

HOW IS WOMEN'S MADNESS PORTRAYED IN DAPHNE DU MAURIER'S *REBECCA* AND SARAH WATERS' *THE LITTLE STRANGER*?

The portrayal of women's madness in Gothic literature has long been intertwined with themes of patriarchal control, societal expectations and gender roles. In Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* (1938), madness is portrayed through the psychological deterioration of the second Mrs. de Winter, overwhelmed by the shadow of her husband's first wife. Similarly, in Sarah Waters' *The Little Stranger* (2009), Caroline Ayres' descent into madness is tied to her role as the last surviving member of the Ayres family, expected to maintain the crumbling Hundreds Hall. In these novels, female characters experience psychological unravelling that is deeply connected to their environments, societal pressures, and interpersonal relationships. Both du Maurier and Waters explore the theme of madness to criticise patriarchal systems and the power they have to send someone into a state of insanity. In the case of these novels, madness is not only a psychological condition; it serves as a metaphor for the psychological and emotional repression experienced by women trapped in oppressive domestic environments. By analysing the experiences of Mrs. de Winter in *Rebecca* and Caroline Ayres in *The Little Stranger*, we can see how their mental states are influenced by external societal pressures and the ghostly legacies of other women in their lives.

In *Rebecca*, Mrs. de Winter embodies a form of madness rooted in obsession and idealisation. Her devotion to the deceased Rebecca manifests as an unhinged fixation that borders on the pathological. This portrayal reflects the societal expectations of the time, where women were primarily valued for their relationships with others, as wives, mothers and caretakers, and subjected to unattainable ideals of beauty, grace and domestic perfection. In *Gothic Literature*, Davidson states, 'Female Gothic writers deploy the supernatural for psychological and political ends to advance a gender-aware commentary on women's roles and the dreaded husbands, guardians and institutions that threaten to control them.'¹ Du Maurier uses this in *Rebecca* through Mrs. de Winter and her idealisation of the former mistress. This positions her as a pitiable and terrifying character, critiquing how these societal pressures can evoke madness in women. Her inability to move beyond Rebecca's memory intensifies this madness, with Frank declaring that 'she was the most beautiful creature I ever saw in my life',² which reveals the impossibility of replicating

¹ Carol Margaret Davidson, *History of the Gothic: Gothic Literature 1764-1824* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), 223.

² Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca* (London: Virago, 2015), 151.

Rebecca's image. Mrs. de Winter's obsessive reverence for Rebecca is heightened by the hyperbolic diction, where adjectives like 'beautiful' create an idealised image impossible to attain. The juxtaposition of this elevated language with her increasing instability sharpens the portrayal of madness as a yearning for perfection and an acknowledgement of its unattainability. This further highlights the oppressive societal ideals of femininity and perfection and the destructive nature of living in her shadow.

This is further emphasised when Mrs. de Winter laments, 'I realise, every day, that things I lack, confidence, grace, beauty, intelligence, wit – Oh, all the qualities that mean most in a woman – she possessed.'³ The nouns 'confidence,' 'grace,' 'beauty,' 'intelligence,' and 'wit' encapsulate the societal expectations placed upon women, particularly wives, to project an idealised image of perfection and compliance. Confidence and grace denote markers of social prowess and self-assurance, especially in a world that values women's ability to navigate social settings and perform their domestic duties with poise and elegance. Beauty was arguably the most emphasised quality for women during this period, as a woman's worth was often defined by her appearance. In this case, Rebecca's beauty is incomparable, and Mrs. de Winter's plainness starkly contrasts with it. Intelligence and wit were expected subtly from women, as they should possess social intelligence, a form of understanding the desires and expectations of others and never failing to meet them. The absence of these qualities in Mrs. de Winter can be seen as a driving force behind her growing instability and madness, as she feels unwelcomed and outcast from society. When she finds out that she cannot meet these expectations, especially in the shadow of Rebecca's idealised image, her psychological breakdown becomes inevitable. These traits reflect the rigid societal roles that women were expected to perform, often leading to feelings of inadequacy and frustration. As argued by Pons in *Patriarchal Hauntings*, 'the novel portrays the characters' inability to fulfil the highly demanding gender roles imposed by this system, which leads them towards hypocrisy, hysteria and crime.'⁴ Mrs. de Winter exemplifies this inability, as her obsessive devotion to Rebecca's ideal only deepens her psychological torment, demonstrating how rigid gender roles can suffocate women and undermine their psychological well-being. Her idealisation blurs the boundaries between admiration and madness, evoking unease and emphasising psychological fragmentation, typical tropes found in the Gothic genre.

