

CHARLOTTE SMITH AND MASCULINITY

THE MEASURE OF A MAN: REFASHIONING MASCULINITY THROUGH
SENSIBILITY AND GOTHIC IN CHARLOTTE SMITH'S *EMMELINE: THE
ORPHAN OF THE CASTLE AND ETHELINDE OR THE RECLUSE OF THE LAKE*

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TITLE: The Measure of a Man: Refashioning Masculinity through Sensibility and Gothic in Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle* and *Ethelinde or the Recluse of the Lake*

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Abstract

While eighteenth-century Gothic fiction typically constructs masculinity as tyrannical in a rigid patriarchal structure, Gothic writers such as Horace Walpole were challenging this structure as they were instituting it. Walpole uses Gothic conventions to establish and criticize the cruel, oppressive patriarchal structure in *The Castle of Otranto*. However, he offers no alternative structure, since even the male characters are powerless to act outside of it. Charlotte Smith introduces Gothic conventions into her sentimental novels in order to undermine patriarchy and to offer an alternative structure of power in which she creates a new social order, challenges gender roles, and demands a more refined masculinity. In *Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle*, Smith challenges traditional understandings of masculinity. By incorporating sensibility, she redefines masculinity by affirming its dependence on social status. Thus, Smith effectively establishes social authority as a more powerful force than patriarchy. In *Ethelinde or the Recluse of the Lake*, Smith further refines masculinity as she uses the power of society to advocate for an equalization of genders, not to degrade masculinity, but to indicate that both men and women are subject to social expectation, and thus to each other. Through her incorporation of sensibility and Gothic elements, Smith promotes a purified masculinity as her male characters must, under the more authoritative force of society, act with selflessness and charity. Smith's new social structure constructs society as a disciplinary force to which men and women are equally subjected, and which replaces the tyrannical authority and gendered hierarchy evident in the traditional patriarchal structure. Ultimately, Smith promotes a new understanding of society as a gender-neutral space,

which demands respectability determined not by wealth or status, but by morality and compassion for others.

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Introduction

In eighteenth-century Gothic fiction, typical masculine villains are tyrannical and patriarchal as they willingly hold power over women's lives by posing a threat to their virginity or by controlling and/or threatening their lives. Heroes also exemplify masculinity in that they use strength and power over women to save them from the tyrannical villains (M. Ellis, *History* 58-59, 64). Traditional gothic masculinity, then, is defined in terms of men's control over the lives of women, whether to help or threaten them. This is not to say that male characters in gothic fiction are without emotions. Just as gothic conventions were being established by authors such as Horace Walpole, they were being challenged by writers like Charlotte Smith, and even Walpole himself. E.J. Clery states that “[w]hile emotion was also an important ingredient in sentimental fiction, Gothic took its characters and readers to new extremes of feeling, through the representation of scenes and events well beyond the normal range of experience” (*Women's Gothic* 13). Charlotte Smith creates a similar experience by integrating gothic elements into her sentimental novels. In doing so, she draws her characters and readers into new experiences and new structures of social order, challenging gender roles and establishing a dynamic, more refined understanding of masculinity.

In *The Castle of Otranto*, conventionally recognized as the first Gothic novel, Horace Walpole establishes masculine authority within a strict patriarchal structure. By exaggerating male characters' authority, however, and by using various gothic conventions such as the supernatural, isolated settings, and hierarchical gendered relationships, he challenges this prevalent structure and origin of male power,

demonstrating its limitations and disadvantages, not only to the female characters who are the obvious victims of patriarchal authority, but to the dominant male characters.

Through his complex portrayal of male-female and male-male relationships Walpole asserts the futility of the patriarchal model of masculine authority since, despite their superficial influence, the male characters are unable to maintain their power. Walpole undermines masculine authority through the patriarchal structure since it functions through the male characters, but is not something over which they actually have any control. He places male characters in various physical locations such as the castle, the church, and the outdoors to reflect the origins of their power, while at the same time accentuating its limitations. By positioning male characters in relation to patriarchy in this way, Walpole condemns oppressive masculine power as a structure of authority; however, he does not offer any alternative structure – the male characters are defined by the oppressive nature of patriarchal authority. Walpole constructs patriarchy as a consuming force that works through the male characters; ultimately he questions the extent of male characters' control over female characters, other male characters, as well as themselves.

Like Walpole, Charlotte Smith challenges the structure of patriarchal power as it constructs and defines masculinity; however, by incorporating sensibility and thus necessarily involving society and public pressures, she complicates masculinity itself. In *Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle*, she offers an alternative to the superficial authority that men wield in the patriarchal structure as she gradually departs from the patriarchal system by involving sensibility as a means of social control and order. She presents

dominating male characters, raising the same issues as Walpole; however, through sensibility her male characters begin to question and challenge their own agency so that, depending on their ability to adapt to the new structure, they either thrive in meaningful individual and social relationships or cause their own demise. Smith challenges traditional understandings of masculinity by asserting that the male characters' authority must be implemented responsibly with consideration for the consequences it holds for others. Moreover, by emphasizing the influence of social space Smith redefines masculinity and the authority with which it is associated in Walpole's novel; male power, rather than functioning as an independent and consistent force, is dependent on social status, economic circumstances, and the opinions of others. Smith holds male characters, and the patriarchal system, accountable to the larger authority of the general public. They are only able to maintain a sense of control over female characters by demonstrating sensibility. However, Smith maintains that their sensibility must be a genuine concern for the well-being of the female characters; if they intentionally present sensibility simply as a method of manipulation without any true sympathy for the female characters, not only will they be unsuccessful in influencing them, they will harm their own social position. Even then, Smith reveals how male characters injure themselves because of their inability to control their emotions. Similarly, these male characters harm the female characters for whom they have compassion, especially as they recognize that their social and emotional well-being is dependent on the female characters. As Smith depicts male characters undermining their opinion of themselves because of their unstable social and emotional connections, she not only challenges patriarchal authority, but in favouring the power of

social authority, responds to the inescapable tyrannical male figures in other gothic texts, using society as a disciplinary force¹ that demands compassionate behaviour and equalizes the genders in order to prevent tyrannical male power from prevailing.

In *Ethelinde or the Recluse of the Lake*, Smith develops this reformatory gothic society to implement a new social order that further equalizes male and female characters as it seems to favour genuine compassion, sympathy for the suffering of others, and acts of selfless charity. More importantly, though, Smith uses the overarching power of society to redefine masculinity as male characters must submit to society in the same way as female characters. Within social situations female characters are able to influence male characters, and Smith encourages this, not to reverse gender roles, but to challenge masculinity as an undisputable authority. Instead she suggests that effective control is not derived so much from gender as it is from a character's selfless actions towards others. Just as actions, emotions, and motivations can change, so too does each man's ability to influence others depending on social context. Smith uses the gothic elements of fear and confinement to reflect male characters' instability as they experience this new understanding of masculinity. By incorporating these components Smith reiterates that women are not above social authority; they are just as subject to it as the male characters. Similarly, Smith implicates the reader in these social operations. In doing so she

¹ Smith's exploration of society and the usefulness of different social pressures in influencing and manipulating people's, especially men's, behaviour is very similar to Michel Foucault's later understanding of public discipline. He explains that "strict discipline" as the "art of correct training [...] does not link forces together in order to reduce them; it seeks to bind them together in such a way as to multiply and use them" (Foucault 170). Smith similarly advocates for a sort of equalization between men and women through corrective social pressure, to ensure society's composition of compassionate and moral members. According to Foucault, the "perfect disciplinary apparatus would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly" (173). For Smith, society and social pressure act as this apparatus – each member is simultaneously the observer and the observed.

confirms the authority of society and extends the experiences of the characters onto the readers and society outside of her novels. She insinuates that her depiction of social order and masculinity is not only pertinent in her fiction, but in the real world.² Smith exposes the instability of social position and indicates that no one person, male or female, despite wealth or status, is free from the pressure of society.

Smith presents a refined masculinity through integrating sensibility based on social expectations, as her male characters gain and assert authority over others as well as themselves through a genuine sense of sympathy and charity. By intertwining this sense of masculinity with gothic elements Smith presents a new social order in which society is the disciplinary force instead of a tyrannical male figure. She redistributes power so that everyone is a part of the dominating force as well as part of the group being subjugated to it, using the fluidity and unpredictability of these positions to equalize male and female roles without obscuring their respected differences, ultimately offering an ideal society and interpretation of individual responsibility for which to strive.

² While Judith Stanton points to the biographical elements of Smith's writing and Antje Blank and Loraine Fletcher acknowledge her political commentary, Smith's sentimental novels offer a complex interpretation of society. Smith explores the role of individuals within society as well as the function of public pressures.

Chapter 1 **Challenging Patriarchal Power in *The Castle of Otranto***

Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* presents a clear depiction of masculinity defined in terms of male characters' power and control over women and thus acts as a useful model of eighteenth-century gothic masculinity with which to compare Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline* and *Ethelinde*. Masculine power is evident through the misogynistic actions, not only in the behaviour of the villainous Manfred, but in that of the hero, Theodore, despite his desire to help and protect female characters. *The Castle of Otranto* provides a depiction of various gothic spaces, such as a castle, church, and cave, all of which provide insights about the origin and preservation of masculine power as the male characters' behaviour changes in each space. The novel allows for ample study of relationships between various male characters as well as their relationships with female characters, revealing the importance (and various understandings) of honour in sustaining a position of authority to regulate others within a broad family structure. Lastly, by comparing this novel with other gothic novels, both "male" and "female," I will show that male authority is firmly established, not just as a way of manipulating women, but as a social structure, especially as Walpole presents a parody of patriarchal power. Through an examination of models of eighteenth-century masculinity in gothic texts we can see that masculinity, as the ability to control women by threatening their lives or virginity, ultimately maintains a fixed gendered hierarchy, which Walpole is unable to dismantle despite his criticisms.

Misogyny and Gothic Masculinity

Each male character in *The Castle of Otranto* has the ability to manipulate female characters' relationships, emotions, and bodies and thus asserts his position of authority over them. Manfred, as a cruel and authoritative figure, uses fear and violence, and though other father figures do not demonstrate the same cruelty, they are just as controlling. The patriarchal structure of the families clearly provides the men with a sense of power. However, even Theodore, the traditional hero, manipulates women for his own purposes. Female characters' reactions to the assertion of masculine authority reveal its complete penetration in their lives as they seem almost unaware of the threat that the men pose.

Walpole establishes traditional examples of masculine authority through which he explores the function of patriarchy as he develops its complexities and contradictions. The most obvious depiction of masculine power in *The Castle of Otranto* is Manfred's control over and manipulation of women for his own gain. Manfred considers his wife and daughter as little more than objects in his household. Though Conrad is quite ill, "he [is] the darling of his father, who never show[s] any symptoms of affection for Matilda," his healthy and caring daughter (Walpole 17). Manfred negates his daughter's presence for the more important life, in Manfred's opinion, of his son. After Conrad's death, Manfred even directly exclaims to Matilda, "Begone, I do not want a daughter" (23). Though Manfred is not able to save his son's life, this declaration against Matilda clearly asserts Manfred's perception of his daughter's life: as an independent human being she is worthless. Manfred would have preferred her death to his son's, since Conrad, as his

heir, would have eventually replaced him as the active and authoritative head of the family. Manfred only values Matilda as an object he can manipulate. He uses her as a tool to control another man – Frederic. Manfred boasts of his ability to control Matilda “by holding out or withdrawing [her] charms, according as the marquis should appear more or less disposed to co-operate in his views” (100). Manfred exploits Matilda as a woman, effectively oppressing her in order to lure and manipulate Frederic. His control over her is especially disturbing in this instance because Matilda is completely objectified – Manfred provides no indication that he has considered any possible consequences for Matilda or her desires.

Manfred exhibits similar control over his wife, even as he attributes some value to her. He diminishes his wife’s position in the family by attributing only reproductive capabilities to her, and even this, he believes, she cannot do properly. When she attempts to advise Manfred, “she never receive[s] any other answer than reflections on her own sterility” (17). Walpole emphasizes Manfred’s tyranny as he purposefully devalues women’s emotions, opinions, and experiences; he is entirely aware of his ability to manipulate the women he is objectifying. For example, as Manfred concocts his plan to divorce his wife in order to marry Isabella, he “flatter[s] himself that [Hippolita] would not only acquiesce [...] but would obey” (38). Although Manfred devalues his wife and daughter as people by not recognizing their needs and desires, he does value them as tools he wields to achieve his own desires. Walpole indicates that Manfred’s power is dependent on their objectification, not just as it establishes a hierarchy within the characters, but because belittling the women is a visible indication of his authority to the

women and other men. Walpole challenges traditional masculinity by suggesting its weakness – dependence on women, even if they are objectified. More importantly though, is the fact that Manfred's conviction of their submission in this familial structure reveals his true control over them – he convinces them that his power over them is inescapable. Manfred's focus on familial continuity and inheritance inflicts a supernatural curse on his family and Walpole uses these gothic elements to highlight and condemn the patriarchal structure. Although Manfred's dependents escape his control eventually as he concedes his usurped position, Walpole does not indicate any new structure in which they function – they are still in a patriarchal family structure. Theodore marries Isabella in order to “forever indulge the melancholy that [has] taken possession of his soul” (115); however, the tyrannical father figure has been diminished for now.

For Isabella in particular, Manfred poses a constant sexual threat because of his focus on inheritance. Instead of preserving his family's lineage in an appropriate manner, Manfred attempts to marry his prospective daughter-in-law himself. After Conrad's death, when he announces his desires, she is shocked at the prospect of this incestuous union to her “father in law! the father of Conrad!” (25) Manfred further threatens her virginity by forcing her to commit adultery and incest with this prospective union. He impulsively exclaims, “I offer you myself [...] Hippolita is no longer my wife; I divorce her from this hour” (25). In this way, Manfred not only harms Isabella, but forces her to conspire against her only mother figure. Walpole emphasizes the significance of the sin Manfred forces her to commit in his description of Isabella's physical reaction to

Manfred's plan: she is "half-dead with fright and horror" (25). Isabella's genuine and appropriate feminine reaction contrasts Manfred's unnatural proposals, exposing his villainous and threatening disposition. He becomes a physical danger to her when, after her rejection, he pursues her throughout the castle and into the dark, foreboding "subterraneous passage" (27). As Isabella is trapped underground and pursued by Manfred throughout the maze of dark corridors and chambers she is essentially being buried alive. Eve Sedgwick explains that the live burial in this, and other gothic texts, "derives much of its horror not from the buried person's loss of outside activities (that would be the horror of dead burial), but from the continuation of a parallel activity that is suddenly redundant" (*Coherence* 20). By chasing her underground, Manfred's threat to her virginity, and ultimately her life, is magnified. Isabella is no longer simply facing the disappointment of an arranged marriage, or a persistent and unwanted admirer; she is simultaneously encountering the oppression of a patriarchal and tyrannical father as well as an unrelenting suitor. Sedgwick adds that this convention of live burial "points to a particular spatial relationship (interiority, the 'within'), at the same time as it points to the sameness of the separated spaces" (20). Isabella's entrapment in the underground space compounds her helplessness as she is, at the same time, trapped in her feelings of horror at the potential outcomes of the pursuit. As Walpole depicts Isabella's attempt to resist Manfred by running away, he emphasizes her powerlessness since she is not able to escape entirely. Moreover, he criticizes the lack of self-sufficient women in general – since Isabella, like other women in the novel, is not able to escape Manfred despite her strength of character that empowers her enough to try, but not enough to successfully

evade him. She eventually returns to the castle and Walpole indicates that male patriarchal power is dependent on weak female figures.

Walpole presents the female characters as conventionally feminine to emphasize the complexities of masculine authority and how it negatively impacts the women and their relationships. The women in the novel consent to Manfred's authority over them as they willingly submit to his demands without questioning his motives or actions. Matilda, for example, after Manfred dismisses her as his daughter, condones his behaviour by "assur[ing] her [mother] he [is] well, and support[s] his misfortune with manly fortitude" (Walpole 23). Though Matilda is aware of her parents' grief after her brother's death, her statement, however misleading, excuses Manfred's behaviour towards her as manly strength and an unwillingness to express emotion. Matilda's submission to her father's unjust authority only gives him more control. Similarly, when Theodore criticizes Manfred for fatally wounding Matilda, she defends her father, calling Theodore a "cruel man!" for "aggravat[ing] the woes of a parent" (109). Not only is Matilda condoning the violent actions of her father, but in supporting him over the valiant Theodore, she indicates her acceptance of Manfred's authority over herself and others. Though Walpole criticizes Matilda's filial loyalty, he also uses it to reveal his disapproval of Manfred's lack of feeling as he refuses to reciprocate her feelings of familial love. In this way, Walpole condemns the patriarchal system for encouraging unquestioned loyalty and support. Through Matilda's acceptance of Manfred's cruelty, Walpole challenges the hierarchy of male characters in the structure of patriarchy and the role that women

perform – Matilda focuses on condemning Theodore, failing to recognize the woes of her caring mother.

Hippolita consistently supports her husband's violence, angry outbursts, and method of controlling and manipulating herself, Matilda, and Isabella. As she submits to Manfred's authority, Walpole criticizes the role of "nurturing" mothers as their desire to care for their daughters necessitates their submission to male authority figures. For example, Hippolita, instructing the young women in proper behaviour, reprimands Isabella and Matilda for their complaints against Manfred and asserts that Manfred "knew not what he said" and that "his heart is good" (90). Hippolita's complacent description of her husband's heart exemplifies Walpole's condemnation of Manfred's tyrannical approach to manipulating the women. However, as he indicates Hippolita's misguided support of her husband, Walpole, despite his criticism, does not destabilize Manfred's power; rather he reveals the authority that Manfred holds over Hippolita since she does not question him at all. In addition, Hippolita directly states, "It is not ours to make election for ourselves; heaven, our fathers, and our husbands, must decide for us" (91). Hippolita openly supports not only Manfred's actions, but the actions of all men, without questioning them, and thus reveals her complete submission to masculine control, no matter what it involves. Once again, Walpole criticizes female submission to dominant male characters without negating their power. Instead, Walpole indicates through the narrator that she "determine[s] to make herself the first sacrifice, if fate [has] marked the present hour for their destruction" in an attempt to protect Manfred from any further disturbances after the death of their son and the appearance of supernatural visions (37).

In this way, Walpole condemns the cruelty of masculine domination by ridiculing Hippolita's willingness to sacrifice herself.

Significantly, Walpole contributes to male authority over women as he emphasizes female weakness in order to criticize Manfred's cruel domination; Walpole offers no alternative to the overwhelming oppressive force of the male characters. His cruel and oppressive male characters make the gothic possible; thus, for him, they cannot be eliminated, only criticized. Walpole also scorns Hippolita's belief in fate. Like her daughter, Hippolita presumes that Manfred's behaviour is a result of the shock of Conrad's death, but her willingness to risk her own safety ahead of her husband's indicates that she not only condones his manipulative authority, but is so accustomed to it that she associates all of her fear with "fate" instead of the actions of her husband. Although Walpole seems to advocate for female agency as he demonstrates her complete submission to her husband through her silence, he also contributes to the oppression of female characters himself as he ignores the positive female trait of restraint and propriety. For example, when Jerome confronts Manfred about his desire to divorce Hippolita, her "countenance declared her astonishment, and impatience to know where this would end: her silence more strongly spoke her observance of Manfred" (48). Hippolita does not voice her own concerns or protestations; she does not even voice her impatience. Her silence reveals Manfred's oppressive force since she does not attempt in any way to oppose his control, even after she becomes aware that his actions are in fact going to be detrimental to her and her family and are not just a misunderstanding as she previously believed. Walpole uses this depiction of misguided femininity to question Manfred's

oppressive masculinity, but does so in a way that subjugates female characters. Moreover, just as Manfred endangers Isabella's virginity, he jeopardizes his wife's sexual purity and honour by threatening to divorce her for entirely selfish reasons and consequently threatens his daughter's legitimacy of birth and her ability to marry well. Through the reaction of female characters to this male domination, Walpole criticizes not only the women, but the entire social order by illustrating the willing subordination of the female characters and their understanding that no other balance of power with male characters is possible.

