester and his patriarchal control, as mentioned.<sup>14</sup> He is granted this control through the ownership of Thornfield Hall, and he utilises his Gothic sight to ensure and enforce female suffering and entrapment. A paralleling hegemonic force is seen in Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* through the characterisation of Maxim de Winter. Du Maurier ensures that Maxim uses his property, Manderley, to not only enforce female suffering, but to limit the female potential.

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<sup>7</sup> Jerrod E. Hogle, "From the Gothic Castle to the Romantic Haunted House: Disbelief, Conversion, Aporia, Abject." *European Romantic Review* 34, no. 2 (2023): 133.

<sup>8</sup> Hoyle, "From the Gothic Castle", 134.

<sup>9</sup> Ledoux, "Defiant Damsels", 336.

<sup>10</sup> Aparna Srivastava, "Jane Eyre as a Female Gothic Novel" *Inquiries Journal* 6, no. 4 (2014): 1.

<sup>11</sup> Srivastava, "Jane Eyre", 1.

<sup>12</sup> Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Guber, "The Spectral Selves of Charlotte Bronte", in *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Literary Imagination*. (Connecticut: Yale University Press), 431.

<sup>13</sup> Charlotte Bronte and Clare West, *Jane Eyre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 420.

<sup>14</sup> Gilbert and Guber, "The Spectral Selves", 360.

Auba Llompart Pons captures this narrative too, and states that the presence of Manderley in du Maurier's novel represents "an old-fashioned, strict, patriarchal system" that "portrays the (female) character's inability to fulfil the highly demanding gender roles imposed by this system."<sup>15</sup> Du Maurier also adopts the same concept of 'othering' in her female character exploration. Avril Horner tells us that "The relationship between the nameless narrator and Rebecca [...] offer variations on Charlotte Brontë's portrayal of a heroine haunted by another women who is both her opposite and a hidden 'self'"<sup>16</sup> It is with these perspectives and more in mind, that I will demonstrate how Brontë and du Maurier use Gothic architecture to demonstrate and convey the patriarchal systems that dominate Gothic women and prescribe them to a strict and confined social role, and even when these female characters attempt to defy and conquer these norms, it is no match for the force that exists within the men and their properties.

### Deception and Corruption: Brontë's exploration of female gender roles in *Jane Eyre*

Before discussing the ways in which Gothic architecture has contributed to the establishing and challenging of gender roles, it is important to identify that when referring to Gothic architecture, it is not simply the "pointed arches" and "grotesque sculptures"<sup>17</sup> that contribute to the true meaning and expression of Gothic buildings. Ruskin tells us that "Gothic architecture has external forms and internal elements. Its elements are certain mental tendencies of the builders. Its external forms are pointed arches, vaulted roofs. And unless both elements and the forms are there, we have no right to call the style Gothic."<sup>18</sup> The physicality of the architecture that we see in both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca* would, undoubtedly, exist pointlessly if it weren't for the presence of the heroines trapped within them, who live only to impress and appease their captors.

The autobiographical nature of Brontë's text gives us true insight of the female experience. This experience conveys the life of a Gothic heroine, and her "business is to experience difficulty, not to get out of it."<sup>19</sup> It is with this notion in mind that we walk through Jane's life as she faces it and make note of the numerous marginalising situations wherein patriarchal oppression attempts to overtake her identity and autonomy. As previously mentioned, this control would not be possible if it weren't for the Gothic spaces that these authors create. According to Wolff, "when we think of a haunted house, we assume that the fearful presence has more or less full rein throughout, [...] however, the terrors of Gothic mansions tended to be confined to only one or several frightful chambers."<sup>20</sup> We see this for the first time in *Jane Eyre*, when Jane is placed in the red-room for attempting to stand up for herself against her cousin, but as we can expect, she is instead punished. The architecture of the red room is used to highlight the true extremes of what it means for architecture to be

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<sup>15</sup> Auba Llompart Pons, "Patriarchal Hauntings: Re-Reading Villainy and Gender in Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca*." *Atlantis: Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies* 35, no. 1 (January 2013): 71.

<sup>16</sup> Avril Horner, "Heroines", in *The Handbook of Gothic Literature*, ed. Marie Mulvey Roberts (New York: New York University Press), 118.

<sup>17</sup> John Ruskin, *The Nature of Gothic: A Chapter from the Stones of Venice* (London: Euston Grove, 2008), 1.

<sup>18</sup> Ruskin, *The Nature of Gothic*, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Cynthia Griffin Wolff, "The Radcliffean Gothic Model: A Form for Feminine Sexuality." *Modern Language Studies* 9, no. 3 (1979): 99-100.