In *The Little Stranger*, Caroline Ayres's descent into madness is portrayed as a product of internal turmoil and external pressures tied to societal

³ Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca* (London: Virago, 2015), 148.

⁴ Auba Llompart Pons, "Patriarchal Hauntings: Re-Reading Villainy and Gender in Daphne du Maurier's 'Rebecca,'" *Atlantis* 35, no. 1 (2013): 71.

expectations as a woman of the upper class who takes on the role of a caretaker and preserver of the decaying Hundreds Hall. Caroline's madness is linked to the decline of her family and estate, symbolising the erosion of aristocratic power in post-war Britain. She complained that 'it's just me now, trying to keep things going,'⁵ capturing her sense of isolation and the overwhelming burden placed on her to maintain the legacy of the Ayres family. Despite her resilience, the weight of her responsibilities begins to break her down: 'She was not the sort of person to simply fall apart. But she was under pressure – terrible pressure.'⁶ The juxtaposition of strength and vulnerability in this quote highlights the internal conflict Caroline experiences as societal expectations clash with her psychological turmoil that arises from attempting to uphold a decaying social order. Halberstam asserts that Gothic spaces often 'represent the collapse of traditional boundaries,'⁷ reinforcing the interpretation of Hundred's Hall as a site where personal and societal breakdowns converge. The critic's focus on the lack of boundaries between self and space mirrors Caroline's experience, as her identity becomes entangled with the decay of her familial home. These perspectives not only highlight the societal constraints imposed on women but also position Caroline's madness as resistance to the roles dictated by class and gender. By linking Caroline's decline to the house's decay, Waters employs Gothic conventions of the supernatural, where physical spaces mirror psychological states.

Additionally, Faraday reflects that the hall's hauntings are 'not just ghosts. They're part of a person. Unconscious parts, so strong and troubled they can take on a life of their own.'⁸ Caroline's madness, though deeply influenced by external pressures, is also a product of repressed emotional conflicts that manifest as supernatural phenomena. The decaying mansion, as Andrew Smith suggests, 'becomes a metaphor for the instability of the family... and the fragility of class structures,'⁹ pointing to the inextricable link between Caroline's identity and the decaying estate. This interpretation also aligns with the Gothic theme of the supernatural, where psychological breakdowns blur the line between the real and the imagined. As a woman, she faces the pressure of navigating a patriarchal society that offers her few choices beyond duty and sacrifice. Her growing estrangement from traditional feminine roles and her pragmatic demeanour renders her an anomaly within the household. Caroline's madness is not merely personal; it reflects the psychological toll forced upon women by societal hierarchies that deny them agency. Her decline exposes the

⁵ Sarah Waters, *The Little Stranger* (Virago, 2018), 210.

⁶ Waters, *The Little Stranger*, 215.

⁷ Judith Halberstam, *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 69.

⁸ Waters, *The Little Stranger*, 324.

⁹ Andrew Smith, *Haunted Texts: The Gothic and the Literary Tradition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 142.

fragility of these structures and the human cost of their preservation, making her madness both a personal tragedy and a broader commentary on the unsustainability of a fading social order where the remnants of aristocracy are linked to internal disintegration.