As Matilda and Hippolita condone Manfred's behaviour and control over their lives, they not only support his authority over themselves individually, and over each other, effectively acting along with Manfred in suppressing women. In this way, they contribute to his threatening behaviour, ensuring that Manfred's misogyny is engrained in the family culture. The narrator objectifies the women through his explanation of Manfred's character, effectively establishing patriarchy as a larger social structure. Despite obvious descriptions to the contrary, the narrator asserts that "Manfred was not one of those savage tyrants who wanton in cruelty unprovoked. The circumstances of his fortune had given an asperity to his temper, which was naturally humane; and his virtues were always ready to operate, when his passion did not obscure his reason" (33). This attempt at an apology for Manfred's behaviour only serves to emphasize his tyrannical control over the women. Walpole presents contradicting reports of Manfred in the text and from the narrator to emphasize his tyrannical control over the women as the narrator, a seemingly objective observer, supports Manfred's actions and ultimately the larger

oppressive patriarchal structure. Walpole emphasizes the impact of social order – the importance and value that Manfred places on objects prevents him from appreciating the women as anything else so that even the female characters see themselves and each other in this way.

While Manfred's ability to control women seems to originate from his position as husband, father and head of the household, the construction of his authority is more complex. Matthew McCormack argues that the "ideal of male protectiveness towards women [...] enjoyed a revival" in the late eighteenth century ("Introduction" 8). Although Walpole depicts Manfred's patriarchal relationship with his wife and children as one of oppression, his text seems to be a part of this revival that McCormack recognizes since Walpole depicts Manfred's flaws and inability to maintain his oppressive, patriarchal power. Significantly though, Walpole, while acknowledging the "ideal of male protectiveness" challenges it as a model of patriarchal power as well, since no male character actually achieves his desires. He clearly establishes patriarchal relationships in order to undermine them. Michael Roper and John Tosh's suggestion that "the notion of patriarchy is important because of the primacy it gives to women's oppression, and because it provides a way of integrating the individual and structural dimensions of male dominance" is, for example, helpful in situating Manfred as the figurehead of his household (9). It connects him to other men who demonstrate similar forms of masculine authority. Manfred, though he is the head of a household is less concerned about the actual well-being of his family members than preserving his family's stolen wealth and status. Matilda, as a dutiful daughter, recognizes his misguided focus, but states that "a

child ought to have no ears or eyes but as a parent directs” (Walpole 41). Manfred’s selfish and manipulative behaviour alters the acceptability of this parent-child relationship in the eyes of the readers. For Walpole, the conflict within the relationship is not just a matter of a model of patriarchy, but the oppressive actions of one individual. By aligning the patriarchal and individual interests for the male characters, Walpole indicates the complexity of the gendered hierarchy – the male characters function as individual forces of oppression and as part of a larger male structure of patriarchy. Walpole identifies this structure of masculinity as another, more abstract form of female oppression, as the social force acts through individual male characters.

The social force of male authority works even through those male characters who seem to attempt to protect or act in the best interest of the women. Frederic is a knight who has a respectable social status as he enters Manfred’s castle with a trumpet fanfare (58). Although neither the readers nor the people in Manfred’s household know who he is at first, his elaborate dress and entrance indicate his elevated status. More importantly, his arrival causes the feathers on the supernatural helmet to “[nod] thrice, as if bowed by some invisible wearer” (59); unlike Manfred, Frederic’s natural goodness does not require any restraint from supernatural forces. The respectable Frederic does not appear to be as dominating or as violent as Manfred is even though he is prone to lust, which weakens his resolve to protect women. He conceals his feelings of lust within the ideals of marriage and thus is easily persuaded by Manfred to marry Matilda. Walpole asserts the negative consequences that patriarchal power has on the honour of both male and female characters as Frederic fails to acknowledge his own vice, which would trap Matilda in an

unwanted marriage. Frederic does attempt to protect the virtue of Hippolita as he relates part of his family history, but Hippolita is aware that he is “destined by heaven to accomplish the fate that seem[s] to threaten her house” (82). Just as Hippolita perceives Manfred’s domination to be inevitable, she recognizes that the destruction that Frederic causes is similarly unavoidable. Patriarchal power works through Frederic, against his wishes. Even he is not able to control the larger social force. Additionally, by identifying the castle as *her* house, and not the house of Manfred, Hippolita makes a clear distinction between masculine authority and female victims. Her position as matriarch, although somewhat unstable, provides her with a degree of protection from Manfred. She seems to exclude Manfred from the victimization even though he will also suffer – his reputation as well as his perception of himself as being self-sufficient and impressive will diminish – by the change in family status.

Theodore, even more so than Frederic, is a well-meaning heroic figure who attempts to counteract the violent and manipulative actions of Manfred; however, he still contributes to the misogyny in the novel. Theodore clearly attempts to help Isabella escape from the pursuing Manfred, exclaiming to her that “it will be some comfort to lose [my life] in trying to deliver you from his tyranny” (30). Though he is assisting her to escape, Theodore negates Isabella’s concerns for his safety and involvement and acts to save her in spite of her protestations and worries that he “will fall victim to [Manfred’s] resentment” (29). While Theodore is obviously concerned with the safety of both Matilda and Isabella and is intent on protecting them both, his motivations are not entirely selfless. “He had long burned with impatience to approve his valour” and therefore acts

on his own desires and not just out of a need to protect the women (75). Like Manfred, he has a selfish motive – to prove his valour and ability to fight. The negative patriarchal power is always present, however discreetly.

Even when and perhaps because, patriarchal power is only subtly present, male characters become victims to their own authority. For example, in his haste and selfish desire to prove himself, Theodore acts impulsively thereby causing harm to Isabella. He mistakes Frederic for one of Manfred's men and "rush[es] impetuously on the knight [...] and at last disarm[s] him as he faint[s] by loss of blood" (77). Instead of protecting Isabella, Theodore causes her harm by wounding her father. Moreover, as he fights to protect her, he completely excludes her. He focuses entirely on the battle and does not think of Isabella so that, like Manfred, his selfish goals are more important than the desires of, or consequences for, the women involved. Walpole parodies Theodore's valour by demonstrating its underlying motivation of self-interest, obscured by pretense of female protection, once again challenging the protective patriarchal model of masculinity.

The men in *The Castle of Otranto* exhibit misogyny, though some do so more conspicuously than others. Manfred, with his obvious desire for control over women, exudes selfishness, cruelty and violence as his methods of authority. Other men, whose desires to control and manipulate women are less obvious, even to themselves, seem to be more caring and considerate of the women as they attempt to protect them or act in their best interests. However, the fact that these men unconsciously control the women reveals how threatening they truly are, especially when the women themselves support

and condone the men's actions against them. By using parodies of masculine villains and heroes to reveal the constant threat of male power, Walpole simultaneously indicates that while the threat of patriarchal power infiltrates every part of society and every set of relationships, it is a force of its own, one that cannot be controlled even by the "powerful" masculine characters.

Maintaining Authority in Private, Public and Natural Spaces

As the male characters move between public and natural isolated spaces there is a shift in the origin of their ability to control women. Similarly they display their authority differently depending on the environment. An examination of the male characters' display of control in various spaces reveals the all-encompassing and threatening power they possess over the women. Manfred is the head of the household and therefore confidently maintains control over the women as well as the general goings-on of his house. The castle is a space where Manfred is able to demonstrate the highest degree of control over everyone. After the death of his son, Manfred "thus [sees] his commands even cheerfully obeyed" to imprison and isolate Theodore, then "dismiss[es] his friends and attendants, and retire[s] to his own chamber, after locking the gates of the castle, in which he suffer[s] none but his domestics to remain" (22). The castle is a contained space where it is easy to manage the inclusion or exclusion of certain people. Moreover, it is a space where the social hierarchies are clearly defined and maintained. Walpole depicts the social hierarchies when Manfred orders his domestics to search for Isabella. Manfred "had in his hurry given this order in general terms, not meaning to extend it to

the guard he had set upon Theodore, but forgetting it” so even those who should have been guarding him join in the search for Isabella (71). While this misunderstanding seems to undermine Manfred’s control of the situation since Theodore is able to escape, it in fact emphasizes Manfred’s control over his household since the domestics are “officious to obey so peremptory a prince” (71). Manfred is at the top of the fixed social order within the castle.

Manfred constantly uses his position to his advantage by manipulating others, even those who are not part of his household within the castle. He is so forceful in implementing his desires that he causes his own demise as he is unable to manage his power. He corrupts a traditional custom of hospitality – a feast – intentionally using it to disorient Frederic. Manfred “push[es] on the feast until it waxed late; affecting unrestrained gaiety, and plying Frederic with repeated goblets of wine” (105). Significantly, Manfred is not overly successful in obtaining his goal of getting the marquis to agree to his own marriage to Isabella. However, Manfred, “to raise his own disordered spirits, and to counterfeit unconcern, indulge[s] himself in plentiful draughts”, thus maintaining the pretense of control and authority, at least in his own perception, in this confined space of the castle (105). As part of the parody of patriarchal power that Walpole creates, Manfred uses his masculine authority, in this case the corrupted act of hospitality, not only to manipulate other men, but to assure himself of his own position.

Manfred’s control appears to be challenged during his pursuit of Isabella as she hides in the dark underground passages since he is not able to capture her; however, she is confined and disoriented in the domestic space over which Manfred maintains authority.

Since the castle, especially the oppressive underground corridors, is an extension of Manfred, Isabella's getting lost within it represents the sexual threat that Manfred poses to Isabella, with her lack of status in the family, as well as the full extent of his control over her; she resorts to hiding in such secluded, dark areas. She is "hopeless of escaping [...] and far from tranquil on knowing she [is] within reach of somebody [...] she [is] ready to sink under her apprehensions" (28-29). The sense of fear that Manfred evokes in Isabella is further manifested in the setting of these underground passages. In this space, even Theodore is not able to assist her since he is "unacquainted with the castle" and Manfred is so familiar with it that when he hears the trapdoor he immediately recognizes that "she is escaping by the subterraneous passage" (29, 30). The castle, as an extension of Manfred, is not entirely knowable to the other people in the castle. For Isabella, an innocent virgin, Manfred's sexual advances cause a similar fear of the unknown, amplifying his sexual threat.

As an extension of Manfred, the castle represents the threat of patriarchy as a system of power, which Walpole is able to manipulate in order to undermine Manfred's dominance over others. Isabella is able to flee from the underground passages and Manfred's threatening hold, contradicting his seemingly inescapable power, and leaving Manfred alone with Theodore, the very man who will overthrow his position in the end. As Manfred pursues Isabella through the castle the narrator explains, "What was the astonishment of the prince, when, instead of Isabella, the light of the torches discovered to him the young peasant, whom he thought confined under the fatal helmet! Traitor!" (30-31). Walpole uses Manfred's feelings of betrayal to emphasize Manfred's inability to

maintain physical control over Isabella, contradicting other scenes in the castle where Manfred appears to have complete control. Walpole questions the strength of Manfred's authority over others as well as the effectiveness of fear as a method of control.

In the public, religious space of the church Manfred experiences challenges in exerting his authority. Isabella recognizes his lack of authority there as she hopes to escape to her sanctuary where “she [knows] even Manfred's violence would not dare to profane the sacredness of the place” (27). Though this is a confining space in that she would not be able to leave in order for the sanctuary to remain effective, it is outside of Manfred's control. Furthermore, the church uses a different hierarchical structure, which does not favour Manfred over all others; in fact, he is lower in status than God, the church, and Friar Jerome. Jerome clearly states Manfred's lack of authority within the church as he explains about the church: “she alone can administer comfort to your soul, either by satisfying your conscience, or, upon examination of your scruples, by setting you at liberty, and indulging you in the lawful means of continuing your lineage” (52). Outside of his domain of the castle Manfred's authority is virtually non-existent.

Manfred, however, still asserts his control over others in this space by resorting to violence and completely denying the spiritual authority of the church. He insults the church and its servants, calling Jerome a “hoary traitor” and reasserting his determination to divorce his wife against the rules of the church (96). Manfred's lack of authority here, though he attempts to maintain it, is clearly evident when miraculously “three drops of blood [fall] from the nose of Alfonso's statue” (97). In the space of the church, Manfred's power is challenged by the supernatural in religious form. Even though the

drops of blood may reveal Walpole's attraction to, but skepticism of, Catholic miracles, as E.J. Clery suggests in his commentary of the novel, these drops of blood evoke other images of blood which are a "staple of the horror mode" (124). Walpole's distortion of Catholic miracles mirrors his treatment of patriarchal structure as he tests its limits and ultimately determines it to be an ineffective structure for healthy and prosperous relationships. More importantly, Manfred becomes aware of his powerlessness in the church and so commands Hippolita, whom he does still control, "Repair with me to the castle, and there I will advise on the proper measures for a divorce" (97). Though Manfred asserts his power in the space of the church, he recognizes his ineptitude in the space and so determines to return to the castle where he does have more control. When he returns to the church later, he attempts to assert his power again, this time through physical violence. In his desire to prevent the wedding of Isabella and Theodore he "draw[s] his dagger, and plung[es] it over his shoulder into the person that spoke," slaying his daughter Matilda (108). The only way for Manfred to dominate women in the space of the church is through denying its authority and resorting to physical violence, both of which prove to be ineffective since Manfred does not manage to achieve his goals in this space. In fact, in attempting to compensate for his lack of authority in the church, he destroys any possibility of manipulating the women to his specifications. He does, however, still manage to threaten their lives as he fatally wounds Matilda. By demonstrating how Manfred's power ironically acts against his interests, Walpole indicates that the social force of male authority is too strong for even the men to manage.

Natural spaces in the novel, such as the forest and cave, are completely out of reach for Manfred, who relies on his authority in the confined spaces of his castle; Theodore, on the other hand, is able to thrive within them. Clery explains that “in the romance genre, caves feature as a refuge from persecution” though they are not entirely a safe place since “the mysterious darkness of the cave can be seen as a figure for the allure of fictional terrors” (123). For Isabella, and even for the previously imprisoned Theodore, the caves are a place of sanctuary. Theodore aims to protect Isabella and explains to her, “I will place thee out of the reach of [Manfred’s] daring” (76). While the cave is a safe place, Theodore still coerces Isabella to do his bidding. He enforces his control in order to protect her, but she is fearful nonetheless as she is aware of his authority and possible sexual threat in this space. She questions, “Should we be found together, what would a censorious world think of my conduct?” (76) Isabella recognizes the possible threat that Theodore poses to her reputation simply by being alone with her in the cave. Significantly, Theodore’s presence is all that is necessary in order to fulfill this threat. Even without Theodore acting in a violent or sexual manner, Isabella’s reputation is threatened, indicating that Theodore’s power over her, even in such an isolated space, is part of a larger social structure of patriarchal power outside of his control. Theodore comforts her, responding that he plans to “conduct [her] into the most private cavity of these rocks; and then, at the hazard of [his] life, to guard the entrance against every living thing” (76). While Theodore confirms his innocent and honest intentions, he encourages Isabella to obey his orders, preventing her from acting freely. In his response he reaffirms her complete dependence on him, thus declaring his control

and authority over her. In this space of the cave, Theodore successfully subjugates Isabella, even though he does so with good intentions. He is “between the castle and the monastery,” between the spaces where Manfred and Jerome have their own authority respectively and thus is able to independently control his situation as well as Isabella’s (75). Walpole marks a generational change in power, but not outside of the patriarchal system. Even within the more romantic, rather than oppressive, settings of the castle and church, Isabella is subject to the desires and pressures of a male figure.

Each of the dominant male characters is assigned a space where his control is most effective as Walpole asserts the all-encompassing portrayal of patriarchal power. Outside of this space, the characters must compete with their male rivals for power and control; however, they are never powerless. They adapt the form of their power in order for it to be effective. These apparent limits in their power only emphasize the complete subjection of the women, who never occupy a space where they are in control. Each man’s willingness to adapt the manifestation of his power in different spaces reveals his motivations for exerting control over others. Ultimately, Walpole depicts the oppressive nature of the patriarchal structure since each of his male characters is most successful in wielding his own authority in only one space. In this way, Walpole clarifies his critique of this system of power: men themselves are subject to the confines of its structure.

Male Honour and the Motivations for Power

The motivations that the male characters have to control female characters are not always villainous, even if their actions have negative effects on the women. Obtaining or

maintaining honour motivates all of the male characters and is the basis for all of their actions. However, since each of the male characters has different opinions of what is honourable, conflicts arise and some men act more villainously than others. Their perceptions of honour revolve around their relationships with other men, but ultimately reveal their control over the women connected to them.

Through the father figures in the novel, Walpole develops the role of honour in male characters' ability, and desire, to sustain authority. Every father figure has a slightly different understanding of what being honourable entails, though for each of them family reputation is the most important; they simply frame it using different parameters.

Manfred believes his honour comes solely from his heir and maintaining the family reputation and status. Though he always demonstrated more preference for Conrad than Matilda, after Conrad's death Manfred explains to Isabella, "[H]e was a sickly puny child, and heaven has perhaps taken him away that I might not trust the honours of my house on so frail a foundation" (24). Before his death, Conrad was important to Manfred for his ability to carry on the family name, not because of any father-son bond. Manfred recovers quite soon after his son's death, and is clearly much more focused on preserving his fraudulent family status than mourning the death of his son. When he sees Conrad crushed beneath the enormous helmet, he "seem[s] less attentive to his loss, than buried in meditation on the stupendous object that [has] occasioned it" (19). After recognizing that he and his family are cursed, Manfred demonstrates the obvious self-serving nature of his authority as he concentrates only on warding off threats to his own status and reputation. Walpole uses the supernatural to undermine Manfred's power. Though Manfred is aware

that the spectacle is threatening his family's status, he does not comprehend the spectacle and thus is unable to contend with it. Moreover, Walpole uses the spectacle of the helmet to align the readers' perspective with Manfred's as they are just as unable to explain the supernatural as Manfred is. In this way, Walpole not only challenges the social order that permits cruel patriarchal power, he implicates the readers, forcing them to examine the social structure in which they participate. This threat is apparent in the presence of Lord Alfonso, in the forms of a statue, a painting, and the legend surrounding the family. He is an authority figure that the women of the castle respect: Hippolita encourages Matilda to venerate and pray to him and she knows that "somehow or other [her] destiny is linked with something relating to him" (41). From the perspective of the women, Lord Alfonso is a respectable and honorable man and they willingly submit to him, even in the form of a statue or painting. Significantly, Lord Alfonso is objectified like the women; however, the other characters' memorialisation of him contributes to his respectability instead of diminishing it, as is the case with the female characters. Since his authority is embodied in the material objects he is not threatening to the female characters; instead, his memorialized authority threatens Manfred and the family's status through the supernatural.

Through Lord Alfonso, Walpole reiterates the significance of familial reputation. The supernatural occurrences involve Lord Alfonso asserting his power by threatening the lives of Manfred's family. These events, such as the violent rising of the giant suit of armour, emphasize male authority through family lines since Lord Alfonso is reasserting his own family line by creating fear through violence (35). Through Lord Alfonso's

supernatural curse on Manfred, Walpole ridicules the importance both characters place on inheritance as they have learned from the society in which they live, since they both resort to extreme measures to restore or maintain their ownership status. Walpole does seem to favour Lord Alfonso's claim as he portrays the weakening effects of the supernatural on Manfred. However, Walpole's incorporation of the supernatural undermines Lord Alfonso's claim as well since he is already dead and must resort to ridiculous supernatural means to restore his family line. For Manfred, this ability to continue the family line manifests itself through tyranny since he acquires the castle and wealth illegitimately and therefore must work hard to maintain it. He consistently chases, causes physical harm, and confines other people. Maintaining honor based on family lineage, results in violent and controlling actions in the case of Manfred and Lord Alfonso.