<sup>20</sup> Wolff, "The Radcliffean Gothic Model", 102.

characteristically 'Gothic'. This is not the only first we see from this scene. It is also the first time we see a woman being held captive against her will in these conditions, simply because she tries to defend her character. Jane describes the room, telling us that "it was one of the largest and stateliest chambers in the mansion. [...] mahogany [...] curtains of deep-red damask [...] blinds always drawn down [...] the carpet was red [...] table with a crimson cloth [...] were of darkly polished old mahogany."<sup>21</sup> The colours described to us by Jane paint a horrifying picture of the red room; one in which sets a sinister tone for the novel, and foreshadows to us the rest of the oppression that Jane experiences as a female protagonist. Jane's descriptions of the red room connote control and despair of the female role. We begin to see this representation as a kind of allegorical message, one in which we will continually question throughout our reading of Jane's journey through Gothic space. Jane demonstrates her confusion too, and asks "Why was I always suffering, always brow-beaten, always accused, for ever condemned? Why could I never please?"<sup>22</sup> This is because the assumption of gender roles in Gothic literature meant that women could never please, and in fact, it would be outside of their role to do so. The role of a woman in Gothic literature is to act as a stepping-stone for men, so that they can corrupt and deceive their feminine naivety as a way to climb the social ladder. It is, however, the heroine's role in both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca* to attempt to defy this role and take vengeance against the patriarchal forces. If this isn't possible for them, it at least adds an allegorical dimension and leaves us to question not only the role of females, but also the role of males in Gothic fiction and the danger this brings to the female heroines. Scott Mackenzie reiterates this point, that Gothic "women find themselves in double binds, between innocent vulnerability and debauched corruption." and like the coexistence of Gothic architecture's internal and external forms, it is only when women possess this innocence, that it is possible for them to be deceived and attempt to break free from their patriarchal bonds.<sup>23</sup>

We then see what happens to female characters who possess the ability and power to overcome these domineering forces. The characterisation of Bertha Mason is, in this sense, extremely important. Jane describes to us the confusion when seeing the being that "ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not, at first sight, tell: it grovelled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing; and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face."<sup>24</sup> Jane also describes the journey it takes to find Bertha which is arguably, equally as alarming. She says that she "mounted the first staircase, passed up the gallery, proceeded to the third story: the low, black door, opened by Mr Rochester's master key, admitted us to the tapestried room." and Rochester then lifted the hangings from the wall, uncovering the second door [...] In a room, without a window, there burnt a fire, guarded by a high and strong fender, and a lamp suspended from the ceiling by a chain."<sup>25</sup> Holding a strong female character hostage, in the hidden depths of Thornfield Hall tells us that its walls "cease to represent protection", not just for Bertha but for Jane too, "but instead mark off an area to be purified from the demands of absolute obedience levied

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<sup>21</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 14.

<sup>22</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Scott Mackenzie, "An Englishwoman's Workhouse is her Castle: Poor Management and Gothic Fiction in the 1790s." *Elh*74, no. 3 (2007): 686.

<sup>24</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 420.

<sup>25</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 419-420.

in the name of a contaminated domestic ideology.”<sup>26</sup> The purification, for Mr Rochester, is integral in ensuring such a “cunning and malignant lunatic” does not ruin his patriarchal system.<sup>27</sup> He tells Jane that “A wind fresh from Europe blew over the ocean and rushed through the open casement: the storm broke, streamed, thundered, blazed, and the air grew pure [...] my heart, dried up and scorched for a long time, swelled to the tone, and filled with living blood.”<sup>28</sup> And “Glad was I when I at last got her to Thornfield, and saw her safely lodged in that third story room, of whose secret inner cabinet she has now for ten years made a wild beast’s den.”<sup>29</sup> William Stafford discusses the structure of Gothic buildings, and how their “castle style” relates to “a conservative fear of revolution.”<sup>30</sup>, and it is true that Mr Rochester’s need to lock Bertha up and contain her threatening femininity in “a goblin’s cell” is simply because of these anxieties, that the female role will revolt and destroy the traditional social order where men continuously possess the upper hand.<sup>31</sup> However, attempting to contain and lock Bertha up does not serve the purpose that Mr Rochester hopes it will. Jane is told how Bertha “was on the roof; where she was standing, waving her arms, above the battlements, and shouting out till they could hear her a mile off: I saw her and heard her with my own eyes.”<sup>32</sup> Turning Thornfield Hall from a sanctuary of domestic control, to simply “quite a ruin”, and dying on her own terms having become emancipated from Thornfield Hall and its control, not only demonstrates a successful act of rebellion having dismantled the root of the patriarchal control, but it also allows for Jane to be free, in a sense, too.<sup>33</sup> Bertha’s end is arguably more symbolic than Jane’s as she advocates for and sacrifices herself in the name of female freedom. The embodiment of this female potential, that can and would disturb the societal order to cause disruption for the men in power is threatening and frightful to them, but powerful and brave to us and the female authors who created them, and their presence is important in exploring the future of feminine possibilities.