The home serves as the primary site of women's entrapment and madness in Gothic literature, and *Rebecca* and *The Little Stranger* are no exceptions. Manderley acts as a physical space and as a symbol of patriarchal control and the oppressive societal expectations that bind women. In *Rebecca*, Mrs. de Winter's feelings of alienation and confinement in Manderley perfectly illustrate how the domestic space becomes a prison and unwelcoming. As she reflects, 'I could not help it if I felt like a guest in Manderley, my home, walking where she had trodden, resting where she had lain. I was like a guest, biding my time, waiting for the return of the hostess.'¹⁰ This statement encapsulates the deep tension between the two mistresses, with the current Mrs. de Winter feeling as though she cannot live up to the standard Rebecca created. Though Manderley is an elegant estate, it is not a place of safety or comfort for her; it is a place where she is haunted by the spectre of Rebecca and overshadowed by her predecessor's legacy. Alexander Warwick states that 'the ordinary home replaces the castle as the place of terror, and the newer villains are more often lovers and husbands than forbidding fathers.'¹¹ In *Rebecca*, Maxim de Winter, although not overtly a villain, plays the role of the patriarch whose authority is manifested through Manderley. This aligns with the observation that in twentieth-century Female Gothic literature, heroines like Mrs. de Winter 'are more likely to be trapped in domestic spaces than semi-ruined castles,'¹² which were once the hallmark of Gothic terror. Manderley becomes a castle-like fortress for Mrs. de Winter, yet remains a sanctuary for Rebecca's memory that furthers her obsession. The psychological terror she experiences is rooted in the emotional and mental chains imposed by the oppressive environment of the home. Her belief that the house embodies Rebecca's spirit underscores the Gothic tradition of linking space and psychological state, where the home becomes a site of both comfort and terror.

Mrs. de Winter's sense of inferiority is expressed further when she states, 'I'm being like Jasper now, leaning against him. He pats me now and then, when he remembers, and I'm pleased. I get closer to him for a moment. He likes me in the way I like Jasper.'¹³ The comparison between herself and the dog

¹⁰ du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 154

¹¹ Alexandra Warwick, 'Gothic 1820-1880' in *Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination* (London: The British Library, 2014), 119.

¹² Andrew Smith and Diana Wallace, "The Female Gothic: Then and Now," *Gothic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2004): 5.

¹³ du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 114.

reinforces her perception of herself as an object of affection rather than a human with autonomy and agency. It reveals the unnamed narrator's deep sense of inferiority and emotional subordination within her marriage to Maxim. Her pleasure in being 'patted' by Maxim when he 'remembers' shows her desperation for validation and affection, even if given inconsistently or patronisingly. Jasper exists to provide comfort without expectation of reciprocation, and her identification with him reflects her internalised belief that her value lies in being subservient to her husband, in offering herself without demanding emotional connection. This dynamic links to the broader theme of women's subordination within the novel, where the narrator's sense of self-worth is continually shaped by the way she is treated by men, particularly Maxim. Her feelings of inadequacy, conjoined with her constant comparison to Rebecca, intensify her ever-growing madness. She begins to lose her identity, feeling as if she is not a partner but a passive figure, reduced to the role of a pet whose worth is determined solely by the attention she receives. This underscores how the domestic realm reflects a system that limits women's roles to those defined by male authority and the legacies of other women. This dynamic leads to Mrs de Winter's psychological unravelling, which is tied to her role in the household. Rather than a specific character, Pons expresses that 'the ultimate Gothic villain in Daphne du Maurier's novel is the haunting presence of an old-fashioned, strict patriarchal system, represented by Maxim's mansion, Manderley, and understood as a hierarchical system.'¹⁴ The narrator's comparison of herself to Jasper reflects her position within this patriarchal hierarchy, where her worth is diminished to an animalistic role. By using the domestic space as a site of psychological oppression, du Maurier critiques the system that confines women's identities, illustrating how madness can be a form of resistance against these repressive structures. The home serves as a place where women's sense of self is tested and broken, eventually revealing the destructive impact of patriarchal norms on their mental and emotional states.

In *The Little Stranger*, the house plays a crucial role in the psychological unravelling of Caroline Ayres. It acts as a physical space and as a metaphor for the patriarchal control that restricts her agency and traps her in a role that does not align with her emotional needs or desires. Caroline's reflections on the house reveal her belief that it is directly responsible for her deteriorating mental state. She expresses, 'I think it's the house. I think it's pulling us all down, and we're letting it,'¹⁵ highlighting her perception that the place that was meant to provide shelter and safety has become a force of oppression. This positions the house as a symbol of societal and familial pressures, especially those placed on

¹⁴ Pons, "Patriarchal Hauntings," 71.

¹⁵ Waters, *The Little Stranger*, 253.

women, which confine them to roles of caretakers and preservers of tradition, roles that are impossible to escape. In both *The Little Stranger* and *Rebecca*, the madness of Mrs. de Winter and Caroline Ayres is a direct consequence of patriarchal structures that limit their autonomy. As Showalter argues, ‘the representation of women’s madness... is bound up with the subjugation of women to patriarchal structures, which limit their autonomy and confine them to roles as wives, mothers, and keepers of the domestic sphere.’¹⁶ Caroline is trapped by the expectations of her class and gender, tasked with the burden of maintaining a feminine role within a declining aristocratic family. Caroline’s desire to preserve the decaying Ayres estate critiques how women’s identities and psychological states are shaped by societal expectations of domesticity and submission, causing feelings of frustration, madness and entrapment.