For Friar Jerome, family lineage is also important; however, his motivations are different from Manfred's since he attempts to restore his own relationship with his son, Theodore. After being estranged for so long, Friar Jerome simply wants to know his son. Jerome pleads for Theodore's life, then confirms that "his blood is noble: nor is he that abject thing, my lord, you speak him" (57). Jerome wishes to restore the relationship in order to improve Theodore's life, not his own. Similarly, Frederic, after being wounded by Theodore, announces to Isabella, "I am Frederic thy father—Yes, I came to deliver thee" (79). Frederic, like Jerome, wants to restore his daughter to her rightful status for her own prosperity and security; he hopes to protect her from the tyrant that he heard was guarding her. Both of these male characters are restoring their family to its rightful status, unlike Manfred who is attempting to maintain a social status that is not rightfully

his. He must go to much greater trouble to maintain it, while the other male characters are able to restore their rightful status without violence or tyranny. Moreover, for Frederic and Jerome, the status they hope to restore is for the benefit of their offspring, not for themselves, whereas Manfred focuses on his own benefit.

The perceptions that sons have of their fathers affects their ability to maintain control over others. Conrad is dead and therefore emphasizes Manfred's emotional detachment from others. Not only is he clearly unsympathetic to the physical and emotional suffering of Matilda, Hippolita, and Isabella, he is not able to experience any human emotional connection because his son is dead. Theodore, on the other hand, demonstrates respect for his father, Jerome. When Jerome is debating between fulfilling Manfred's wish to divorce his wife and losing his son, Theodore exclaims, "[L]et me die a thousand deaths, rather than stain thy conscience" (58). With this statement, Theodore affirms his father's honour and demonstrates his own – both men think of others before themselves, even though they have a desire to maintain their newly established father-son relationship. Their father-son relationship is built upon a shared sense of self-interest as they value and uphold hereditary honour and virtue as they attempt to safeguard women from other men's physical and emotional threats. By juxtaposing Manfred's lack of emotional connection with the father-son bond of Theodore and Jerome, Walpole condemns male characters' inability to genuinely relate to female characters, essentially criticizing their exaggerated demonstrations of masculinity. Though they appear to demonstrate some characteristics of sensibility, their ultimate motivation is maintaining their sense of honour for their own benefit. Moreover, the compassion and sympathy they

do have towards female characters only exists as a result of Manfred's harmful tyrannical power.

Even with a focus on relationships between fathers and sons, or other relations between men, women are inevitably at the centre of their conflicts. Jerome, Manfred and Frederic discuss marriage plans without ever consulting the women involved. Eve Sedgwick explains that male homosocial relationships reveal “a desire to consolidate partnership with authoritative males in and through the bodies of females” (*Between Men* 38). Manfred demonstrates a desire for this partnership in his discussion with Jerome about divorcing Hippolita. He attempts to gain Friar Jerome's trust without forcing him to comply. His statement that “Hippolita is related to [him] in the fourth degree,” among other excuses, reveals his attempt to construct a stable bond with Jerome (Walpole 51). Ironically, as Manfred distances himself from his *wife*, he argues for his proximity to her as a relation, thereby objectifying her in order to use her to solidify his relationship with Jerome. Sedgwick's distinction between male-male relationships and male-female relationships is significant in this instance; she argues that male relationships are stable in that each man accepts the other for how he is, while the “tensions of the male-female bond are temporally conceived [...] and hence obviously volatile” (*Between Men* 45). While Manfred focuses on his relationship with Jerome in order to achieve a divorce, he not only necessarily excludes Hippolita, as his wife, from the relationship, he reveals his understanding of his marriage to be temporary and unfixed, following Sedgwick's argument that men seem to overlook women to construct their relationship with other men, even though these male-male relationships are actually dependent on the presence of

female figures. The relationship between the two men is necessary for Manfred, but clearly it minimizes the role of Hippolita as a person, while emphasizing her role as an object, thereby enforcing masculine dominance, but as a force that Manfred cannot control since he is not able to exclude Hippolita from his relationships despite his best attempts.

Theodore, as the hero, attempting to save both Matilda and Isabella, reveals a different honour than both his father and Manfred. He does not concern himself with his status or family reputation, but is only concerned with protecting the women from the physical threats of other men. Shawn Maurer explains that “masculine excellence” was beginning to be defined by works, challenging the notion that only men of noble birth were capable of being virtuous (76). Theodore seems to reflect this change. At the beginning of the novel, he is nothing more than a poor peasant who is imprisoned for making an observation about the origin of the helmet that crushed Conrad. He demonstrates his honour through his desire to protect both Isabella and Matilda. He states selflessly and bravely, “I fear no man’s displeasure [...] when a woman in distress puts herself under my protection” (Walpole 54). Clearly, Theodore’s understanding of virtue is founded in protecting and serving those unable to do so themselves, namely women. Walpole intentionally portrays Theodore as a romantic hero as he parodies patriarchal power. Theodore acts with self-interest under the pretense of helping others. In this way, Walpole criticizes not only the tyrannical power of Manfred, but the seemingly well-meaning authority of the hero figure. Theodore’s bravery establishes him as a man of honour as well. He refuses to hide in a sanctuary for his own safety, explaining to

Matilda that “sanctuaries are for helpless damsels, or for criminals” and since his “soul is free from guilt [it] will [not] wear the appearance of it” (73). Theodore’s honour is founded in his moral goodness rather than social or family reputation; he is guilty of no crime, thus he is virtuous. However, with his distinction about the purpose of sanctuaries he clearly raises himself above the women he is protecting, establishing his authority over them, despite his virtuousness.

Maurer’s description of “masculine excellence” is not quite complete in Theodore since eventually Theodore discovers that he is the son of Jerome, Count Falconara (84). Neither Matilda’s family, nor Frederic, fully appreciate Theodore’s virtue, however selfless and honourable his intentions, until he reveals that he is a prince, “the sovereign of Otranto” (111). Only after he reveals his true status do the others stop questioning his desire to marry Matilda before her death. Nevertheless, Theodore does maintain his virtue as he reveals that the “lovely Matilda had made stronger impressions on him than filial affection” and he continues to love Matilda despite Jerome’s warnings (93). Theodore acts as a virtuous man, remaining constant in his understanding and depiction of honour despite an increase in his social status. This rise in status does provide him with increased control over others, especially as it provides him with independence from his own father. However, his honour does not have the same authority as Manfred’s self-centered and violent control over others since, in the end, Theodore does not have the ability or authority to save Matilda: Manfred displays more power in that instance as he kills her. Just as Walpole criticizes the patriarchal power of Manfred, he criticizes Theodore’s heroic power by indicating that as he becomes more heroic, he is less able to

maintain control over women and eventually harms them instead of protecting them. Furthermore, Walpole uses Matilda's death to undermine Theodore's seemingly benevolent power since this permanent and unavoidable separation from her leads him to act violently, mirroring Manfred's violent actions. Although he acts out of love when he "threaten[s] destruction to all who [attempt] to remove him from [Matilda]," in his mourning, Theodore focuses on his own loss and abandons his heroic power (112). As he undermines Theodore's benevolent authority over distressed women, Walpole simultaneously condemns tyrannical patriarchal power as he asserts its inevitability.

While family lineage is important for all of the men, their reasons for its importance clearly affect their approach to restoring or maintaining it. To Manfred, family lineage is the only source of honour so he resorts to violent and selfish methods of obtaining and maintaining it. Frederic, Jerome, and Theodore, on the other hand, believe that honour is achieved through family lineage, religious devotion, and noble or valorous actions. Their shift in focus allows them to maintain personal honour while upholding the virtues of others, at least until their influence is denied and they must resort to cruel and violent forms of power to maintain a semblance of control over others.

Approaching Patriarchy through "Male" and "Female" Gothic

The critical approach of analyzing gothic texts as either male or female has been useful for many scholars in examining the role of gender, various characters' perspectives, and even the supernatural. Donna Heiland and Ellen Moers assert the importance of examining various combinations of gendered relationships and the

significance they incur in male gothic texts compared to female gothic texts. Moreover, exploring differences between male and female gothic texts is useful in understanding gendered perceptions of patriarchal society. Anne Williams argues, “From the patriarchal point of view (and ‘point of view’ is everything), any woman who becomes an object of the male gaze, may never be anything else but an object, and a focus of unconscious resentments against the feminine” (109). By examining patriarchal approaches to women in male gothic texts compared to similar approaches in female gothic texts, a pattern of patriarchy becomes clear – even as women exert some agency in female gothic texts, they are still subject to the exploitation of their male oppressors. While it is helpful to recognize and consider this overall pattern of female oppression, examining gothic texts through a gender binary limits any understanding of other influential forces – patriarchy appears as a structure solely constructed and implemented by men, negating the influence of the larger social structure of patriarchy that subjugates men.

Clearly, in *The Castle of Otranto* relationships are intended to serve the interests of the father figures. Manfred, as the villain, manipulates his family members in order to maintain his social position. Their ability to sustain other relationships depends on him. Meanwhile, Theodore and Isabella both discover their own identities after learning who their fathers are. As with Manfred and his relationships, Theodore and Isabella are both reliant on their fathers’ approval. In Matthew Gregory Lewis’s *The Monk*, relationships favour male characters such as Ambrosio, Don Lorenzo, and Don Raymond. The life of each of the female characters in the novel is intricately intertwined with one or more of these male characters. Both Walpole and Lewis emphasize the oppressive authority male

characters wield over their female dependants. They undermine the model of patriarchal power as they expose the intense relationship between female oppression and masculine domination.

Female gothic, on the other hand, places importance on different kinds of relationships. Donna Heiland explains that in female gothic texts, the mother-daughter relationships are more prominent than they are in male gothic texts, which focus on male characters and their relationships (58). For example in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*, female relationships are more prominent and influential than male-female relationships in forming and altering the identity of the female characters. For example, until she meets Vincentio di Vivaldi, Ellena has no male influence in her life since she was raised by her aunt. More importantly, her discovery that Sister Olivia is in fact her mother confirms her own identity while destroying Schedoni's position as a threatening, patriarchal figure since Sister Olivia affirms that he is not Ellena's true father (Radcliffe 381-82). As Heiland argues, in female gothic "gender roles were insistently codified even as they were insistently resisted" – by privileging the mother-daughter relationship, both female characters achieve a sense of agency (3). Significantly though, the women only attain an impression of independence; it is not real. While the two women appear to have authority over Schedoni as they remove themselves from his control by recognizing that they are under no obligation to the tyrant who is not actually the head of their family, the women can neither neither forget nor ignore the cruelty he has inflicted. In order to gain approval from her mother to marry Ellena, for instance, Vivaldi must convince his family that she "proved to be the daughter not of the murderer Schedoni, but of a Count di

Bruno” (410). And though he is successful in doing so, this necessity emphasizes the influence that Schedoni has over others, even after his death. Even as women in female gothic seem to gain some agency from their female relationships, they are unable to evade the confines of the social constructs of patriarchal power.

Aside from female relationships, female gothic writers present individual female characters differently than male gothic writers. Ellen Moers explains that while gothic writing in general has to do with fear, female gothic focuses on women fearing natural events of motherhood, such as childbirth, as women examine themselves as women, sisters, and mothers (90, 109). This is not to say that in female gothic the women fear themselves as they do the cruel or authoritative men who are threatening them, but as Moers explains, for example, “the looks of a girl are examined with ruthless scrutiny by all around her, especially by women, crucially by her own mother” (108). Within a patriarchal social structure, the women condemn and oppress each other. In *The Castle of Otranto*, Hippolita, Matilda, and Isabella question their own actions and reactions to male characters (without doubting the male characters), even though the main focus of Walpole’s text is the threat that the dominant male figures pose to the women. After reaffirming her father’s piety and nobility, Isabella asks, “But should he command it, can a father enjoin a cursed act?” (Walpole 91). Since Isabella does not question her father’s intentions or honour, she worries more about the effect this decision will have on her father rather than the effect the decision will have on her. By focusing on her father’s choice in this manner, Isabella consents to his authority in that, to her, as his daughter, he is always correct, even though she adamantly disagrees with her possible marriage to

Manfred. Importantly, Isabella is aware that she has no agency in making the decision; her father holds all of the power. Conversely, in *The Italian*, when Ellena is kidnapped and forcibly separated from Vivaldi, she criticizes herself for her unhappiness instead of those people who have forced her into this situation; she concerns herself with her ability to be a good and dutiful betrothed. When Vivaldi's mother, with the help of Schedoni, forces Ellena to choose between marrying someone else or joining the convent, Ellena asserts that she is not subjected to anyone else's power. She explains to Olivia, "I have accustomed myself to contemplate those sufferings; I have chosen the least of such as were given to my choice [...] and can you then say that I am subjected?" (Radcliffe 96). Ellena displays her own apparent agency, neglecting to recognize the control that Schedoni and Vivaldi's family wield over her. Despite this change in focus, masculine authority and cruelty are still, if not more, present since the women learn to blame themselves instead of the men.

Male and female gothic texts present characters' points of view in different ways, complicating gender relationships. While female characters appear to have more authority to speak in female gothic compared to those in male gothic, both versions emphasize male characters' oppression of female characters. Anne Williams explains that the male gothic novel is told from multiple viewpoints, while the female novel is communicated from the point of view of the heroine (102). Male gothic stories, as they are told from multiple points of view or focus on male perspectives, depict the complete dominance of male characters over others. In *The Monk*, though one narrator tells the story, he focuses on the detailed events and perspectives of Raymond, Lorenzo, and

Ambrosio. The narrator describes Ambrosio's changing thoughts towards Antonia: "Grown used to her modesty, it no longer commanded the same respect and awe: He still admired it, but it only made him more anxious to deprive her of that quality, which formed her principal charm" (Lewis 256). The narrator depicts Antonia as the object of Ambrosio's desire, and by adopting his perspective, Lewis develops Ambrosio's desire to exploit her into a larger social representation of patriarchal power. Similarly, when Lorenzo discovers Agnes in the crypt, the narrator details Lorenzo's experience instead of Agnes's: "He grew sick at heart: His strength failed him, and his limbs were unable to support his weight" (369). By describing the scene from Lorenzo's perspective and relating to his emotions even though he demonstrates genuine concern for Agnes, the narrator favours the male perspective over the female, and Lewis effectively asserts patriarchal power as the only plausible social structure.

Female gothic, though it focuses predominantly on the heroine's point of view, also demonstrates the complete authority of male characters. The heroine, as she relates her own story, reveals her absolute victimization as her life and her virginity are continually threatened. Ironically, the only authority to speak that the heroine gains in female gothic empowers her male oppressor by revealing his ability to successfully threaten and frighten her. In *The Italian*, the narrator focuses on Ellena, consistently revealing her thoughts and emotions. For instance, when Schedoni enters her room to murder her, the narrator focuses on Ellena's state of mind, describing that she, "agitated with astonishment at his conduct, as well as at her own circumstances, and with the fear of offending him by further questions, endeavour[s] to summon courage to solicit the

explanation which [is] so important to her tranquillity” (Radcliffe 239). Ellena’s desire to speak and question Schedoni, emphasizes her silence and the authority that Schedoni has over her, especially since Ellena ignores her own suspicions about him and convinces herself that he means her no harm. The difference between points of view in male and female gothic ends with a similar effect – revealing the authority of male characters. Significantly, in both male and female gothic texts women are the victims of controlling men who threaten their lives and virginity, even when they seemingly have the ability to speak for themselves.

Lastly, male and female gothic texts explore the supernatural in different ways that emphasize gender distinction and alter slightly the depiction of masculinity since male gothic emphasizes the horror and female gothic emphasizes the importance of reason. In male gothic texts the supernatural is never explained. In *The Castle of Otranto*, for example, Manfred and his household experience various supernatural occurrences, such as the death of Conrad when he is “dashed to pieces, and almost buried under an enormous helmet, an hundred times more large than any casque ever made for human being, and shaded with a proportionable quantity of black feathers” (Walpole 19). From this moment on, Manfred is haunted by the supernatural; various apparitions are visible to him, though none are explained. Although the presence of these spectres seems to reveal Manfred’s weakness as he is “full of anxiety and horror” upon seeing them, they in fact encourage him to react forcefully against the women to compensate for his inability to control the supernatural; he does everything in his power to control what he does have authority over – the women (26). These spectres emphasize Manfred’s need to

maintain his family lineage through a male heir since they originate from the family line that he overthrew in order to gain his place at the castle of Otranto. Moreover, these supernatural visions encourage Manfred to fully exert his control over women in order to maintain his position. At one point, when Manfred attempts to follow one of the spectres who seems to be assisting Isabella in her escape, he is prevented by a door “clapped-to with violence by an invisible hand” and instead of quitting his pursuit, Manfred states, “I will use the human means in my power for preserving my race” (26). Clearly, instead of deterring Manfred from his goal of upholding his place within the castle, the presence of the spectres actually encourages Manfred’s domineering behaviour, thereby increasing his threat to Isabella. Manfred reacts in a similar manner towards Bianca. After hearing of another frightful vision of a giant in the great hall, Bianca sees “a hand in armour as big, as big”, to which Manfred questions, “Are my own domestics suborned to spread tales injurious to my honour?” (104). He uses her fear to reveal his own superiority because of his bravery and by reasserting his place of power over his domestics as he degrades her for questioning his “manly daring” (104). Once again Manfred uses the unexplained supernatural occurrences to his advantage as he re-establishes his control over the women through his own claim to bravery and his willingness to use violence to protect himself and his title. In this way, Walpole portrays Manfred’s oppressive and threatening actions, while destabilizing his character since Manfred himself does not understand the supernatural occurrences.

In *The Monk*, Lewis uses the supernatural to assert male dominance. Although his male characters experience fear, they, whether human or supernatural, control the female

figures. The Bleeding Nun, like the supernatural occurrences in *The Castle of Otranto*, has no realistic explanation. Raymond describes his experience: “I beheld before me an animated Corse. Her countenance was long and haggard; Her cheeks and lips were bloodless; The paleness of death was spread over her features” (Lewis 160). Raymond cannot explain the appearance of the Bleeding Nun and is only able to rid himself of her by enlisting the help of the Wandering Jew, another supernatural being. This mystical man explains to Raymond, “I have the power of releasing you from your nightly Visitor [...] After Saturday the Nun shall visit you no more” (168). The Wandering Jew, like the powerful supernatural figure of Lord Alfonso, emphasizes masculine authority as he alone has the ability to eradicate the Bleeding Nun. Similarly, the Devil alone has the power to save Matilda’s life when she is poisoned and though she summons the Devil to cure her, Ambrosio only witnesses “a column of light flash up the Staircase” and “a strain of sweet but solemn Music, which as it stole through the Vaults below, inspired the Monk with mingled delight and terror” (233). The unexplained, and thus unknowable, supernatural occurrences in male gothic texts support masculine authority as they mimic the unquestionable, and often cruel or frightening authority that the men display. Moreover, by aligning supernatural incidents and patriarchal power, the social structure itself becomes mysterious and is a larger force than the actions of any one male character oppressing or controlling others.

In contrast, in *The Italian*, Ann Radcliffe provides reasonable explanations for the supernatural occurrences. For example, Vivaldi encounters a mysterious monk at the arch and again at the inquisition and he cannot determine whether he is man or ghost. While

imprisoned at the inquisition Vivaldi is unable to “convince himself the appearance was more than the phantom of his dream” (Radcliffe 318). Furthermore, while he is being interrogated, Vivaldi hears the voice of the monk even though he is not visible (327). Eventually though, according to the characteristics of female gothic, Nicola di Zampari reveals himself as the ghost-like monk (347). As with male gothic texts, the supernatural supports masculine authority in that Nicola di Zampari discloses Schedoni’s true character and all of his cruel and manipulative behaviour. Just as Wollstonecraft argued for a balance of reason and feeling, Radcliffe’s supernatural events evoke feelings but are explained by reason (Fry 118). Significantly, Vivaldi experiences this strong feeling of fear that he eventually overcomes with reason. Unlike in male gothic texts, where the supernatural occurrences construct the model of patriarchy as an overlying and inescapable social structure, the explained supernatural events in female gothic suggest an attempt to account for the reasons behind the patriarchal structure in order to escape it. Despite this attempt, however, female gothic does not and cannot evade the structure of masculine authority just as the supernatural events still occur; the texts, in their attempt to explain the structure, still focus on the structure itself, further perpetuating it.