### Vulnerability and Guilt: Daphne du Maurier’s exploration of female gender roles in Rebecca

It is true that, whilst du Maurier’s nameless narrator in *Rebecca* may not yet be trapped within a physical Gothic building, she is, like Jane, trapped by the necessity of the male figures around her. Horner and Zlosnik suggest that “Identity is not a ‘given’ to be discovered, but a dynamic process of construction.”<sup>34</sup> and given the narrator’s young and vulnerable state, this makes it easy for Maxim to use and manipulate to create a woman who will only elevate his already all-encompassing power.

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<sup>26</sup> Kate Ellis Ferguson, *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Urbana: University Of Illinois Press, 1989): 51.

<sup>27</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 444.

<sup>28</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 442.

<sup>29</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 443.

<sup>30</sup> William Stafford, “The Gender of the Place: Building and Landscape in Women-Authored Texts in England of the 1790s.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 13 (2003): 311.

<sup>31</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 443.

<sup>32</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 616.

<sup>33</sup> Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, 613.

<sup>34</sup> Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, *Daphne Du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998): 13.

As previously mentioned, it is the attribute of innocence that Gothic heroines possess that makes it possible for patriarchal forces to corrupt them. This helps to explain the reason why Maxim's hasty marriage to the narrator is sprung upon us so quickly, because without her innocence, she might gain "not the right sort of knowledge" that will endanger his and Manderley's masculine position.<sup>35</sup> The narrator cannot understand "how it was he spoke so casually, as though the matter was of little consequence, a mere adjustment of plans. Whereas to me it was a bomb-shell, exploding in a thousand fragments."<sup>36</sup> The narrator herself questions Maxim's motives, but due to her "painfully apparent social, intellectual and sexual naivety", she does not acquire this knowledge and becomes trapped by marriage to Maxim and his patriarchal institution.<sup>37</sup> Mrs Van Hopper, who clearly does not possess the same level of naivety as the narrator, reveals to her that Maxim's need for marriage doesn't exist from a place of love, romance or respect, but it simply comes from his necessity to replace his late wife with a more angelic figure to help run Manderley, a completely 'other' version of Rebecca. Mrs Van Hopper says "that empty house got on his nerves to such an extent he nearly went off his head. He admitted as much before you came into the room. He just can't go on living there alone..."<sup>38</sup> The void that exists in Manderley and in Mr de Winter's life creates a "nightmare space [...] full of dark secrets and threatening scenarios." for the narrator, and we only fear what is to come of her femininity following the marriage.<sup>39</sup> It is clear here that "Women, for Maxim, is the other necessary for the construction of his masculine self."<sup>40</sup> The female gender role works alongside Manderley to grants him his own identity construction that allows him to imprison the narrator, and Manderley and Maxim's power work effortlessly together in ensuring that the women who serve them do not venture outside of their role. They are present as subservient figures who obey and listen, and not much else. Like Jane, who questioned her suffering, the narrator ultimately ends up doing the same. She "wished he would not always treat me as a child, rather spoilt, rather irresponsible, someone to be petted from time to time when the mood came upon him but more often forgotten, more often patted on the shoulder and told to run away and play. I wished something would happen to make me look wiser, more mature. Was it always going to be like this?"<sup>41</sup> The narrator is convenient for Maxim. Horner and Zlosnik believe that "the text sets up Manderley as a dream space wherein fantasies can be fulfilled and the objects of desire achieved."<sup>42</sup> She is someone who, as mentioned, achieves and fulfils his life as an object of desire and more importantly, in Manderley's system too. It is interesting to note that whilst Manderley is portrayed as, in a way, a best case scenario for the narrator, Thornfield Hall exists as an overt opposite. Dream space or not, both Gothic spaces ensure that the narrator and Jane are left marginalised, alone and alienated from a society where they were never welcomed at or meant to be a part of in the first place.

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<sup>35</sup> Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca* (Little Brown & Co, 2016): 226-227.

<sup>36</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 60.

<sup>37</sup> Horner and Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier*, 103.

<sup>38</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 67.

<sup>39</sup> Horner and Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier*, 102.

<sup>40</sup> Horner and Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier*, 105.

<sup>41</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 219-220.

<sup>42</sup> Horner and Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier*, 102.