Hundreds Hall becomes a site of psychological conflict, where Caroline is forced to confront the weight of her family’s history and the diminishing power of her class, both of which further her feelings of entrapment and her descent into madness. Caroline admits, ‘I feel as though I’m sinking, every day a little more. The house, the debts, Mother – it’s all just too much.’¹⁷ The juxtaposition of the grand, majestic house with the stressful debts and her mother highlights the connection of patriarchal expectations, class hierarchy, and familial duty, all of which burden Caroline and leave her with little emotional space. The house is a microcosm of the societal structures governing her life and forces Caroline to play a role where her desires are subordinated to preserving the Ayres family legacy. As Diane Elam observes, ‘the house becomes a symbol of the imprisonment of women’s desires, their forced confinement within the domestic sphere that allows for no expression of individuality.’¹⁸ In *The Little Stranger*, Hundreds Hall reflects Caroline Ayres’ confinement within both the decaying estate and her prescribed societal role. The house is not simply a setting but a symbol of the patriarchy that constrains women’s identities and mental states. Caroline’s madness, therefore, can be understood as a reaction to the overwhelming pressures placed on her, ones that demand she maintain a crumbling family estate as the social structures that once supported her class disintegrate around her.

Rebecca’s haunting presence in the novel transcends her physical absence, creating a psychological grip on the reader that progressively unravels the second Mrs. de Winter’s sense of self. Rebecca’s bedroom, ‘as it used to be, before she died...’¹⁹ serves as a reminder of her omnipresence and how she

¹⁶ Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture* (London: Virago, 1987), 13.

¹⁷ Waters, *The Little Stranger*, 105.

¹⁸ Diane Elam, *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: A Critical Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 38.

¹⁹ du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 186

continues to dominate the lives of those within the walls of Manderley. The preservation of Rebecca's belongings highlights her lingering control, with Mrs. de Winter noting that 'Her footsteps sounded in the corridors, her scent lingered on the stairs.'²⁰ These sensory images emphasise Rebecca's spectral influence, blurring the lines between memory and the supernatural. She is, therefore, positioned as a figure of power and defiance, with her haunting serving as a critique of the societal norms that sought to constrain her in life. However, the second Mrs. de Winter, by contrast, is consumed by the oppressive weight of Rebecca's legacy, poignantly demonstrating how patriarchal structures manipulate women into competing with impossible ideals. By situating the protagonist's declining mental state within the domestic sphere and tying it to Rebecca's spectral presence, du Maurier critiques how societal expectations and internalised ideals of womanhood can fracture a woman's sense of identity, ultimately driving her towards madness.

Furthermore, the surrounding characters' inability to let go of Rebecca further emphasises Mrs de Winter's feelings of inadequacy. She states that 'Rebecca was still mistress of Manderley. Rebecca was still Mrs. de Winter. I had no business here at all. I had come blundering like a poor fool on ground that was preserved.'²¹ The comparison magnifies Rebecca's resplendent image and traps the protagonist in a cycle of self-doubt and inferiority. Her growing paranoia is amplified by Mrs. Danvers, who manipulates her, saying, 'Do you think the dead come back and watch the living?'²² This question, filled with Gothic ambiguity, reflects du Maurier using Rebecca as an inescapable force, as a memory and a haunting entity that influences and unravels Mrs. de Winter. As Pons observes, 'Rebecca's haunting operates as a reminder of the destructive consequences of rigid gender roles,'²³ a theme that du Maurier effectively explores through the protagonist's psychological decline. Her descent into madness follows the Gothic tradition and links psychological instability with patriarchal oppression.