Comparing male and female gothic texts reveals that even though differences in the portrayal of relationships, points of view, and supernatural occurrences exist, they all emphasize the dominance of male characters as they pose a threat, even unintentionally at times, to the women with whom they are in contact. Though in some instances the female gothic appears to support women by focusing on their reason and seeming ability to speak, the women are in fact, still under the control of the threatening masculine figures.

Through gothic elements these writers indicate the all-encompassing, overwhelming nature of patriarchal structure. Depending on their manipulation of these elements they are able to support or criticize patriarchy, or offer alternative structures of power.

Charlotte Smith and the Gothic

In *Emmeline* and *Ethelinde*, Charlotte Smith develops masculinity in a similar manner to Walpole in *The Castle of Otranto*. Many of the male characters demonstrate comparable characteristics of misogyny, a need for control, as well as an obsession with the importance of family lineage and reputation. However, by adding a component of sensibility within the context of a community that has demanding social expectations for proper behaviour, financial status, and reputation, Smith alters the depiction of masculinity. She complicates the social force of patriarchal power by suggesting that it is not just a force that acts through men to oppress and manipulate women, but that, as in Walpole's novel, it oppresses and manipulates the men through whom it acts. Smith, on the other hand, offers an alternative that permits male characters to have actual power instead of the superficial power that the patriarchal structure provides.

In her novels, authoritative father figures are still controlling women as well as their entire families, and the heroic men still demonstrate power over the women they are attempting to protect, but Smith challenges these misogynistic depictions of masculinity. She “satirizes [these] male characters who express misogynist views and describes the suffering of women that results from the domination by husbands and fathers” (Fry 114). By incorporating sensibility, Smith creates dominating men who, at times, question their

own authority, thereby drawing attention to a new understanding of gothic masculinity. Though the men still have authority over the women, Smith alters the relationship between men and women as she describes women who are reasonable and thus able to assert some independence from male authority. Guided by Mary Wollstonecraft as well as Rousseau, Smith emphasizes the linking of “private sensibility and singularity with a quest for freedom” (Fletcher 298). As Smith depicts sensibility in male characters and reason in female characters she alters the power dynamic of their relationships. She privileges characters who demonstrate a balance between sensibility and reason; in order to survive and thrive in society characters must relate to others, but also have the ability to be self-sufficient.

Despite this transfer of power, honour, as in other gothic texts, still originates from respectable family lineage. However, unlike *The Castle of Otranto*, which occurs mostly in the seclusion of the castle and empty church, *Emmeline* and *Ethelinde* take place in more social settings. Smith’s focus on society affects characters’ understanding of honour as it is connected to family status; it becomes much more connected to economic and social status within the larger community. Smith reveals how men behave differently in private spaces compared to social, public spaces, which mirrors the shift from the emphasis on morality in *The Castle of Otranto*, to a focus on the relationship between reason and sensibility in *Emmeline* and *Ethelinde*.

By considering the importance of social status and reputation, Smith’s novels exemplify Shawn Maurer’s explanation of masculine honour as beginning to be defined by works and not just noble birth (76). Just as Theodore in *The Castle of Otranto*

challenges the notion that masculine virtue cannot exist without noble birth, so do several male characters in Smith's novels as they act honourably even though they are not wealthy or of noble birth. Like Theodore, they eventually discover that they are, in fact, of a higher social status or they improve their economic situation. Whereas, in Walpole's novel, Maurer's distinction is only partially true, in Smith's novels, this notion of "masculine excellence" is entirely applicable as Smith redefines honour as dependent on actions and intentions, not necessarily connected to men's economic status or reputation in society. In this way, men's power derives not from self-serving actions that exploit others, but from their self-control and their respectability. Smith differentiates between the honourable and dishonourable men based on their actions, not simply their family lineage, and effectively reveals the destructive capability of greed and negative reputations in society.

In her novels, Smith presents aspects of female gothic, though by adapting these elements she changes the depiction of masculinity. For example, she does emphasize female relationships, though they are not the mother-daughter relationships depicted in *The Italian*. Instead, Smith focuses on other female relationships, specifically friendships, in order to advocate for female agency. By emphasizing these relationships, as well as feminine points of view, Smith affects the depiction of masculinity, as it can no longer be defined by marriage or the household if mother-daughter relationships are not the main focus. More importantly, if the female characters have more authority, then male characters' ability to control others necessarily changes. Their power, instead, is more dependent on their respectability within society. Smith omits supernatural

occurrences, revealing a balance between feeling and reason, effectively demonstrating that the element of fear instilled in the characters comes from a completely different source. Instead of losing authority to other male characters or supernatural beings, the social environment becomes the real threat, to female and male characters alike, illustrating that men are vulnerable to forms of authority beyond their control – the expectations of the public. Their power is no longer as effective as when it originates from cruel actions towards others; rather, their power depends on their ability to control themselves in order to maintain respect within society.

Smith establishes her novels as gothic by mirroring elements of masculinity from other gothic texts. However, as she alters these elements to focus more on society, economic status, reputation, and public spaces, she destabilizes the gothic depiction of masculine power as cruel control over women. Instead, she reveals that masculine power depends on men's ability to control themselves and to maintain genuine respect within the community. Ultimately, Smith creates the social environment as a gothic space.

Chapter 2
Proving Worth and Earning Affection: Masculinity in a Modern Gothic Society in
Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle

Notions of masculinity and expectations of men were changing during the eighteenth century. Shawn Lisa Maurer explores the rise of “the chaste and loving husband as a powerful new type of desirable masculinity” that is based on the “notion of honor” as it “appeal[s] to both Christian virtue and burgeoning commercial values” (75). Maurer argues that this new form of masculinity, while it maintains an overall patriarchal presence, “integrat[es] the public and private” realms as the men’s economic interests ultimately benefit their families in private (76). To be successful men were required to act with morality in order to uphold their respectability in business relationships and, with this integration of spheres, society expected them to act with the same morality at home. Men were encouraged to act with sensibility to demonstrate their embodiment of this morality and compassion for others. Their sensibility, as a demonstration of virtue based on an increased emotional response to, and compassion for, others, necessarily combined aspects of the body with emotional response, essentially requiring them to have a genuine bodily reaction to another person’s suffering and thus to offer genuine care and support (Barker-Benfield 86-87). It meant “not only consciousness in general but a particular kind of consciousness, one that could be further sensitized in order to be more acutely responsive to signals from the outside environment and from inside the body” (i). Ann Jessie Van Sant reiterates that sensibility marks a “general shift of the foundation of moral life from reason and judgment to the affections” as “it is an ‘inward pain’ in response to the sufferings of others” (5). Essentially, by integrating the expectation of

sensibility into social interaction, men were expected to exhibit an awareness of others' emotional and physical suffering, react with sympathy, and advocate for change instead of focusing solely on their own assertions of individual power and superiority.

In *Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle*, Charlotte Smith complicates this valuing of social sensibility as she contrasts female characters, who experience genuine sensibility as they recognize the suffering of others, sympathize with them, and legitimately feel their pain, with male characters who distort this same sensibility in an attempt to achieve their own desires. These male characters do identify with the suffering of others to some extent, but because they perform sensibility with the intention of manipulating others, they are unable to cope with the unexpected resulting emotions. By contrasting these two depictions of sensibility, Smith raises questions about masculinity as it functions in social spaces. She communicates the difficulties that men experience as masculinity moves away from patriarchal authority to a more socially oriented sense of power that is not infallible, but rather based on a need to prove their superiority as their financial situations and social relationships change.

Smith redefines masculinity in relation to social space. Just as sensibility obscures the distinction between public and private, Smith suggests that “we should not assume that masculinity is solely an aspect of the ‘private’ self” (McCormack, “Introduction” 4) as she explores masculinity as it is relational to femininity and society as a whole. She depicts the various struggles that male characters encounter and the transformations they experience as they attempt to mold the expectations of sensibility for their own goals and experience the unexpected emotional and physical ramifications of

sensibility that they are unable to manage, to “disrupt the binary gender system that defines patriarchal culture” (Heiland 12). In doing so, Smith establishes a new social culture that equalizes the genders, not by demeaning masculine authority entirely, but by compelling the male characters to improve their perception of female characters, and even more importantly, their perception of themselves. Society becomes the oppressive gothic force that the male characters struggle against, though they ultimately become submissive to its expectations for them.

Subverting Patriarchal Power

Though male characters in Charlotte Smith’s *Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle* display control over women, Smith destabilizes tyrannical and patriarchal notions of masculinity as she portrays men with sensibility, often with excessive emotion, thereby altering the source and effect of the masculine ability to manipulate women. To some extent, she reveals that men’s demonstrations of sensibility provide them with more control over women as they are able to relate to and sympathize with them. Because of this common understanding, the men persuade the women to act as the men desire. However, Smith weakens the extent of their influence as her male characters’ often excessive emotion, despite the sense of control it provides, weakens them as they are subjected to the personal effect of their passions towards the female characters. These men further reduce their superiority as they empathize with and care for other men. However, by using excessive emotion as a way to manipulate other male characters, they ultimately reveal their own weakness since their ability to sympathize with others is

physically and mentally damaging to themselves. Moreover, their sensibility alters their position in society as they lose the respect of others because of their excessive emotions. It prevents them from maintaining control over others because of the detrimental personal effects it produces. In *The Castle of Otranto*, Manfred's emotions are cruel, constant, and overpowering for others. Smith provides her characters with similar intense emotions to maintain a sense of gothic oppression, but, by including sensibility, her male characters diminish their own authority as their desires and emotions change unpredictably. Contrary to typical gothic masculinity that involves men's physical and emotional control over women, thus creating a power binary, Smith determines that by asserting control over women through sensibility, men weaken themselves as they damage their social reputation. Men use their demonstrations of forceful emotions to manipulate women and other men in order to maintain control over them; however, they ultimately destabilize their own power as their emotions also emphasize their weaknesses and suffering.

Unlike *The Castle of Otranto*, which depicts male dominance over female characters in the isolated setting of the Castle, *Emmeline* portrays a complex society in various private houses, as well as different social settings across several countries. Smith constructs the gothic in a contemporary setting as society itself becomes the authoritative force, though it encourages a change in characters' behaviour with an underlying tone of improvement. Donna Heiland recognizes the changing society in the eighteenth society that is significant in the novel. She describes the rising capitalism that lead to a middle class as well as "a shift in the organization of family structures, as men were drawn into the workplace, women were increasingly confined to the home, and gender roles were

insistently codified even as they were insistently resisted. It was a period characterized by massive instabilities in its socio-political structures” (3). By situating the events of the novel in this larger social context, Charlotte Smith suggests a change in masculine authority over women. Men struggle to reposition themselves as fluctuating economic and cultural circumstances demand changes in the role of masculinity. In order to do so, Smith implements sensibility as a way of obtaining “what a culture has repressed” since it “can point the way to the dissolution of the self (in male writers), to the restructuring of gender relations (in female writers), and to different ways of being male and female (in both)” (Heiland 12). However, while Smith does demonstrate a restructuring of gender relations, this is not her overall focus. Her incorporation of male sensibility indicates a change in how men institute their authority over women. Erin Mackie asserts that masculine power always “rel[ies] on modes of privilege, aggression, and self-authorization that violate the moral, social, and legal dictates that constitute its own legitimacy” (2). Smith emphasizes this complexity of masculinity as she reveals the damage that male power inflicts on the men themselves.

By emphasizing the significance of social context, Smith draws attention to the socially constructed ideal man with which to compare her male characters. Because of his sensibility which causes him to sympathize with others, the ideal man in changing economic and social circumstances must act with “‘mannerly’ conduct,” which G.J. Barker-Benfield describes as a “courtesy” towards others and a respectable “[p]resentation of self” (87). Social perception is the most significant factor when determining an ideal man since “one ‘needed to be or at least appear to be, a man’ who

kept up his ‘reputation’” (87). Smith focuses on this notion of presentation that calls attention to the social gaze that observes these male characters and how they present themselves, their reputations, and their attempt, whether successful or not, at attaining prosperity. Men are able to act as they please as long as they appear to act in accordance with society’s desires. They must appear to be able to respond to a “particular range of stimuli [...] with great and shared emotions” (206). Because they may only be acting, Smith maintains gender distinctions and illustrates how men use their performance of sensibility to manipulate women. She indicates, despite their performances, that men are not omnipotent; they must at least act in a way that is acceptable for society.

The men in *Emmeline* are motivated to preserve their positive reputation in society based especially on social and financial status; therefore, they willingly submit themselves to the power of society, just as female characters willingly submit themselves to dominating fathers in Walpole’s novel. However, as part of a changing society in which sensibility is a significant aspect of relationships between women as well as between men and women, men are required to change their approach in regards to relationships with their families and specifically with women in order to maintain social respect. Those men who do not alter their relationships with women are unable to maintain consistent control over them. For example, Richard Crofts manipulates Emmeline by hiding her parents’ marriage certificate to ensure her lack of social status, putting Lord Montreville, his patron, “in immediate possession of his paternal estate,” which is “highly advantageous to himself” (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 398). Crofts’s attempt to improve his social situation by focusing on his finances is ultimately unsuccessful since

his lack of sensibility leaves him vulnerable to Emmeline, who, with great sensibility, determines to clear her parents' names as soon as she discovers the truth about their legitimate marriage. Similarly, James Crofts attempts to physically trap Emmeline, but is unable to sustain his physical manipulation of her since he cannot support this with any emotional manipulation. By depicting him in this way, Smith reveals his weakness as well as his own subconscious awareness of his inferiority. Though he mentions that Emmeline's disgust towards him is "not fair," he focuses on physical connections as he relates his (mis)understanding of Emmeline's encounter with Fitz-Edward: "You did not run thus—you did not scream thus, when Fitz-Edward, the fortunate Fitz-Edward, was on his knees before you. Then, you could sigh too, and look sweetly on him" (248). Though James Crofts is successful in instilling Emmeline with fear and a slight sense of submission as he threatens her physically by approaching her to kiss her, his physical threat is not enough to prevent her from flying "to the bell, which she rang with [...] violence" for assistance (248). Similarly, Delamere's attempts to physically control Emmeline are unsuccessful. He does frighten her as he approaches her room late at night. "Her terror encrease[s]" as she hears noises in the hallway and she is "infinitely too much terrified to speak" when "Mr. Delamere burst[s] into the room," forcing the door in with "a violent effort with his foot" (71). Despite her initial fear and submission to Delamere as his physical presence trapping her in her room infers a sexual threat, she "recover[s] her recollection," asserts her desire for him to "leave [her] instantly," and eventually evades his physical control over her in the dark passageways (71). Delamere fails at his attempt to forcibly control Emmeline as his actions unintentionally persuade her to assert

her independence and disdain for his actions. Without using genuine sensibility, which would require these men to internalize Emmeline's suffering, they are not able to inflict any physical harm upon Emmeline or confine her. Moreover, had either of them actually experienced sensibility towards her, they would not have acted in a way that threatened her physically since they would have been more aware of her fear and anxiety. Sensibility would have led them to act morally and in the best interest of Emmeline so that they would not have threatened her in any way in the first place.

The Chevalier, who attempts to control Emmeline through conversation instead of physical restraint, is similarly unsuccessful; his lack of sensibility not only prevents him from manipulating Emmeline into becoming engaged to him, it actually enables her resistance. He does not listen to or sympathize with Emmeline at all: "all her rejections, however repeated, [are] considered by the Chevalier as words of course" (338). His inability to relate or listen to Emmeline prevents him from influencing her in his favour. More importantly, it causes her to defy him as she is "disgusted at that levity of principle on the most serious subjects which the Chevalier avowed without reserve" as well as his perception of matters that contribute to a person's identity such as religion and nationality, as "matter[s] of great indifference" (338). His inability to understand Emmeline and what is important to her prevents him from controlling her and enticing her into marriage. Instead, he unintentionally encourages her to oppose his dominance.

Emmeline's defiance of, and disdain towards, Lord Montreville, a significant patriarchal figure, solidifies the ineffectiveness of male characters' attempts to control women through means other than sensibility. Though Lord Montreville threatens to

completely abandon Emmeline if she does not act as he desires, he cannot force her to fulfill his wishes. Despite facing social isolation and financial ruin, Emmeline rebukes him stating, “If you abandon me—but my Lord ought you to do it?—I am indeed most friendless!” (148). Emmeline assertively resists Lord Montreville’s unsympathetic guardianship over her as she refuses to do his will and questions his judgement. Through Emmeline’s rational plea, Smith indicates the logical need for male characters to use sensibility in their decision making process and in their actions towards others, especially women. Lord Montreville cannot gain Emmeline’s respect when he is neither caring, nor reasonable. Instead, he only incites her anger. For example, when Emmeline receives a letter from Lord Montreville absolving her from her betrothal to Delamere as she desires, she feels “some degree of pique and resentment involuntarily arise against” him because of “the cold and barely civil stile” in which he informs her (352). Smith reveals that men cannot manipulate or maintain control over women by threatening them physically, socially, or emotionally because their lack of sensibility empowers the women to actively rebel against masculine domination.

Sensibility as a Source of Male Power

Smith indicates that, in order to successfully maintain control over women’s actions and emotions, men must demonstrate their own sensibility. By doing so they are able to instil a lasting sense of fear and worry in the female characters, thereby weakening the defenses they have established against cruel and forceful treatment, making them easier to manipulate. Her claim coincides with Mary Wollstonecraft’s assertion that,

according to Markman Ellis, “both the patriarchal and the sentimental versions of masculinity oppress women” since “[b]oth constructions assume the subservient status of women in institutions such as marriage and romantic love” (*History* 74). For example, when Delamere mistakes Lady Adelina’s son for Emmeline’s, his expression of “rage, fierceness and despair” that originates from his profound love for Emmeline elicits from her “an involuntary shriek” and she is “unable to recall her scattered spirits” (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 287). Emmeline, though able to evade Delamere’s physical threats, cannot avoid or prevent his emotional outbursts. She reacts in a similar manner to his physical threats, but is unable to regain her composure, revealing that the true source of Delamere’s leverage over her is his emotions. When he “hesitate[s] not to pour forth the most extravagant professions of admiration, in a style so unequivocal,” Emmeline “burst[s] into a passion of tears” and begs him, “in a tremulous and broken voice, not to be so cruel as to affront her, but to suffer her to return home” (64). Emmeline, despite her desire to resist Delamere, is affected by his emotions and can only react emotionally, so she is unable to escape him by her own effort. His emotional outbursts and applications to her feelings astonish her so that she does not know how to respond. When he pleads for her to join “the man who lives but to adore” her and elope in Scotland, Emmeline is “astonished and terrified at the impetuosity with which he pressed this unexpected proposal” and is unable to resist as the “words were a moment wanting” (167). Moreover, her inability to respond and resist immediately leaves her vulnerable to the further emotional protestations of Delamere’s friend, Fitz-Edward, who “tak[es] advantage of her silence” (167). His emotional demonstration influences Emmeline by

supporting her incapacity to resist Delamere, revealing the complete control that men exert over women through their emotional exclamations. During another of Delamere's demonstrations of extreme emotion as he professes his love to Emmeline she concludes that "it [is] no purpose to resist" since "the impetuous vehemence of Delamere [is] too much for [her] timid civility" (64). She recognizes that she cannot stop Delamere's emotional declarations and concedes his power over her by refusing to even attempt to resist him.