Like Bertha Mason, du Maurier uses the titular character Rebecca as a version of the nameless narrator's 'other'. It is said that "The relationship between the nameless narrator and Rebecca [...] offer variations on Charlotte Bronte's portrayal of a heroine" and "another woman who is both her opposite and a hidden 'self'".<sup>43</sup> Rather than offering us a stark representation of femininity as Bertha Mason, du Maurier depicts Rebecca as a tempting, unfaithful, sinister seductress whose presence, although she was murdered by Maxim, is still very much alive. Like Bertha, Rebecca's character lives in a location inaccessible to the narrator where her embodiment of the female role lives. In Rebecca's case, this is in the West Wing of Manderley. Mrs Danvers shows the narrator Rebecca's West Wing and tells her how it is the "The loveliest room you have ever seen."<sup>44</sup> Whilst it is true that Rebecca's display of femininity is present in the West Wing, her presence, and her threat to Maxim and Manderley is everywhere. Mrs Danvers tells the narrator that "It's in many rooms in the house. [...] I feel her everywhere. You do too, don't you?"<sup>45</sup> Rebecca's omnipresence at Manderley enlightens Maxim's own insecurities, and Maxim's "fear of the feminisation of his estate" reveals to us the reason he murdered his wife, telling us that promiscuous femininity is not to be tolerated within these spheres, it must be eradicated.<sup>46</sup> He tells us that Rebecca was "not even normal"<sup>47</sup>, and that "Her blasted taste made Manderley the thing it is today."<sup>48</sup> His ignorance then and blatant dismissal for his wrongs ensure not just his fate, but also the fate of Manderley.

The narrator describes the Manderley fire to us, and states that when Manderley was burning, "There was no moon. The sky above our heads was inky black. But the sky on the horizon was not dark at all. It was shot with crimson, like a splash of blood. And the ashes blew towards us with the salt wind from the sea."<sup>49</sup> Pons argues that "The destruction of Manderley is not a liberation and a new beginning as the burning of Thornfield Hall. [...] Instead, the ending of Rebecca poses a question for social reproduction and continuance, the ruined estate becoming the most prominent haunting presence in the minds of Maxim and Mrs de Winter in their exile."<sup>50</sup> The Manderley fire, then, is seen as another dimension to the burning of Thornfield Hall. Its end signifies a kind of identity crisis for Maxim. Alfred Hitchcock's 1940s interpretation of *Rebecca* provides us with a new, significantly poignant ending that sends this message to the audience with clarity. It is suggested to us the mystery of the Manderley burning is solved, and it was in fact Mrs Danvers who set Manderley on fire. She not only emancipates herself and Rebecca from the mansion and its control, but she also allows the narrator a chance to possess her own sense of feminine freedom and break free from Maxim, Manderley and everything it embodies. Without his material object, Maxim has lost the attribute that gives him the patriarchal strength. Although, in du Maurier's text, Rebecca did not burn down Manderley herself as Bertha Mason did, it is surely her spirit and memory that taunts Maxim as he believes she has won from this disastrous event taking place. It is ultimately after the loss of Manderley, the mark of the patriarchal system, we are forced to question what will exist following this, and that if

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<sup>43</sup> Horner, "Heroines", 118.

<sup>44</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 189.

<sup>45</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 194.

<sup>46</sup> Horner and Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier*, 115.

<sup>47</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 304.

<sup>48</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 307.

<sup>49</sup> Du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 428.

<sup>50</sup> Pons, "Patriarchal Hauntings", 80.

anything is to exist from this, it should be the social need for reform and the creation of an equal society.

## Conclusion

To conclude my analysis, both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca* are narratives where a “persecuted maiden is entrapped by the male tyrant in a labyrinthine castle.”<sup>51</sup> Brontë captures the life of a Gothic heroine who is trapped within numerous Gothic spaces and the hegemony that exists within each one. The characterisation of Bertha Mason is used as a social message of what femininity could become if it is allowed to dominate such spaces. The nameless narrator of du Maurier’s fiction also helps to encapsulate the passive version of femininity that Gothic males like to corrupt and use to their own potential. *Rebecca*, like Bertha Mason, acts as a symbol of resistance, wherein we question why females are contained by their domestic roles, and what gives males the right to use their Gothic property to control a woman’s enfranchisement. It is clear then, that all of the female characters and their representations of the female gender role, seek to provide “a new voice that verbalises its own desire to deconstruct the prevailing order of patriarchal societies where men are dominant and woman subservient”.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Alison Millbank, “Female Gothic,” in *The Handbook of Gothic Literature*, ed. Marie Mulvey Roberts (New York: New York University Press), 184

<sup>52</sup> Quawas Rula, “A New Woman’s Journey into Insanity: Descent and Return in the *Yellow Wallpaper*” *Journal of the Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association* 2006, no. 105 (2006): 40-41.



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