In *The Little Stranger*, Sarah Waters intertwines themes of madness and haunting, allowing the novel and women's madness to be understood as both a personal and societal phenomenon. With the Ayres family being emblematic of the declining aristocracy and facing the erosion of their status and wealth, Caroline Ayres's experience of madness in *The Little Stranger* reflects the profound social and psychological disruptions faced by women in post-war Britain. Gordon, in *Ghostly Matters*, proposes the concept that 'the ghost is not

²⁰ du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 261

²¹ du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 261

²² du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 194

²³ Pons, "Patriarchal Hauntings," 35.

simply a dead or missing person, but a social figure'.²⁴ This can be linked to Caroline, whose perceived madness represents unresolved conflicts between history, identity and the changing social order. Furthermore, unlike her mother, Caroline's disconnection from traditional aristocratic femininity – her lack of interest in beauty, marriage and social expectations – makes her an outsider within her family and class. This increasing isolation, symbolised by her entrapment in the decaying Hundreds Hall, reflects how the 'house knows all our weaknesses and is testing them one by one',²⁵ amplifying her vulnerabilities and frustrations. Braid describes the decline of the estate as going 'hand in hand with the destruction of the Ayres family',²⁶ mirroring Caroline's breakdown. As the house deteriorates, so does her ability to maintain this façade of control. Her desire to leave Hundreds Hall is cast aside due to societal and familial expectations, trapping her within its decaying walls. Caroline's eventual descent into madness thus represents the damaging effects of gendered expectations and class obligations on women like herself.

According to Klonowska, the haunting of the house also serves as 'a spectacular sign of seemingly unseen and yet long-lasting'²⁷ systems of social hierarchisation. Caroline's madness can be interpreted as 'a means of subsequent retribution exacted by the helpless and mistreated.'²⁸ Her frustration with her inability to escape the family's decline and her subordinate position as an unmarried daughter reveal the oppressive structures that confine women in society. Her death, ambiguously framed as either suicide or supernatural interference, criticises the failure of the aristocratic class to adapt to an ever-changing society and modernity, showing the devastating toll this failure exacts on its women. The supernatural elements surrounding her death show the inescapable grip of the past and the lingering ghosts of outdated values taking their toll on living women. Hundred's Hall's haunting symbolises 'a sign of latent social problems',²⁹ and Caroline Ayres' madness is a commentary on how societal pressures and systemic oppression shape women's mental health. Her story intertwines personal struggle with broader social decay, making her a tragic figure whose decline illuminates the cost of a society in transition.

²⁴ Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 8.

²⁵ Waters, *The Little Stranger*, 309.

²⁶ Barbara Braid, "What Haunts Hundreds Hall? Transgression in Sarah Waters' *The Little Stranger*." *In Art of Darkness: A Poetics of Gothic*, ed. David Punter (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 138.

²⁷ Anna Klonowska, "Haunting Across the Class Divide: Sarah Waters's *Affinity* and *The Little Stranger*," *Avant* 8, no. 2 (2017): 177.

²⁸ Klonowska, "Haunting Across the Class Divide," 173.

²⁹ Klonowska, "Haunting Across the Class Divide," 172.

Du Maurier demonstrates the damaging effects of marriage, particularly failed marriages, and how women are expected to stay to uphold an image of happiness and perfection, often leading to frustration and madness. The de Winters prioritise the reputation of their marriage, repressing their unhappiness and emotional instability. Mrs. de Winter, reflecting on her troubled marriage, admits, “If he had no more tenderness for me, never kissed me again, did not speak to me except on matters of necessity, I believed I could bear it if I were certain that nobody knew all of this but our two selves.”³⁰ The narrator is obsessed with external appearances, willing to sacrifice her mental health and yearning for romance to keep a positive image. Shame is deeply internalised by Mrs de Winter, who reflects that “there was nothing quite so shaming, so degrading, as a marriage that had failed.”³¹ This highlights how women are burdened with the responsibility of upholding the idealised image of marital success, regardless of their suffering. The fear of societal judgement and personal degradation traps them in roles where they must endure emotional neglect and alienation. This is evident in Mrs de Winter, who is afraid of this condemnation and is therefore contemptuous of living a life of misery and neglect. This psychological strain suppresses her autonomy and increases her mental instability. In *Returning to Manderley*, Light discusses the idea that romance ‘emerges as a form of oppressive ideology, which works to keep women in their socially and sexually subordinate place.’³² The de Winter marriage becomes a site of repression, where the wife’s individuality and desires are sacrificed to maintain the patriarchal ideal. This repression mirrors the common Gothic trope of madness, where women’s psychological unravelling is not an inherent flaw but a reaction to the confining structures and expectations in their lives.