In addition to stimulating fear in women through their earnest sensibility, men's performance of sensibility elicits pity, revealing that the men are even better able to manipulate women by persuading them to feel sympathy. Emmeline does not resist Delamere's influence over her both because she fears him and because she pities him. She affirms that "Delamere unhappy—Delamere wearing out in hopeless solicitude the bloom of life, was the object she found it most difficult to contend with" especially as she sees "him [as] the victim of his unfortunate love" and can therefore "no longer command her tears" (125). Delamere's emotional demonstrations of love and dejection elicit an emotional response of pity from Emmeline; her genuine sensibility towards him makes her completely submissive to his will. Delamere "hope[s] in that sensibility of temper and that softness of heart to which he owed all the attention she had ever shown him, he should find a sure resource. In her pity, an advocate for his fault—in her love, an inducement not only to forgive but to reward him" (170). Delamere's sensibility makes him aware of the effect his emotional demonstrations have on Emmeline and he purposely uses them to his advantage. Because he is driven by his sexual desire and his

desire to possess Emmeline as an object, his sensibility cannot be genuine – it revolves around his own bodily longings which cannot be a sympathetic bodily response to Emmeline’s hardships. Under the pretense of sensibility, however, he does manipulate her in an attempt to satisfy his base human yearnings. In this way, Delamere still represents the male threat of other gothic novels as he plots to dominate the desirable female character. However, in Smith’s depiction of this relationship, the inclusion of feelings necessarily implies that Delamere cannot control her, or himself, perfectly, since feelings are unpredictable.

Fitz-Edward, who appeals to Emmeline’s sensibility by portraying his own emotional suffering, is slightly more successful in manipulating Emmeline since he presents his motive as less selfish than Delamere. He desperately wants to reunite with Lady Adelina and their son and implores Emmeline to act on his behalf by forcing her to feel sympathy for him, and for Lady Adelina whose reputation is at stake. He pleads, “[W]ill you, my lovely friend, undertake to plead for me? will you and Mrs. Stafford, who know with what solicitude I sought her, with what anguish I deplored her loss, intercede on my behalf?—you, who know how fondly my heart has been devoted to her from the moment of our fatal parting?” (405). By appealing to her emotions with his own, Fitz-Edward not only manipulates Emmeline, but acquires her assistance in manipulating Lady Adelina. Emmeline is convinced that he is “extremely affected” by his separation from them Lady Adelina and his son (299). By presenting their emotions in a way so as to appeal to Emmeline’s genuine sensibility, both Delamere and Fitz-Edward are able to manipulate her underhandedly, making her believe that she is acting

on their behalf as she does not realize that she is being manipulated by her feelings of pity that they induce.

As male characters become aware of their ability to perform sensibility, they present their sincere emotions in an exaggerated form to manipulate the female characters. Delamere, for instance, after frightening Emmeline with his emotional outbursts, promises that “he would endeavour to be calm,” but only if she acts as he desires: “He [makes] her solemnly protest that she would neither write to Lord Montreville, or procure another to do it” (126). Delamere appears to entrust to her the outcome of their relationship by letting her choose to act as she deems appropriate; however, he uses his emotional demonstrations as a threat to compel her to allow his constant presence. Unlike the male characters in *The Castle of Otranto*, Delamere’s threatening presence and ability to manipulate and harm female characters is not limited to a specific setting; as he travels in pursuit of Emmeline and follows her to various places – all in the social world – Smith reworks traditional male gothic power. She removes the limitations that other male characters experience in physical location and, in so doing, constructs society as an all-encompassing gothic setting.

Sensibility as an Unpredictable and Uncontrollable Force

Smith complicates the male characters’ attempts to perform sensibility to their advantage as she exposes their inability to control their actual emotions. Their true feelings interfere with their exaggerated performance, but this imbalance still assists male characters in influencing and exploiting female characters. Delamere’s emotional

instability physically harms Emmeline and his mother. For example, when he cannot control his feelings for Emmeline and kidnaps her to elope in Scotland, his rashness and protestations of love physically harm Emmeline, making her completely vulnerable to him. She is “so entirely overwhelmed and exhausted, that she [can] no longer support herself” (172). With her genuine sensibility, she is unable to cope with the magnitude of Delamere’s intimidating and conflicting emotions. Delamere unintentionally harms his mother in a similar manner. Reports of his emotional recklessness cause her to have “at very short intervals, such dreadful fits, as had entirely contracted her left side, and left very little hope of recovery,” foreshadowing his own demise (205). By directing his sensibility towards Emmeline, Delamere disregards his mother’s feelings of worry and anxiety, thereby causing her physical pain and suffering. This performance of sensibility, complicated by his genuine feelings towards Emmeline, compels his mother to act on his behalf, even though he does not enforce these actions. She does not act against him in any way; he has a detrimental physical effect on his mother without being physically present. Likewise, Delamere’s emotional instability confuses Emmeline, eliciting her pity and genuine sensibility, and thus empowers him to manipulate her even when he is not with her. Even after she has not seen or heard from Delamere for a long period of time, Emmeline feels compelled to follow his desires at the expense of her own. She simply attributes his lack of contact with her to his constant travelling and she “still [feels] herself bound to keep from her mind as much as possible the intrusive image of Godolphin” (284). Emmeline’s submission to Delamere’s manipulation of her is undeniable when she, even after a complete lack of contact from her betrothed, is

determined to not induce any further emotional outbursts from him by even thinking about Godolphin. Delamere not only controls Emmeline's actions, but manipulates her thoughts as well. He seems to obtain complete control over her; however, by using emotions to do so, Delamere, despite his ability to control the women around him, struggles to control himself since he cannot balance between his true emotions and his exaggerated performance of them.

Although Smith indicates that men are able to use demonstrations of sensibility to manipulate and control women, their sensibility reveals their own vulnerability, the women they are manipulating, and society as a whole. Delamere's sensibility physically weakens him. When he mistakenly assumes Lady Adelina's son is Emmeline's baby, he begins shouting acclamations of disbelief, dejection and anger, but he stops and "in the speechless agony of contending passions he lean[s] his head against the frame of the door" (287). Delamere feels physical repercussions of his emotional outburst. Moreover, Delamere causes his own weakened mental state through his dramatic display of emotions. His deep feelings of love and devotion to Emmeline leave him vulnerable to the Crofts' orchestrated rumours of Emmeline's affair with Fitz-Edward. Delamere "dared hardly trust his mind with the import of this investigation" as the "seeds of jealousy and mistrust" are implanted in his mind (256). His strong emotions do not allow him to think clearly so that he is easily persuaded by others and thus made to doubt himself and his ability to think or react. He is unable to forgive himself as he understands the physical and emotional pain he has inflicted on his mother. For example, when he recognizes that his recklessness has inflicted her with illness, he stares at his mother "in

silent terror” then “burst[s] into tears” (206). He reveals his own vulnerability as he recognizes the effects of his impulsive and emotionally driven actions. He emphasizes this weakness by convincing himself that the suffering he has inflicted on his mother affects his relationship with Emmeline. He exclaims to Emmeline that he “shall be a wretch unworthy of *you*” (204). Delamere reveals his fear of losing his mother, and consequently Emmeline, because of his own faults. Through his emotional exclamations Smith discloses not only his emotional instability, but the weakening affect that these emotions have on him as they undermine the control that he wields because of them. He does not have control over himself as he “exaggerate[s] every circumstance” and “magnifie[s] them” as he responds emotionally (257). Moreover, through these moments of vulnerability, Smith indicates a continued importance of family connections, though not because of inheritance and patrilineal succession that causes the supernatural curse in *The Castle of Otranto*, but rather because of the social prestige they communicate. Once again, Smith uses this change in the importance of family relations to modernize the gothic by using unstable emotions in relation to family connections in place of a supernatural curse.

Smith reveals the male characters’ weaknesses as their genuine sensibility forces them to recognize the consequences of their manipulative, though often unconscious, performances of sensibility and the harm they have inflicted. Fitz-Edward displays feelings of unworthiness as he recognizes the detrimental effect his professions of love have had on Lady Adelina. He cries, “oh God!— of what misery may I not have been the occasion!” (243). Like Delamere, Fitz-Edward’s sensibility makes him recognize the

injury he has caused Lady Adelina, but it reveals his own weakness as Smith portrays his own pain. As a rake, Fitz-Edward harms Lady Adelina and though Smith permits him to abandon this lifestyle, she uses sensibility to cause him suffering as atonement for his actions. Sensibility, as it raises awareness of public scrutiny and the importance of a respectable reputation, establishes society as a replacement for the tyrannical male in other gothic novels since it manipulates male characters' behaviour through fear and pain. Though his "criminality is [...] not named as such" since his prestige is "guaranteed by his elite social status" (Mackie 35), Smith does not exonerate him from his mistreatment of Lady Adelina; he experiences justice privately through his emotional pain. Similarly, Lord Montreville eventually acknowledges the pain he has caused Emmeline by trying to control her life, while keeping her emotionally distant. He reveals his own weakness through his sensibility. He is unable to forgive himself, even when Emmeline forgives him. He shouts to her, "You forgive me—But to what purpose?—Only to plunge me yet deeper into wretchedness. You forgive me—but you despise, you throw me from you forever" (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 381). Smith suggests that, for Lord Montreville, sincere sensibility, although it permits him to correct his wrongdoings, causes him pain from his guilt as it ultimately causes him to focus selfishly on his own injuries and dejection. He is upset because he faces the thought of losing her forever. By breaking this connection, Smith seems to destabilize male power since Lord Montreville perceives his well-being, as he associates it with his happiness, to be dependent on Emmeline's willingness to stay with him. He has destroyed this with his own emotional instability. Through this perception, and his inability to distinguish between his sincere feelings and those he has

exaggerated, he unconsciously relinquishes control to Emmeline. Ultimately, Smith argues that even though men use their emotions to manipulate and control women, they do not have control over their own emotions since each of their feelings is “struggling for superiority” (287). They surrender their authority to the female characters with whom they desire an emotional connection and who demonstrate only genuine sensibility, thereby maintaining complete self-control over their emotions.

Smith suggests that even when men successfully use their sensibility to manipulate women, they relinquish some of their control to the women because their emotions are accessible. Because Smith focuses on emotional connections between characters thereby making male characters vulnerable and more intimately knowable, she refashions the male gothic villain, as he is simultaneously threatening to the female characters, but also a victim to scrutiny from individual characters or society as a whole. Delamere asserts that his feelings of pain caused by Emmeline’s denial of love towards him “drive[s] [him] to despair!” (97). This exclamation prescribes control over Delamere’s feelings to Emmeline: even though Delamere is using his sensibility to manipulate Emmeline by inspiring feelings of guilt, he is admitting that she has control over his emotions. On the one hand, his sensibility is not authentic and sympathetic, because he is willingly performing his emotions in an attempt to manipulate Emmeline, initiating a struggle for control, instead of using it to understand and care for her. However, by performing sensibility he enables himself to perceive Emmeline’s feelings. Her feelings overpower his own desires, thereby undermining his plans and control over her. For example, Smith describes that Delamere’s “terror at Emmeline’s immediate

danger had obliterated for a moment every other fear” of being pursued on their escape to Scotland (175). Delamere hesitates in his plan to elope with Emmeline because his sensibility allows him to understand her suffering. Smith uses this contradiction to develop Delamere’s vulnerability. In attempting to distort sensibility into a selfish force, Delamere unintentionally becomes vulnerable to the difficult emotional effects of true sensibility. Even then Smith reiterates that extreme, performed sensibility results in a lack of control for Delamere since he only recognizes Emmeline’s suffering as a potential loss for himself through her death, or at the very least, her continued rejection of him. Furthermore, though Delamere expects Emmeline to willingly submit to him with his declarations of love, they in fact have the opposite effect. For Emmeline “[t]here was something so terrifying in the wild looks of the young man, that [...] having only half opened the door, [she] retreated from it” (98). Instead of effectively attracting and consequently manipulating Emmeline with affirmations of his love, Delamere’s forceful demonstrations of emotion repulse Emmeline and he is unable to elicit his desired reaction from her. Moreover, even after he realizes that he cannot force her to feel the way he desires, he recognizes that he has just as little control over his own true feelings of love for her. He shouts to himself, “Oh! fool, fool that I am, to persist in loving a woman without an heart, and to be unable to tear from my soul a passion that serves only to make me perpetually wretched. Cursed be the hour I first indulged it, and cursed the weakness of mind that cannot conquer it!” (187). He acknowledges the weakness of his own mind and thus, Smith emphasizes Delamere’s vulnerability to the woman he loves because of his true feelings for her and his inability to use a performance of sensibility to woo her.

This vulnerability leaves him open to further injury. Like Manfred, he causes his own downfall, but his sensibility causes him to experience this more forcefully. For example, even when he resolves “never again to yield to such impetuous transports of passion,” he cannot “even mitigate the tumultuous anguish which [has] seized him” (257). Smith emphasizes Delamere’s weakness as she portrays his inability to control himself. Even after determining that he must be more emotionally stable, he descends into a state of emotional turmoil that is consequently more damaging to himself than to anyone else. For Smith, emotional instability and sensibility transforms the male gothic tyrant into a complex and somewhat sympathetic figure as he is vulnerable to the same forces he attempts to use to his advantage. By demonstrating his vulnerability, Smith indicates that even though Delamere, and to some extent, Lord Montreville and Fitz-Edward, is able to use a performance of sensibility to manipulate and control women, it leaves him open to injury and failure since he can’t actually contain it or use it to his advantage; he is overpowered by the force of sensibility. His sensibility and sympathy for Emmeline does not guarantee complete successful domination over her.

The male characters’ sensibility does not only prevent them from obtaining total authority over the female characters; it lowers their status in society. For example, Humphrey Rochely unreasonably permits thoughts of, and feelings for, Emmeline to fully occupy his mind. He decides to propose to Emmeline after “Love very unexpectedly put to flight the agent of Plutus, who had, with very little interruption, reigned despotically over all his thoughts and actions for many years” (128). He cannot control his feelings for Emmeline and impulsively asks for her hand in marriage, ignoring thoughts of money

and fortune which had consistently been significant factors of his social reputation. Delamere similarly disregards all thoughts of reputation as he consumes himself with thoughts of Emmeline. He spends all of his time with Emmeline, “intoxicated with his passion, indulging the most delightful hopes, and forgetting every thing else in the world” (130). His feelings for Emmeline prevent him from considering the social consequences of his actions; he essentially separates himself from society. Though he is able to manipulate Emmeline, his emphasis on his feelings overwhelms him so that he has no interest, and cannot function normally, in a social setting. Moreover, his reckless, emotion-driven behaviour degrades his father’s perception of him. When Delamere passionately confronts Emmeline in her room to express his love for her, his father, Lord Montreville, questions him, “What excess of madness and folly has tempted you to violate the retirement of Miss Mowbray?” (73). Far from being a respectable “man of feeling”, Delamere loses the respect of his father and assaults Emmeline, who remains calm and reasonable, with his feelings.

Smith uses male characters’ failed attempts at using sensibility to highlight female characters’ reason in order to emphasize male characters’ volatility. To some extent, Delamere’s use of sensibility, as he attempts to use it to purposely manipulate Emmeline while only causing himself to be overwhelmed and overpowered by it, encourages Emmeline’s reason and seems to indicate a reversal of gender roles. “[P]olite masculinity [is] ‘rent with anxieties,’ and anxieties about effeminacy in particular” (Kennedy 79), and Delamere’s extreme emotions convey this anxiety as he struggles to maintain a balance between his masculine status and portraying the politeness expected by society. Smith

depicts “the application of disabling sensibility to a new version of (ineffectual) masculinity” (Labbe 7). Delamere’s masculinity is not entirely ineffectual as he does distress Emmeline, but he afflicts himself in the process. Barker-Benfield argues that a complete gender reversal is not possible, despite the extent to which men appear feminine because of their emotions. He explains that “however delicate a man’s system, it was firmer than a woman’s” (24). Since Delamere dominates Emmeline because of his sensibility even as he harms himself in the process, Smith suggests that this domination, though important, is not as significant as the effect his sensibility has on himself. It provides him with the opportunity to manipulate Emmeline, but reveals his own vulnerability as the force of his sensibility overpowers him. Smith refashions the gothic oppressor into a character who is also oppressed. She indicates, through her reconfiguration of the gothic, that society itself is the dominant force in place to restore the proper balance in male and female relationships.

Though lowered social status and damaged reputations are harmful for both men and women, and though women usually appear to be more at fault for social offences, men are in fact, the focus of social victimization as they harm themselves. Despite their physical presence, “women were excluded, both in fact and by law, from the operations of the public sphere” (Parsons 4). This forced absence from the public sphere leaves men as both the primary causes and recipients of harm. Delamere’s inability to control his emotions destroys his chances of obtaining his desires, namely, Emmeline. He has been “accustomed from his infancy to the most boundless indulgences, [and] he never formed a wish, the gratifications of which he expected to be denied: and if such a disappointment

happened, he gave way to an impetuosity of disposition which he had never been taught to restrain, and which gave an appearance of ferocity to a temper not otherwise bad” (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 68). His demonstration of emotions is not negative; however, his inability to control them affects the way in which other members of society perceive him: as having a ferocious temper. His temper and its appearance of cruelty and unruliness prevents him from obtaining Emmeline; he is unable to control his emotions and is consequently unable to control Emmeline, thus adding to his emotional instability and causing harm to himself. This harm is magnified by the fact that others witness it, so Delamere is not only vulnerable to just his own weaknesses, but to the perceptions of others as well.

Fitz-Edward encounters similar victimization from himself and society as he pursues Lady Adelina. However, he attempts “to prevent [his vices from...] being know to, or at least offensive to those, whose good opinion it [is] his interest to cultivate” (68). Fitz-Edward is aware of his subjection to social reputation and therefore attempts to achieve his goal, a relationship with Lady Adelina, by influencing her in more subtle and private methods. He secretly appeals to Emmeline and Mrs. Stafford, and though this proves slightly detrimental to him as Delamere, who is unable to control himself, misunderstands the situation, Fitz-Edward is eventually “allowed to carry with him the hope, that at the end of her mourning [Adelina] would relent, and accede to the entreaties of all her family” (475). As Fitz-Edward learns to control his actions and emotions, he has the potential to achieve his goal since his “heart [is] still sensible” to the plight of Lady Adelina, but he must relinquish his desire to force her forgiveness in order to do so

(286). Smith emphasizes that men cannot control women while they are themselves being manipulated by social expectations for proper decorum; they must surrender their authority over women in order to fully control themselves before they are able to unite with the women they desire.

Sensibility Between Men

As social values were changing, so to was the role of the public. The distinction between public and private life was less obvious as men were required to act with the same decorum and compassion in business and at home. Barker-Benfield explains that this esteeming of social consciousness in the form of a “new ideology of sensibility” was not relegated to just feminine qualities (215). Instead, it universally valued “‘the social affections’—sympathy, compassion, benevolence, humanity, and pity—against selfishness” (215). Within a society that favours “men of feeling,” Smith complicates men’s sensibility in *Emmeline* as they use it to not only manipulate women, but other men as well, challenging the role of patriarchy and the effectiveness of this new form of masculinity. By doing so, Smith complicates the control that men have over others as their sensibility empowers them and weakens them simultaneously. Delamere performs his sensibility in order to emphasize his superiority over Fitz-Edward. When Delamere believes that Fitz-Edward has run away with Emmeline “he [is] prepossessed with the idea” and “he [swears] perpetual vengeance against him” (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 106-07). Delamere indicates that Fitz-Edward should fear him, not because of any physical threat, but because of the strength of his negative feelings towards him. Similarly, Sir Richard

Crofts uses his sensibility to manipulate Lord Montreville. When his younger son advantageously marries Lord Montreville's daughter, Crofts discloses the information in a manner to preserve his own reputation. He "undertook to disclose the affair to Lord Montreville, and to parry the first effusions of his Lordship's anger by a very common, yet generally successful stratagem, that of affecting to be angry first, and drowning by his own clamours the complaints of the party really injured" (310). Crofts understands how to use sensibility to manipulate others and he uses it to manipulate Lord Montreville's feelings. Smith emphasizes the instability and inconsistency of masculine power as Crofts uses it to undermine Lord Montreville's patriarchal role. Delamere exerts similar power over his father. He uses his feelings of anger to strengthen his resolve to act against his father's wishes to keep him separate from Emmeline: "Vexed and angry, Delamere [begins] to suspect that his father had some design in thus detaining him at a distance from Emmeline; and fired by indignation at this idea, equally scorning to submit to restraint; or to be detained by *finesse*, he disengage[s] himself from the card-table" and leaves in pursuit of her (139). As Delamere defies his father because of his powerful emotions, he undermines patriarchal control, and Smith reveals that sensibility and excess of emotions undermine traditional stable relationships. Even Lord Montreville recognizes the change in their relationship and his inability to prevent it as he states, "The impetuosity of his temper, which has never been restrained, it is now out of my power to check; whatever he determines on he will execute, and I have too much reason to fear that opposition only serves to strengthen his resolution" (95). Lord Montreville recognizes his lack of control over his son, though his tone indicates his disdain and lack of respect for

him. Even though Delamere is asserting his power over others with his emotions, he is not praised for it. Rather, he is condemned for “throw[ing] off the restraint of paternal authority, and daring to avow his resolution to act as he please[s];” he jeopardizes his place in his family and in society (73-74). Furthermore, Sir Richard Crofts uses Delamere’s sensibility to his own advantage, manipulating him as well as Lord Montreville. He “warmly represent[s] to his Lordship the necessity of Staffords going abroad and taking Emmeline with them” (290). Since, “Lord Montreville [knows] that Delamere [is] returned, and [is] embroiled with Emmeline; he [is] therefore eager enough to follow advice which appear[s] so necessary” (290). Delamere is weakened because his performance of sensibility, even though it is based on true feelings, is so obvious and exaggerated that he makes himself vulnerable to the manipulation of others. Lord Montreville’s obvious dislike of Delamere’s excessive emotion leaves them both susceptible to the manipulation of Sir Richard Crofts. Smith clarifies that Delamere’s outward presentation of sensibility make both him and his father vulnerable to manipulation, undermining their positions of respect and their ability to act as dominant masculine figures.

Smith exposes the instability and inconsistency of masculine relationships as she indicates that the performance of sensibility undermines men’s opinion of themselves. For instance, while Fitz-Edward attempts to use sensibility earnestly to win the love of Lady Adelina, he does not anticipate his feelings of guilt for impregnating her. Consequently, he experiences feelings of inferiority and self-degradation, especially as he considers Godolphin’s reaction to her pregnancy. Fitz-Edward explains his encounter

with Godolphin after Lady Adeline exiles herself: “He implored me to help his search after his lost sister, and again said how greatly he was obliged to me—while I, conscious how little I deserved his gratitude, felt like a coward and an assassin, and shrunk from the manly confidence of my friend” (245). Fitz-Edward’s sensibility allows him to understand Godolphin’s feelings of gratitude, which, since they are undeserved, contribute to Fitz-Edward’s acute feelings of guilt and vulnerability. Unlike the confident and assertive male characters in *The Castle of Otranto*, Fitz-Edward questions, and even regrets his actions because his sensibility provides him with a new perspective of the events. Smith subtly constructs society and its notions of propriety as the more dominant force instead of the influence of one male character. She offers this social force as an alternative to patriarchal power. Despite his difficulties, Fitz-Edward’s unstable emotions do not confine him to a position of submission to Godolphin; he is able to use his feelings of guilt to empower himself and confront Godolphin after he discovers the truth about his sister’s situation. He is able to use the unexpected feelings to perform sensibility for Godolphin in order to reassert his authority. Fitz-Edward states, “[W]e part not till I hear from herself whether she prefers driving me to desperations, or quitting, in the character I can now offer her, the cold and barbarous Godolphin” (436). Fitz-Edward’s guilt causes him to consider Lady Adelina’s and his own feelings as more significant than those of Godolphin; therefore, he regains some control over his relationship with Lady Adelina as he places less significance on Godolphin’s opinion and employs genuine sensibility to care for Lady Adelina. His adjusting emotions and perspective reveal his ability to adapt to changing circumstances, and epitomize Smith’s conception of masculine sensibility: it

reveals men's unstable relationships with others as well as with themselves. Their ability to control others is not constant; it is dependent on their fluid perceptions of others and themselves.

Significantly though, Smith constructs this strong, demanding, unsympathetic perception of Godolphin through Fitz-Edward. She contrasts Godolphin and Fitz-Edward as Fitz-Edward's unreliable descriptions of Godolphin are self-serving. Fitz-Edward desires sympathy, but Smith challenges the reader to fully understand both characters: Fitz-Edward as manipulative, though with an admirable, if not somewhat selfish, motive and Godolphin as unsympathetic to his male counterpart's plight, especially given his past behaviour. Smith establishes Godolphin as a higher moral character in relation to Fitz-Edward, who, though repentant, cannot entirely escape his past conduct as a rake. Her alternative power structure still maintains a hierarchy of male characters, though it is based on morality rather than an ability to forcefully manipulate others. Smith implies through his coldness, that Godolphin is more concerned with the well-being of his sister than of the man responsible for her potential social ruin by impregnating her. He does exclaim, "Poor Adelina! her dreadful malady is returned" (440). Smith forces the reader to look beyond appearances. While Manfred, the tyrannical and oppressive male figure is as cold and distant as he is described, Godolphin's supposed "cruel" behaviour is, in fact, beneficial to the female character he is protecting. Moreover, his sensibility permits him to actually understand her suffering so that he is genuinely protecting her and not simply oppressing her in another way.

Despite their ability to use their sensibility and emotions to their own advantage, Smith's male characters are still vulnerable to the perceptions of the social world to which they belong. For example, Elkerton experiences physical effects of his fear when dueling, but is unable to evade them without damaging his reputation. Smith describes the "trembling challenger, with a face as pale as if Delamere's pistol had already done its worst" (200). The negative physical effect on his body exudes his fear, even though he feigns courage by not accepting defeat. He damages his reputation by revealing weakness, and Smith complicates the ideal form of masculinity since, Elkerton as a fop, is already degraded by society before he loses more respect by exposing his fear. Like Fitz-Edward, he cannot control his sensibility, especially as it takes on a physical form, because he is so focused on material possessions and outward appearance. According to Eve Sedgwick, "for a man to undergo even a humiliating change in the course of relationship with a man still feels like preserving or participating in a sum of male power, while for a man to undergo any change in the course of a relationship with a woman feels like radical degeneration of substance" (*Between Men* 45). Elkerton, then, does not damage his reputation because of his encounter with Delamere, but because Emmeline is at the centre of their argument and she so strongly disapproves of the duel as she is genuinely concerned for the physical safety of both men. Smith degrades Elkerton for his inability to grow in his relationship with Emmeline because of his desire to maintain his unchanging and "respectable" outward appearance.

Smith further complicates masculine power as her male characters' sensibility reveals their own perceptions of society's view of themselves. For example, Delamere,

who has a high opinion of his social habits, immediately assumes that Emmeline and Fitz-Edward are lovers and experiences strong jealousy and anger. When he discovers that he is mistaken, he is “somewhat ashamed of the hasty conclusion he had made” (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 107). He understands that his emotional reaction and accusations do not affect Fitz-Edward and Emmeline so much as they affect himself and how others perceive him. He must compensate for his mistake and is therefore “more disposed to hear what Fitz-Edward [has] to say” regarding his innocence (107). Smith is reconfiguring social order. Not only does Delamere’s rash emotional response make him appear foolish in society, but his ability and willingness to feel also amplifies the threat of a negative reputation and his vulnerability, for which he is not entirely able to compensate, especially as he recognizes his inability to control his emotions. Instead, his ability to perceive the threat of his damaged social reputation actually reinforces his feelings of inadequacy and pain at the loss of Emmeline until he is unable to control his mind. While waiting and hoping to confront Fitz-Edward once again, Delamere “add[s] new anguish to that which corroded his heart, by supposing that Emmeline, aware of the danger which threatened her lover from the vengeance of his injured friend, had written to him to prevent his return” (294). Delamere, in worrying about his reputation and his belief that Fitz-Edward has taken Emmeline from him, cannot control his mind as he makes unrealistic assumptions about Emmeline’s actions. Smith determines that his focus on his place in society actually causes Delamere to lose the control he once had over Emmeline since he cannot control her actions even in his mind; his idea of her betrays him. Furthermore, Delamere loses control over himself because of Fitz-Edward’s continued absence. Delamere, though

seemingly vulnerable to the pain others cause him, is even more vulnerable to himself. “When no immediate prospect offered of meeting the author of his calamities, they tormented him with new violence,” thereby indicating the significant role society actually plays in Delamere’s life (294). His inability to confront Fitz-Edward and correct the apparent violation leads to further emotional instability as Delamere’s feelings of pain, anger, and jealousy harm himself since he is not able to correct the social harm he has encountered. Smith’s alternative structure of power aims to erase gender and social hierarchies.

Rejecting Sensibility

Smith uses Delamere’s desires to be separate from his social connections to explain how social demands and social criticism overpower masculine authority. Delamere wants to experience and dwell on his feelings for Emmeline. While he is “forced to mix in” society, he does so with “impatient contempt” since he cannot focus on social events and his feelings for Emmeline at the same time (118). His obsession with his own emotions prevents him from feeling satisfied as an active part of society. His distorted use of sensibility isolates him from society instead of connecting him to it. Consequently, Smith suggests that society controls Delamere since his self-inflicted inability to actively participate frustrates him and leads him to isolate himself, further damaging his reputation. Moreover, in the social setting he must fight for the ability to indulge in his misery. He “frequently fle[es] from society, and when he [is] in it, [forgets] himself in gloomy reveries” (315). To take part in social activities, Delamere

must control his emotions, and because he is unwilling and then unable to do so, Delamere is injured by social expectations as he refuses to comply and ultimately isolates himself. Smith reveals the true nature of social power as Delamere reinforces society's power over him as he willingly excludes himself from it when he refuses to comply with its expectations. Social expectations of others force Delamere to damage himself and his reputation as he appears foolish, reckless and out of control. He lacks the true male power that Smith develops as social in nature since his performed sensibility isolates him from the rest of society.

To attribute value to this form of masculine power, Smith compares Delamere's social situation with that of Lord Montreville. He has complete control over his emotions, but to an extent that he does not demonstrate any sensibility, thereby damaging his social reputation. When he meets with Mrs. Stafford at her request for financial assistance in order to remain in society with her extravagant husband, who is facing financial ruin, Lord Montreville, "recollecting *that he had a conscience*, was about to ask it by what right he assumed the power of rendering an innocent family wandering exiles, merely to save himself from a supposed possible inconvenience" (291). However, "while every lingering principle of goodness and generosity was rising in the bosom of his Lordship to assist the suit of Mrs. Stafford" he is interrupted and determines not to act on his feelings (291). His failure to act on his sensibility, while illustrating his control over his own emotions as well as the fate of Mrs. Stafford and her family, damages Lord Montreville socially, and Smith depicts him, not as a man of honour, but as a selfish, financially-driven man. Lord Montreville, though apparently active in society, does not

have masculine authority either since he does not demonstrate any sensibility – the only force that would truly connect him to others.

Masculinity and Social Relationships

Smith incorporates various instances of gossip between men to reiterate her argument that masculine power relies on genuine social connections. By using gossip, which is typically a female pastime, as a male activity, Smith reiterates that women experience similar social struggles that she is highlighting in her male characters. Thus, not only does she use gossip to portray male vulnerability, she justifies the previously assumed frivolous social experiences of females. Smith uses gossip to depict the power struggle between male characters as well as to weaken them since the gossip emphasizes their destructive focus on their own social status and the importance they place on their own feelings. In this way, Smith reveals the disingenuous nature of their emotions that undermine their masculinity and argues that male power is more of a performance than physical force. According to T.C.W. Blanning, “‘public opinion’ came to be recognized as the ultimate arbiter” and men are not exempt from the need to participate appropriately (2). Elkerton uses gossip frequently to improve his own status and to degrade the status of Delamere in order to manipulate Emmeline into loving him. For example, while at a social gathering with Emmeline Elkerton relates, “I went to call upon my old friend Delamere, Lord Montreville’s son, in Pall-Mall; we passed a very chearful hour discoursing of former occurrences when we were together at Turin. Upon my word, he is a good sensible young man. We have renewed our intimacy; and he has insisted upon my

going down with him to his father's house in Norfolk" (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 123).

Elkerton attempts to establish himself as having an equal social status with Delamere to justify his association to Emmeline and to undermine Delamere's social superiority by feigning a relationship with him. However, his scheme is unsuccessful and has the opposite effect as Delamere asserts the truth about their non-existent relationship, damaging Elkerton's reputation. In response to Delamere's explanation "the discomposed looks of the distressed Elkerton [...] [explain] the matter to the whole company; and the laugh [becomes] general" (123). Elkerton is not taken seriously by the others present and he effectively manages to lower his status from its previous standing; he is not simply just unknown, now he is identified as someone who is quite ridiculous. Moreover, though Delamere "at first [feels] inclined to be angry at the folly and forwardness of Elkerton," he is then "struck with the ridicule of the circumstance" and can only laugh (123). Elkerton is not even successful in eliciting an inappropriate emotional response that would degrade Delamere's social status; he simply injures his own reputation.

Other instances of anonymous gossip are more successful in damaging the subject's reputation in society and Smith reveals, through these incidents, that when they perform excessive emotion and pervert sensibility, men are vulnerable to the perception of society. For example, when Delamere's rashness leads him to elope with Emmeline to Scotland he becomes the subject of conversation, even with servants. The bar maid relates her conversation with one of Delamere's servants: "Last night, after they comed here, his walet was pretty near tipsey; so he come and sot down here, and told me how his

master had hired him to go along with ‘em to Scotland; but that before they got near half way, somehow or other ‘twas settled for ‘em to come back again. But don’t say as I told you, Mr. Elkerton, for that would be as much as my place is worth” (190). Delamere’s impulsive and emotional actions leave him vulnerable to rumours and weaken his social position as he becomes the subject of mockery for those in lower classes. Hazel Jones explains, “Sniping against the ruling classes never went out of season and every example of vice or folly was treated as fair game” (101). No one is exempt from the degradation from gossip, especially as the lower classes use it to obtain at least some degree of equalization between classes.

Smith uses gossip to reveal how public opinion preys on male characters who misuse sensibility by threatening their reputations and social status. Delamere is victimized by gossip as it encourages him to doubt himself. When he mistakenly learns that Emmeline has been unfaithful, he “dare[s] hardly trust his mind” (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 256). He does not know who or what to believe and even has misgivings about his own understanding of her and their relationship. He is unable to control his emotions. When he first reads the condemning letter, “fury flashe[s] from his eyes, and anguish seize[s] his heart;” he feels extreme anger and misery simultaneously, which ultimately leads to further reckless thoughts as he quickly redirects these feelings to his undeserving mother (255). Through Delamere’s response to this piece of gossip, Smith asserts the influence that society, through the work of individuals, has on men as they are forced into contrived emotional situations that are damaging to their own authority.

Even as conductors of gossip, Smith's male characters reveal their submission to social expectations. James Crofts, for instance, is instrumental in implementing the rumours about Emmeline's betrayal to harm Delamere, but he is unable to act independently to do so. Despite his talents in manipulating others, James Crofts "readily under[takes only] to assist in detecting the intrigue;" he is unable to act on his own and must submit to the women and the structure of society in relaying information (238). Moreover, like the *Female Tatler*, which concerns the public "only insofar as it possesses the ability to destroy private families," James Crofts is not pursuing any larger social morals; he is simply attempting to destroy Delamere and his family (Parsons 116). Moreover, he cannot take credit or receive praise for his efforts since Miss Galton determines that "anonymous letters were [the most effective] expedients" since she "had before had recourse" to them (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 252). James Crofts is able to participate in this social condemnation of Delamere, but is not able to improve his own situation by doing so. In this way, James Crofts's position is further demeaned as he uses letters to implement his attack on Delamere. Though letters were a popular form of written gossip and could sometimes lead to printing in the national press, quite frequently gossip was included in letters simply to "justify the cost of postage" (Jones 103). Smith reveals that his use of gossip, even as it achieves his desired outcome, degrades his own social position.

Smith contrasts James Crofts's gossip with Elkerton's, which has detrimental physical effects on several characters, in order to develop masculine power as requiring both genuine sensibility and social connections. Elkerton exploits and manipulates

Delamere, the subject of his gossip, through his rumours. He acts openly and independently, and damages Delamere's reputation while improving his own. After Delamere and Elkerton almost duel, Elkerton exaggerates and distorts the truth in his explanation in the paper. He describes "all its imaginary horrors, and end[s] with asserting very roundly, that 'Mr. Elkerton had the misfortune dangerously to wound the Hon. Frederic Delamere; and, when this account came away, there were no hopes of his recovery'" (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 201). This rumour seems to only have negative effects on Delamere who is enraged and whose mother, convinced of his recklessness, experiences several serious physical ailments as his behaviour "subject[s] her to fits" (193), and in this way, Elkerton seems successful in eliciting negative emotions from Delamere to his detriment, while at the same time, improving his own reputation. Elkerton uses sensibility to manipulate Delamere, using gossip to "materialis[e] [his body] in different ways and in other locations", but is ultimately subject to the perceptions of society himself (Parsons 8). Smith argues that spreading rumours is shameful and is actually degrading in society. Elkerton spreads the rumours even though he recognizes that they will only be believable "for two or three days" (C. Smith, *Emmeline* 201) at which point he must sacrifice his own reputation. Moreover, Smith indicates that Elkerton never "reflect[s] on any other consequences than those most flattering to his ridiculous vanity" (201). He is not thoughtful or sentimental and is therefore not respectable, despite his apparent manipulation of others through social means. Gossip is a significant source of power for male characters as it enables them to manipulate others, but it is only effective because of its involvement of the larger social

body. Even though individual male characters orchestrate the gossip, Smith establishes society, in which the gossip thrives, as the true source of power to manipulate others, re-establishing society as a controlling force instead of any one individual. Society, as an alternative authority, repositions male characters as simultaneously dominant and subject to the demands of society, effectively removing gender hierarchies and equalizing power.

Smith further challenges typical male positions in society as she criticizes men who, focusing on maintaining their social reputation, do not demonstrate any sensibility. Smith indicates not only the necessity of maintaining social status, but the need for men to portray at least some sensibility. Sir Richard Crofts, for example, asserts his focus on his own, and his sons', financial situation when he denies assistance to the Staffords. He explains to Mrs. Stafford, "He wants the money, Madam, for a particular purpose; and tho' from my heart I grieve, and lament, and deplore the necessity of the measure, I do assure you, Madam, nothing else will give you any chance of winding up, compleating, and terminating the business before us" (292). Crofts's mechanical tone contradicts his declarations of emotions. Smith reveals through his desire to maintain his social status, the degree to which it is of the utmost importance to him since his well-being is dependent on it. However, Smith criticizes him for his lack of sensibility as he is not at all sympathetic to the suffering of the Staffords. Though he is financially successful in the social world, he is not genuinely connected to it through sensibility. Smith mocks his insensitivity as she depicts his sensibility as a performance. Smith criticizes Lord Montreville in a similar manner, once again emphasizing the extent to which the men are subject to the perceptions and ways of society. At the beginning of the novel, Emmeline

is in a precarious social position as an illegitimate orphan, and the only female in the household after the death of her caregiver, Mrs. Carey. Lord Montreville does not recognize the impropriety of Mr. Maloney's behaviour as he approaches Emmeline with "insulting familiarity" or her terror and "alarming apprehensions" at the idea of being "entirely in his power [...] without any female companion" (49). However, rather than depicting Lord Montreville as a villain perpetuating this impropriety as he focuses only on his own social standing, Smith apologizes for his behaviour. The narrator explains that Lord Montreville has "basked perpetually in the sunshine of prosperity; and his feelings, not naturally very acute, were blunted by having never suffered in his own person any uneasiness which might have taught him sensibility for that of others" (59). Smith criticizes society's focus on wealth and reputation, demonstrating through Lord Montreville, how this wealth prohibits sensibility which would ensure a lasting respectable social authority. Lord Montreville, despite his title and appearance of power, is controlled by his social status and is weak because of it. As with Sir Richard Crofts, Smith encourages the reader to project degradation on Lord Montreville when he confronts Emmeline with inappropriate emotions. He wrongly accuses her of provoking and encouraging Delamere's attachment to her. Emmeline is "hurt at finding, from his angry and contemptuous tone, as well as words, that she was condemned unheard, and treated with harshness where she deserved only kindness and gratitude" (131). Emmeline is hurt by Lord Montreville's lack of sensibility and ability to understand her situation, but despite her assertion that she is heard, Smith voices Emmeline's feelings; she is not silenced or completely controlled by Lord Montreville. In fact, by voicing Emmeline's

concerns here, Smith demeans Lord Montreville and his lack of sensibility, ultimately challenging dominant masculine authority over women.