Sarah Waters explores women’s madness, linking psychological deterioration to the oppressive madness of the household and the societal expectations imposed on women. Caroline’s frustration with her life is evident when she states, “I ought to have gone years ago. But I’ve been stuck here, haven’t I? Stuck, looking after Mother and this bloody house.”³³ This entrapment reflects the restrictive roles assigned to women, particularly unmarried daughters, who are expected to sacrifice personal aspirations for familial duty. She is forced to become a caretaker and holds the burden of Hundreds Hall independently, which becomes a Gothic representation of decay and confinement. Ann Williams writes, “the castle also represents a man’s

³⁰ du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 260.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Alison Light, “‘Returning to Manderley’: Romance, Fiction, Female Sexuality and Class,” *Feminist Review*, no. 16 (1984), 8.

³³ Waters, *The Little Stranger*, 354.

culture, the arrangement of spaces in which this ‘Gothic’ action unfolds and the distribution of power that generates the plot.”³⁴ The house symbolises a patriarchal legacy that traps its inhabitants, particularly women, in roles defined by servitude. Caroline’s remark, “the house is sick with something. Or we’re sick with it”,³⁵ blurs the line between the physical deterioration of Hundreds Hall and her mental state, linking this psychological decline to the oppressive forces of both her environment and societal expectations. Through Caroline’s madness, Waters critiques the devastating impact of patriarchal structures, class expectations, and the decay of tradition on women’s autonomy and mental health. Madness, therefore, is presented as an individual failing and a result of broader systemic oppression.

In conclusion, the theme of madness provides a method for Waters and du Maurier to explore these taboo issues, subsequently giving women a voice in their struggles and responsibilities. Madness, in both novels, reveals how patriarchal systems and repressive controls can impact an individual, leading them into an eventual decline. In *Rebecca*, du Maurier uses the theme of madness to highlight the consequences of damaging societal expectations of how women are supposed to act and constant comparison to other women. In *The Little Stranger*, Waters shows how women can become frustrated through entrapment and being suffocated with responsibilities. Through the experiences of Mrs. de Winter and Caroline Ayres, the authors highlight the emotional and psychological toll exacted by external forces and expose the limitations placed upon women in a world dominated by gendered and class-based hierarchies. These women, isolated and defined by their relationships with men and tormented by the ghostly legacies of past women, become trapped within their domestic spheres. These spaces serve as both a sanctuary and prison to them, where their identities are consistently overshadowed, manipulated and broken. Both writers poignantly use madness to explore women’s issues and critique the society that oppresses them.

³⁴ Anne Williams, *Art of Darkness: A Poetics of Gothic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 44.

³⁵ Waters, *The Little Stranger*, 373.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Braid, Barbara. "What Haunts Hundreds Hall? Transgression in Sarah Waters' *The Little Stranger*." In *Art of Darkness: A Poetics of Gothic*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Davidson, Carol Margaret. *History of the Gothic: Gothic Literature 1764-1824*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009.
- Du Maurier, Daphne. *Rebecca*. London: Virago, 2015.
- Elam, Diane. *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: A Critical Dictionary*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Halberstam, Judith. *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1995.
- Klonowska, Anna. "Haunting Across the Class Divide: Sarah Waters's Affinity and *The Little Stranger*." *Avant* 8, no.2 (2017): 171-178.
- Light, Alison. "'Returning to Manderley': Romance Fiction, Female Sexuality and Class." *Feminist Review*, no. 16 (1984): 7-25.
- Pons, Aura Llompart. "Patriarchal Hauntings: Re-Reading Villainy and Gender in Daphne du Maurier's 'Rebecca.'" *Atlantis* 35, no. 1 (2013): 69-83.
- Showalter, Elaine. *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture*. London: Virago, 1987.
- Smith, Andrew. *Haunted Texts: The Gothic and Literary Tradition*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Smith, Andrew and Wallace, Diana. "The Female Gothic: Then and Now." *Gothic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2004): 1-7.
- Warwick, Alexandra. 'Gothic 1820-1880' in *Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination*. London: The British Library, 2014.
- Waters, Sarah. *The Little Stranger*. London: Virago, 2018.
- Williams, Anne. *Art of Darkness: A Poetics of Gothic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.