Smith criticizes Mr. Stafford for his excessive and scandalous lifestyle, which he prioritizes over the needs of his family. Mr. Stafford buries himself in debt as he indulges his every want and lives an extravagant lifestyle beyond his means. There is no way for him to correct his behaviour which has been harmful to his entire family who must deal with the financial and social repercussions of his debt. Smith explains the gravity of his situation:

Stafford was cast; and nothing remained for him but either to pay the money or to be exposed to the hazard of losing his property and his liberty. His conduct had so much injured his credit, that to borrow it was impossible. Mrs. Stafford attempted therefore to divest herself of part of her own fortune to assist him with the money. But her trustees were not be moved; and nothing but despair seemed darkening round the head of the unfortunate Stafford. (289)

Stafford's lack of sensibility combined with his selfishness, as he dwells on his own suffering instead of the pain he has caused for his wife, supports Smith's criticism of male objectification of women. Without sensibility Stafford cannot understand the trouble he causes for his wife; he does not acknowledge the sacrifice she is willing to make for him or the pain he causes her. Smith not only challenges the objectification of women, but condemns Mr. Stafford for the power he has over his wife. She replaces the supernatural forces of traditional gothic novels with social condemnation to contemporize gothic and

to encourage social change, in financial responsibility, and especially in male-female relationships. Smith asserts that masculine power over women is a result of their ability to feel and function well in society. They are not independent forces of authority over women.

Masculinity – A Balancing Act

As men are subject to society and maintaining their reputation, they are unable to manipulate women to the full extent of their desires. The male characters cannot devote all of their attention to dominating women when they must consider the social implications of their actions. For instance, the narrator explains that Richard Crofts is not well-thought of in society. He is, to “his superiors, the cringing parasite; to those whom he thought his inferiors, proud, supercilious, and insulting; and his heart hardening as his prosperity increased, he threw off, as much as he could, every connection that reminded him of the transactions of his early life, and affected to live only among the great, whose luxuries he could now reach, and whose manners he tried to imitate” (117). Though he manipulates Emmeline, he does so, not with the ultimate intention of controlling her, but of benefiting himself socially. In this way, Smith emphasizes that men, in their struggle to obtain and maintain good social standing are vulnerable to social opinions and are unable to successfully maintain authority over women because their focus is divided. Especially with Richard Crofts, Smith reveals how the attempt to control social status and women is in itself detrimental; others simply perceive him as a “parasite” and find him “proud, supercilious, and insulting” (117) and his plans to manipulate Emmeline are

unsuccessful in the end. The Chevalier is equally unsuccessful in his pursuit of women because of the demands of society. He wants to spend all of his time with Emmeline, but leaves without her because even though he “detest[s] a party which the ladies were not to enliven,” he recognizes that “his declining to go would so much chagrin and disappoint his father, that, with whatever reluctance, he was obliged to set out with him” (341). Bellozane’s performed sensibility enables him to recognize his father’s emotions and forces him to act as his father wishes even though he must leave Emmeline, essentially sacrificing any attempt to convince her to love him. Bellozane is subject to the decorum of society as he must accompany his father, not simply because of his father’s request, but because he cannot appear improper in front of Lord Westhaven and the military men they are visiting. The Chevalier’s focus becomes his father’s perception of him and not his inability to be with Emmeline; his compulsion to act properly within society overpowers his affected sensibility and destabilizes his masculinity.

Smith complicates this destabilization in other male characters as social pressures force them to recant their previous performances of sensibility as well as earnest sensibility from which the former originated. Other men too, must renounce the women they love because of social pressures. Even the emotionally unstable Delamere, who acts rashly and impulsively, is compliant with social expectations to his own detriment. Lord Montreville explains Delamere’s reasons for ending the long-sought-after engagement with Emmeline. He states, “My son, Lord Delamere, convinced at length of the impropriety of a marriage so unwelcome to his family, allows me to release you from the promise which he obtained” (351). Although Delamere appears to have authority as he

determines whether or not his marriage to Emmeline will occur, his past declarations of passion and love suggest that Delamere is making decisions based on his social position. Because Delamere is subject to social expectations, he must eventually free Emmeline from his domination, thereby demonstrating that society ultimately has control over women as well.

Godolphin recognizes the same complication of women in society and Smith reveals that masculine authority, aside from being social in nature and requiring an emotional connection to others, needs to be based on selflessness. When Emmeline discovers the truth about her parents' marriage, legitimizing her birth and position in society as she gains access to her family's money, Godolphin "suppos[es] that independence might be grateful to her sensibility, and affluence favorable to the liberality of her spirit. But the satisfaction he derive[s] from these reflections, [is] embittered and nearly destroyed, when he consider[s] that her acquiring so large a fortune would make her alliance eagerly sought by the very persons who had before scorned and rejected her" (368). Godolphin's reflection, though suggesting a degree of freedom for Emmeline who will no longer be subject to the authority of her uncle, reveals that she will instead be vulnerable to others vying for her attention and for their own financial gain through an advantageous marriage. More importantly, Godolphin, through the depiction of his strong feeling of bitterness, reveals himself to be the true victim of the situation, since Emmeline's "freedom" prohibits him from obtaining his desires – Emmeline. This focus on his own feelings, even with an awareness of Emmeline's, prevents him from immediately obtaining a state of effective masculine authority.

Smith reinforces this concept through the characters of Godolphin and Lord Westhaven as they differ from the other male characters. Lord Westhaven does not encounter any hostility from society or injure himself in any way since he is constantly in control of his emotions. For example, when Delamere threatens Emmeline Lord Westhaven does not act rashly, but instead, “consider[s] what could be done to prevent their seeing each other” (383). He conveys sensibility through his sympathy for Emmeline, but he controls his emotions in order to effectively protect her. Furthermore, he uses his controlled emotions for others’ benefit instead of his own. He helps Emmeline assert her legitimate position in society without “giv[ing] himself an air of importance” or considering “the prospect of future advantage” for himself (407). Emmeline recognizes this and willingly submits to his authority. She appreciates his stability and focus on her well-being. She trusts him entirely and knows that he is “a protector too intelligent and too steady to be discouraged by evasion or chicanery—too powerful and too affluent to be thrown out of the pursuit either by the enmity it might raise or the expence it might demand” (399). Smith explains, through Lord Westhaven, that stability of emotion and stability of reputation enable men to successfully help and protect women, maintaining authority over them, but in a way that is productive for both, instead of detrimental. Moreover, Lord Westhaven is able to manipulate social situations without victimizing anyone as he convinces Lord Montreville to “put [her] in possession of [her] estate,” but still caring for her until she is of age (452). Lord Westhaven improves Emmeline’s social status without degrading his own or Lord Montreville’s and

without demonstrating excessive emotion, so that everyone is satisfied with the result and no reputations are damaged.

Through Godolphin's actions and responses to various situations, Smith depicts effective masculinity as maintaining complete control over their emotions, while participating in society, and acting on behalf of others. Like Lord Westhaven, Godolphin is motivated by his desire to help his sister as well as Emmeline. Through him, Smith idealizes masculinity in the social setting since his sensibility, as he understands and responds to the suffering of other characters, leads to acts of charity – a necessary component of social honour and morality that Maurer, Barker-Benfield, and Van Sant consider significant to the emerging figure of the "man of feeling". Godolphin's rage at Fitz-Edward is very similar to Delamere's rash and dramatic emotions; however unlike Delamere, Godolphin expresses his rage through genuine sensibility for his sister. He exclaims, "Accursed! doubly accursed be the infamous villain who has driven her to this! And must I bear it tamely!" (275) His passion is directed at Fitz-Edward for the harm he has caused Lady Adelina by impregnating her and threatening her reputation. Despite his desire to seek revenge on Fitz-Edward, Godolphin does not question his need to confront him civilly; rather, he redirects his emotional outburst to himself, reminding himself that he must control his emotions and actions in regards to Fitz-Edward. In doing so, he improves the situations of his sister by not submitting her to a confrontation with Fitz-Edward or to worry over their safety if a duel or other altercation were to occur. He controls his emotions in a similar manner when he is professing his love to Emmeline. Once again, like Delamere, he begins to demonstrate excessive emotion when he is

speaking with her about his sister, but he recognizes the negative effect he is having on her and stops himself mid-sentence stating, “But wherefore presume I to trouble you on a subject so hopeless? I know not what has tempted me to intrude on your thoughts the incoherencies of a mind ill at ease” (303). Godolphin embodies genuine sensibility since he resists the temptation to project his feelings on Emmeline. Instead, he recognizes her feelings and acts in a manner that protects her from experiencing his afflictions as well as her own. When he wants to express his feelings of love, he attempts to protect her as much as possible by communicating his hesitations, and gradually introducing the topic. He asks, “will you allow me to address you on a subject which you must long have known to be nearest my heart; but on which you have so anxiously avoided every explanation I have attempted, that I fear intruding too much on your complaisance if I enter upon it” (411). Godolphin maintains self-control and willingly entrusts Emmeline with the decision as to whether or not he expresses his devotion to her. As he expresses concern for her feelings, he does not presume to manipulate her or over-stimulate her feminine sensibility, but uses his own sensibility to understand her concerns. In this way, the “noble-minded Godolphin” (394) earns the respect of Emmeline who “determine[s] to have no longer any secrets concealed from him who was [her heart’s] master” as she willingly submits to his desires since they match her own (417). Like Lord Westhaven, Godolphin maintains control over his emotions, does not act irrationally, and considers others’ feelings before his own, thus ensuring his success in obtaining Emmeline’s love, as well as the safety and respect of his sister. He does not suffer any infliction from his own behaviour or from anyone else in society as he experiences only “the excess of [his]

own happiness” (419). Because he is able to control his emotions and actions, while at the same time advocating for the women instead of attempting to manipulate them, Godolphin does not experience any negative social ramifications; he exhibits true and effective masculinity, generating honourable authority that convinces other characters, as well as the readers, to trust him completely.

Within a complex social setting that demands the perfect balance between sensibility and reason, Smith condemns men who do not demonstrate any sensibility. Without sensibility male characters are unable to maintain any genuine connection with other people. They would be physically and emotionally separate since the very nature of sensibility involves understanding and feeling the plights of others. Characters such as Lord Montreville are detrimental to themselves when they do not exhibit any emotions or understanding for the emotions of others. These men are unable to control women as their lack of emotion frustrates the women who demand to be acknowledged on an emotional level. However, Smith specifies that men’s sensibility must be authentic to effectively dismantle superficial social hierarchies. By contrasting characters such as Lord Westhaven and Godolphin with irrational characters such as Delamere, Smith distinguishes between genuine sensibility and the performance of sensibility that is actually self-serving and detrimental to the individual. Men are completely subject to the demands of a society that requires them to demonstrate sensibility, but also obliges them to maintain control over themselves before they can maintain consistent control over others. Society requires men to act with sensibility in order to achieve control over others. However, this ability to perceive their own feelings as well as those of others

leaves them vulnerable to other social expectations, thereby revealing that men are not independently powerful since they are reliant on their position in society; their ability to control others is dependent on their willingness to submit to the expectations of the society of which they are a part. Smith is advocating for an equalized society where no individual is better than another since even the control the male characters obtain is not self-serving. By arguing that male power requires social connection, sensibility, and selflessness, she is not advocating for a removal of male power, but arguing that it must be used to benefit everyone. Through her depiction of the complex male-male relationships she establishes authority as a privilege that is easily lost. The various male-female relationships indicate Smith's understanding of female authority as the female characters consistently display genuine sensibility that elicits the sympathy and care of others, compelling others to act in their favour. Ultimately, she asserts that both men and women are subject to the authority of society as it seeks to eradicate superficial and harmful power imbalances.

Chapter 3
A Gothic Society: Destabilizing Masculinity and Advocating for Social Change in
Ethelinde, or the Recluse of the Lake

While Walpole presents a critique, through gothic conventions, of traditional forms of patriarchal authority in *The Castle of Otranto*, he does not offer an alternative structure in which the characters can function and relate to one another. Charlotte Smith continues this critique, but begins to explore alternative forms of authority as she introduces sensibility into the social construction of masculinity in *Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle*. By maintaining continuity with gothic narratives, and incorporating the social world and sensibility, she expands this social experimentation in *Ethelinde or the Recluse of the Lake* as she reconceives society itself to act as a dominant corrective force, to which the male characters must conform. From the beginning of this novel, Smith challenges the tyranny of patriarchal power, drawing attention to its presence in order to replace it with a public social power. She depicts and then denounces the superficiality of society as characters attempt to appease the public's expectations for finances, relationships, and reputations. Colonel Chesterville attempts to provide for his daughter, Ethelinde, after his wife's death and after he and his son have gambled away the majority of their money. Sir Edward tries to save his marriage as his wife flirts with other men and lives a lavish lifestyle. Mr. Montgomery attempts to earn a living to provide for his aging mother and Ethelinde, whom he hopes to make his wife. All three of these men work to protect Ethelinde, especially as she encounters other, less desirable suitors and as she exerts herself to protect other female characters from social condemnation. Each character is bound by social expectations as well as social and

financial limitations and Smith criticizes the expanding material culture. In this way, Smith develops her refashioning of masculinity from *Emmeline*, which explores a new position for men in society, to *Ethelinde*, which pushes men to rise above the trivialities of society. Smith reveals male characters' vulnerability as they are subject to the social condemnation of others, especially as their sensibility makes them feel the shame more intensely, not only because of their own feelings, but because of their loved ones as well. She destabilizes masculinity as a form of tyrannical and patriarchal power over women and instead asserts that it is part of a social structure that values self-control and selfless compassion for others. Male characters are completely vulnerable to these social expectations. Smith depicts a transformed masculinity that is submissive to social expectations. Social condemnation as it changes the relationships between male and female characters and their perceptions of each other replaces oppressive masculine authority with the power of public opinion. Thus, Smith establishes the social world as a gothic space, in which society acts as a disciplinary force that regulates its members to make possible a pure masculinity devoid of social pressures, trivial selfish desires, and superficial relationships. This space reconfigures male-female relationships in order to assert the possibility of female independence. By subtly challenging masculine authority in this way, Smith successfully constructs a new social order that is governed by honourable morals instead of gender-based authority or financial success.

Relinquishing Force in Favour in Sensibility

Though Smith presents a patriarchal structure, her inclusion of male sensibility combined with the power of social expectations suggests the structure's limits. Male characters, as they care for others and sympathize with their feelings, do not act forcefully. For example, Sir Edward, instead of demanding that Lady Newenden go with him to Grasmere, "[beseeches] her, as a favour, to accompany him thither" (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 1: 3). Smith points to the tension between male sensibility and tyrannical patriarchal power. Sir Edward cannot demand his wife's obedience and be sympathetic to her desires simultaneously; in order to appease her, he must relinquish his authority to abide by society's notion of proper decorum. Smith further destabilizes the structure of patriarchal power as she depicts the lack of control male characters experience as they attempt to use sensibility in tandem with their patriarchal position. Sir Edward, for example, attempts both to earn the respect of and maintain authority over Ethelinde through his sensibility. He cares for her, reacts to her emotions, sympathizes with her family's financial and social difficulties, and confesses his admiration for her. His sensibility permits him to maintain some intimacy with her as her respected and caring guardian; however, this position, especially because of his sensibility that leads him to place her needs before his own desires, prevents him from forcing Ethelinde to reciprocate his love: "she consider[s] him [only] as an elder brother" (1: 22-23). Smith confirms the ineffectiveness of tyrannical patriarchal power as male characters attempt to compensate for their inability to control the actions and emotions of others. When Sir Edward, for instance, realizes that he cannot prevent his wife from consorting with Lord

Danesforte, he “resolve[s] on that which appear[s] the only method left to crush it at once, by assuming, what he [has] never yet done, the authority of an husband” (2: 214). Even this is not effective for him, since he is contending against not only her dotting parents, but her fluid interpretation of social decorum. Similarly, Sir Edward decides against using patriarchal authority over his sister after considering that “unaccustomed as she was to controul, she would resent any attempt of his to dictate to her, and would become impatient of the company of Ethelinde if she found it likely to impose on her inclinations the smallest restraint” (4: 228). Smith challenges the inevitability of patriarchy as the only structure of relationships. Instead she suggests that patriarchy is part of a larger social structure in which social expectations hold more power over a greater number of people; therefore male tyranny is not an effective method for male characters to manipulate female characters, especially as they must consider the social implications of their actions. Sir Edward, who is concerned about Ethelinde’s well-being, cannot exert his patriarchal authority over his sister without risking her alienating Ethelinde from her society. He is subject to social authority. Significantly, Smith does not completely discredit patriarchy. Mr. Maltravers uses his authority to compel Lady Newenden to return to her husband; however, he “carefully conceal[s] that circumstance from Sir Edward” as if he is ashamed of implementing his authority in this manner (5: 9-10). Patriarchal authority is represented as part of a larger social structure that favours popular reputations, a secure and prosperous financial status, and connections with important and wealthy people, because although Smith recognizes the need for beneficial relationships

and money to live satisfactorily, she condemns people who focus only on these trivialities and not the physical and emotional well-being of others.

In Smith's novel, male characters' sensibility and reliance on their own as well as other characters' feelings leaves them disappointed and dissatisfied with their patriarchal power. Even through these instances, though, Smith does not completely discredit patriarchal power. Instead she asserts the overall authority of social expectations within the family structure. She designates specific roles to each family member, mimicking the patriarchal structure, while making familial roles flexible, thereby demonstrating the overarching pressure of social expectations and how different characters' understanding of them is either empowering or debilitating. The aging Mr. Harcourt wants his estranged daughter to care for him. He explains that he "expected in her to find a nurse, who, from love and gratitude, would have delighted to attend [him]" (5: 243). Not only is Mr. Harcourt left without the care of his daughter, thereby losing some of his status within the household, he loses her to her desire for a higher position in society, one that is based on her connections and her focus on leisure activities. His disappointment emphasizes a variation in the patriarchal structure. Mr. Harcourt, like Lord Montreville in *Emmeline*, is still the head of family in name, though he, as well as his family members whom he governs, must comply with larger social expectations. Victorine is subject to the authority of social reputation, and although her father clearly disapproves of her behaviour, he does not overtly criticize her. To do so would be to confirm her social misconduct and publicly admit his failings as the head of his family. Similarly, Colonel Chesterville acts with sensibility towards his daughter as he attempts to protect her from

the knowledge of her family's financial ruin. He instructs Sir Edward: "Do not however shock her, by telling her my reasons for wishing her to return before her cousin, but rather give any that you think will be plausible, and save her at least some days of fruitless uneasiness" (1: 114). He desires her presence, not to exploit her, but to protect her from the public effects of their financial and thus social destruction. Her family connection automatically implicates her in their misfortune. Colonel Chesterville's reliance on family connection as a source of strength instead of one of abuse highlights Smith's perception of the benefit of a family that is not managed simply by patriarchal authority. She values unified families, while still maintaining individual roles within them.

This move away from patriarchal authority that is only accessible to dominant male figures to the authority derived from superior social status in terms of reputation and finances enables women to occupy a different role in relation to men. Significantly, when the already independent Miss Newenden marries Mr. Woolaston, "her change of situation seem[s] to make no alteration either in her behaviour or the style of the house, except only that Mr. Woolaston [becomes] at once its acknowledged master" (5: 27). The new Mrs. Woolaston is not entirely impervious to patriarchal authority since Mr. Woolaston is recognized as the new master in the household; however, she does not automatically occupy a lower social status or become more dependent because of the marriage. By favouring social status and all that it entails, Smith asserts the possibility of female independence without completely overturning the way in which society is understood. In this way, she makes the changes accessible and understandable in order to make the social change desirable for everyone.

Female characters' opinions and desires are a significant consideration as male characters act and make decisions. The degree to which they acknowledge the women's impact reveals the value that Smith places on a more equitable family structure, especially as Lord Montreville and Mr. Crofts in *Emmeline* micromanage their families as much as possible. She juxtaposes two heads-of-households: Colonel Chesterville "let[s] [Ethelinde] see how much he thought himself obliged to her for this effort to obey and relieve him" by not associating with Montgomery despite her love for him (2: 110-11), while Sir Edward simply attempts to satisfy his wife. Unlike Colonel Chesterville and Ethelinde, who compromise – Ethelinde obeys her father and Colonel Chesterville acknowledges the pain this causes her – Sir Edward concedes all authority to make decisions. Ultimately, neither man is successful in leading his family. Sir Edward ensures dissatisfaction for both himself and his wife since he "too often [finds] that all his endeavours [serve] only to increase her discontent; and that the more earnestly he attempt[s] to please her, the more difficult she [becomes] to please" (1: 18). While Colonel Chesterville uses a balance of patriarchal authority and sensibility to effectively encourage Ethelinde to act with propriety, Sir Edward's reliance on only sensibility leaves him unable to promote his wife's proper social behaviour and essentially contributes to social condemnation for both of them. He does not command any respect from his wife. Colonel Chesterville, on the other hand, obtains not only his daughter's respect, but her care and devotion. His financial burdens caused by the social impropriety of his son "redouble[s] her attachment towards him" (1: 8). For Smith, patriarchal authority is only valid within the larger, more complex, structure of society with its

distinct social roles and expectations. While Colonel Chesterville's sensibility elicits filial obedience and devotion, his financial hardships and consequent social degradation strengthen the patriarchal relationship between him and his daughter; Ethelinde chooses to increase her devotion to him. However, she is not acting entirely independently, since she, like her father, is guided by social expectations that require her to be loyal, sympathetic and caring, despite the importance of financial stability.

Contemporary Gothic Threats

As in other gothic texts, male characters in *Ethelinde* attempt to exploit or, at the very least, influence women by threatening their virginity or their lives; however, they present their threats as threats to social status rather than to the physical body. Through this shift, Smith suggests a new source of gothic threat for the female characters – the emotional ramifications of being forced to conform to social expectation. By focusing on male sensibility in *Emmeline*, Smith reveals the social implications of physical threats as male characters begin to perform emotions to manipulate the female characters. In *Ethelinde*, Smith develops this further as the male characters attack female characters' reputations, status, and social relationships. Significantly, Smith does not exclude male characters from the negative consequences of their threats and emotional manipulations. Lord Davenant, for example, is determined to ruin Ethelinde's reputation after she rejects his advances. He accuses Sir Edward of having inappropriate relations with her. Ethelinde exclaims that Lord Davenant is “[c]ruel—cruel!” and then pleads with him: “My Lord, you must allow me to repeat to my father what you have said, that he may at

once and for ever remove me from a family where I am liable to them” (2: 50). Although Lord Davenant successfully disgraces Ethelinde and causes her to think poorly of herself through his slander, Smith complicates his authority. He has no physical control over Ethelinde. Society’s perception of her and her family ultimately holds more authority over them than Lord Davenant himself – his threats are successful, but only because of their social consequences. Similarly, while Colonel Chesterville makes the final decision to prevent Montgomery from marrying Ethelinde, his decision is based on the public’s opinion. He even contradicts his own desires by forbidding their marriage. He rationalizes, “Yet nothing is more romantic than his hopes, nothing more impossible than their union! Had Ethelinde a fortune—” (2: 73). He wants nothing more than to see them married and happy, even though it is not an advantageous match. His sensibility and understanding of their feelings and desire to make them happy contradicts public opinion; thus, in asserting his patriarchal authority in union with his understanding of the power of public opinion, Colonel Chesterville harms himself emotionally, just as he harms Ethelinde. As the male characters attempt to emotionally threaten or manipulate female characters Smith complicates the physical threats of male characters in other gothic texts. By emphasizing the emotional nature of the threats and their negative consequences for female characters Smith clarifies the related implications for the male characters as their threats, despite their good or bad intentions for the female characters, harm themselves as well.

Feminine Sensibility and Masculine Vulnerability

Smith, instead of promoting tyrannical authority, seems to be advocating for sensibility as a possible method of controlling female characters. She argues that even the sentimental version of masculinity allows for a degree of influence over them, especially as the male characters consciously perform it as a method of manipulation. However, sensibility necessitates the subservience of male characters to the greater force of society. In *Ethelinde*, Smith uses male characters' seemingly controlled and balanced sensibility to undermine not only their authority over female characters, but their own well-being and good intentions to help female characters. For example, as he attempts to sympathize with Ethelinde's concern over her father's health and financial situation, Sir Edward undermines his own good intentions as he seems to speak on behalf of her. He accuses her: "I see you are anxious to leave us! You are tired of Grasmere Abbey, though you have yet been here only five weeks" (1: 233). As Ethelinde refutes these claims, asserting her genuine distress for her father, Smith affirms not only Sir Edward's lack of patriarchal power to manipulate Ethelinde, but his inability to use sensibility to entice her to stay, thus firmly establishing her independence from him. Mary Wollstonecraft reasons that "women are trapped by the social institutions that shape their lives from start to finish. They are trapped by the mere fact of being women" (Heiland 91). While Smith does not refute her female characters' entrapment, she does not leave them completely helpless either. Male characters must submit to the same social institutions as their female counterparts. Moreover, through Sir Edward's wounded tone Smith establishes the complexity of social relationships as she juxtaposes Sir Edward's personal

disappointment with Colonel Chesterville's much more legitimate distress caused by the financial and social ruin of his son. In doing so, Smith establishes a society in which male characters oppose each other, as they care and provide for the female characters for selfish reasons, ultimately ensuring their own subversion. In other instances, Sir Edward's sensibility causes a separation between himself and Ethelinde, even when he intends to use it to strengthen his connection with her. Ironically, Ethelinde recognizes that "an heart like [his] cannot be too much seen, and seen as it really is" without truly understanding his feelings of love and devotion towards her (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 1: 53). Smith uses this misunderstanding to indicate that the male characters are unable to use sensibility to manipulate women's actions and feelings, despite their innocent and caring intentions; although Sir Edward's feelings seem to be accessible to Ethelinde, his caring nature and recognition of Ethelinde's feelings prevent her from seeing his true emotions. Furthermore, his ability to understand and sympathize with Ethelinde's feelings in connection to his own compromises his ability to express himself even though it is beneficial for him to do so. For example, in order to maintain his friendship with and guardianship of Ethelinde, he must share the news of Colonel Chesterville's financial difficulties with Ethelinde. However, even as he recognizes that he can "no longer delay informing her of her father's wishes for her return: yet he dread[s] the explanation" (1: 192). Sir Edward's anticipation of Ethelinde's anxiety for her father as well as his portrayal of his own unhappiness at Ethelinde's inevitable departure indicates his unwillingness to submit to social expectations. Propriety requires Sir Edward to inform Ethelinde, but his sensibility causes him to hesitate and Smith exposes the discomfort of

masculine submission to social expectations, especially as Sir Edward forces himself to submit to them.

Smith complicates masculine identity as she contrasts male characters' demonstrations of sensibility with those of female characters' to stress the ways in which male characters must adjust their actions, emotional responses, and ultimately, their notion of masculinity. By juxtaposing the emotional reactions of male and female characters to various events Smith rebalances the typical male-female hierarchy. For example, when Ethelinde and Montgomery admit their feelings for each other, understanding that they must be separated, Ethelinde cannot put her feelings into words; "her tears spoke more forcibly, than language could have done" (1: 214). Montgomery, on the other hand, expresses his emotions with passionate language, exclaiming,

Good God! [...] for what am I reserved? To meet the loveliest, the most amiable of women; to find her generosity and compassion awakened for me, and to be certain that I shall see her no more—no more hear of her, perhaps, unless that she has blessed some more fortunate man with that hand and that heart, which are all that I covet on earth. Poverty! adversity! obscurity! I have hitherto endured all without a murmur! But now I feel how bitter it is to be thrown out of that line of life, from whence I might have dared to look up to supreme happiness." (1: 214)

Smith implies that Ethelinde's physical communication is forceful and more effective than Montgomery's verbal articulation of the same emotions. Smith implies that because of their silence, women are able to influence others – she effectively reverses social

assumptions to advocate for women's agency. Smith does not justify a patriarchal hierarchy by endorsing women's forced silence; instead, she advocates for their autonomy as their self-imposed silence is a strength rather than a weakness since it elicits emotional responses from others. Though Montgomery is able to act with sensibility, uniting his feelings with Ethelinde's, his reliance on language and his masculine egotism prevents them from marrying immediately. He is too focused on himself and his ability to articulate his emotions to be able to consider her needs and desires to ultimately nurture a courtship. Like Montgomery, Colonel Chesterville expresses his sorrow verbally in reaction to Ethelinde's physical display of emotion. After determining never to see Montgomery again she meets her father "with forced smiles indeed, and assumed cheerfulness, but with a countenance so wan, and eyes so heavy, that he start[s] when he [sees] her" (1: 256). Because of his sensibility, Colonel Chesterville is able to sympathize with Ethelinde; however, unlike her, he is not able to control his reaction. Instead of feigning acceptance of his decision, he pleads, "[T]ell me, my child, too truly that you are unhappy; and my reproaching heart accuses me of having robbed those eyes of their lustre, and of suppressing those genuine smiles which were the delight of my soul!" (1: 257). Smith confirms that his verbal outburst is less effective than Ethelinde's physical demonstration of emotion in eliciting sympathy. The female body can more effectively influence the male characters since, through their own sensibility, they are able to perceive the emotions of female characters, though they are unable to express their emotions in the same way. Montgomery is unable to relate to Ethelinde when he encounters her physical expression of emotions as "the tears that [are] in her eyes, and the

agitation in which she appear[s], [strikes] him with astonishment and terror” (2: 51).

Though he, like other male characters, successfully perceives female characters’ emotions, effectively meeting the social expectations for men of feeling, the female body as its own entity is not entirely knowable to the male characters.

This inability to know the female body evokes the gothic convention of struggling to maintain a sense of personal identity by attempting to understand what is unknowable, what Burke and Kant describe as a sublime experience that is a “confusion of boundaries between subject and object, and finally a transcendent or totalizing vision that results from the confusion or blurring of those boundaries” (Heiland 33). Smith uses male characters’ sensibility to develop an awareness of the sublime as these men, despite, or rather because of, their sensibility, understand that they do not and cannot *know* the female characters. Heiland adds that typically, because violence is conventionally “directed against women, one can only conclude that these novels understand women as the embodiment of the ‘difference’ that sublime experience eliminates” (34). However, since the male characters are unable to fully transcend to a state of complete understanding of the female body, Smith suspends the male characters in a state of not knowing and thus, constructs a new gothic space in which both men and women encounter fear and discipline. She does not necessarily empower female characters, but she does withhold power from the male characters.

Smith clarifies that though shared sensibility unifies male and female characters to some degree, the way in which they portray their emotions enforces a separation between them since the female body, as it more effectively conveys emotion, impacts the emotions

and experiences of the male characters. Female sensibility has a negative effect on male characters as it confuses and destabilizes their emotions. For example, after Sir Edward participates in a duel against Lord Danesforte because of his improper behaviour towards Lady Newenden, Sir Edward has a destabilizing encounter with his mother-in-law, Mrs. Maltravers. She is upset because she believes that Sir Edward has killed Lord Danesforte, and instead of being frustrated with her, “Sir Edward [feels] his indignation conquered by pity and contempt” as he encourages her to “be calm” (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 4: 218). Despite his feelings of dislike towards his mother-in-law, Sir Edward’s sensibility prevents him from expressing his genuine emotions and actually changes his feelings towards her.

Female characters’ sensibility has a physical and emotional effect on the men, revealing their vulnerability to others, that their patriarchal status is not impermeable. While Emmeline hopes this is true as she rationally solicits her uncle’s protection, Ethelinde recognizes its veracity. When her father is distressed she focuses on caring for him and makes “the tranquility of her father [...] her first consideration” (1: 230). By specifying that his tranquility is Ethelinde’s “first consideration,” Smith asserts that not only are women capable of influencing men’s emotions, but that they are able to do so intentionally and freely. While Emmeline constantly acts to appease Delamere, Smith advocates further for female independence through Ethelinde, who has genuine agency over her actions and relationships. Ethelinde’s sympathy for her father provides her with the freedom to encourage him to be calm so that he may protect her.

Significantly, the male characters are aware of the female characters' power of persuasion. For example, when Ethelinde openly displays her distress at her family's social and financial ruin, Sir Edward implores her to "reflect that nothing can hurt the colonel so much as [her] distressing [her]self" (1: 195). By acknowledging her ability to affect her father's emotions, Smith values female sensibility above male emotions that are easily manipulated and appeased. Moreover, she implies that the male characters are reliant on the female characters' ability to manage their emotions, using them effectively to elicit desired reactions from others. Montgomery, for instance, dramatically entreats Ethelinde to control her emotions so that he is able to gain control of his own. He shouts to her: "For God's sake recollect and support your own fortitude, in mercy to your father, to poor Harry, and if I may say so, to your Montgomery!" (3: 30-31). Not only does he acknowledge that the emotional well-being of Colonel and Harry Chesterville is dependent on Ethelinde's control over her own emotions, but that, because of his sensibility, he is entirely dependent on her. Combined with social disgrace, male characters' awareness of female sensibility forces them to surrender themselves to the judgment of others, contributing to their feelings of guilt and self-condemnation. Harry Chesterville firmly states, "I deserve not your affection, dearest and most generous girl! I deserve to be deserted—to be detested. Agonize me not thus by the sight of sorrow which I am not worthy to excite" (3: 37). Not only does Smith explain the powerful consequences of social infractions, she reorients male-female relationships since she uses female sensibility to highlight the misconduct of the male characters. They expose their own feelings of guilt as their sensibility makes them aware of the social effect they have

on female characters. Smith uses male and female sensibility within social situations to reorient the male-female hierarchy as male characters are dependent on female characters, not so much for their social stability, but for their ability to control their emotions. Harry, though gazing upon Ethlelinde, scolds her for making him see; she becomes an active agent, which Harry detests because she forces him to consider his actions and causes guilt. Ultimately, Harry's statement reveals the true authority of the public opinion as it sets in motion this reaction from Harry. He is convinced his pain is caused by another even though it is entirely of his own making. Smith implies that society's power lies in its ability to instruct and improve people without their knowledge. Smith subtly undermines the structure of patriarchal power and asserts the manipulative authority of society.

Social Condemnation

Smith undermines patriarchy by portraying the social misbehaviour of sons as well as the public actions of female characters. Harry Chesterville has accumulated so much debt that his father is unable to pay it and explains, "His draughts have very much exceeded all bound: I have paid all but the last; but now I cannot continue to do so" (1: 249). His son has ignored Colonel Chesterville's financial means and has left him without money or power to free him from his debts. Smith reveals the weakness of patriarchy – social power is stronger and destabilizes the ability of fathers to control, or even help, their sons. This is a slightly different father-son relationship than Lord Montreville's with Delamere in *Emmeline*. Delamere's recklessness as he pursues

Emmeline harms his father's reputation. However, Smith maintains a semblance of patriarchy as Lord Montreville overcomes his son's misdemeanors, while Delamere eventually dies because of his rash behaviour. By switching this outcome in *Ethelinde*, Smith undermines the role of the father. Chesterville cannot distance himself from the shame that his son incurs; he is vulnerable because of his children and experiences a complete social and physical demise. Though he is sympathetic to his son's difficulties, he explains to Sir Edward, "[T]he unhappy conduct of my son, added to an unfavourable turn in my affairs, has involved me I fear beyond all recovery" (1: 114). Smith constructs the role of the patriarchal figure as undesirable; Chesterville cannot evade the consequences of his son's debt even though he passively asserts that he has only "been involved;" he does not want to take responsibility for his son's actions or for his family's finances, especially since he feels there is nothing he can do to rectify their situation. Smith further undermines the system of patriarchy by voicing the negative effects of Harry's financial recklessness through Ethelinde. Although Harry's actions weaken Ethelinde in that she must use her own meager means to rescue him, Smith does not present this relationship as one of patriarchal exploitation. Ethelinde is only concerned with their well-being and position in society as she exclaims, "Returned unknown to my father—arrested—and in prison! Oh! my poor Harry!—My father!—what will become of him when this is known?" (2: 226) Ethelinde is able to provide some financial assistance. Moreover, she acknowledges that even though their actions harm her, her father and brother are subject to a larger social structure – one from which they will be

excluded as their reputations and financial status diminish. She is aware that they too, are concerned with the social implications their financial loss will have on her.

This awareness of social condemnation combined with sensibility creates a sense of helplessness, destabilizing patriarchal power in favour of the power of social persuasion. Colonel Chesterville loses all of his authority. His title maintains no genuine sense of authority; he cannot assist his son financially and his emotions and sympathy for his children's financial and social situation prevent him from even writing a letter. As he attempts to procure monetary assistance for them "his eyes [fill] with tears; a deep groan seem[s] to issue from the bottom of his heart; and he [throws] away the pen" (3: 120). His true lack of authority originates from his shame when he considers his reputation. He explains, "I cannot solicit these people for pecuniary help. I am heart-struck—and why should I struggle against destiny why not rather submit to it like a man, than poorly cringe for a remedy to those I despise, and by whom perhaps I may be contemptuously refused" (3: 120). Through his speech Smith undermines any remaining influence of patriarchal figures. Matthew McCormack explains that "the very notion of a 'public man' not only equates public life with men, but also implies that the public sphere and its values are synonymous with masculinity" ("Introduction" 2). Male characters themselves create and orchestrate the very public that they are striving to thrive within. Colonel Chesterville subjects himself to the opinions of others, as he perceives his social and financial demise as his inescapable destiny. He is submitting himself, however, to a "public sphere [that] [is] socially heterogeneous" (Blanning 12). In this way, Smith confirms Chesterville's vulnerability as he attempts to appease the public by submitting to it, while at the same

time failing to realize that the public opinion to which he is submitting is diverse, divided, and, thus, too superficial to be a reliable source of authority. Moreover, he voices his understanding of what it means to be a man – not fighting for power or independence, but surrendering to the authority of society, simply in order to avoid any possible shame or rejection. Smith emphasizes the finality of Chesterville’s defeat through his physical reaction. His sensibility assumes a physical form as his feelings of shame and defeat destroy his body. The knowledge of his family’s financial and social ruin destroys him. Even the slight reprieve of discovering that his son will be released from prison soon cannot “pro-long that life which [is] now ebbing fast away” (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 3: 199). By reacting with sensibility to the social destruction of his family, Chesterville confirms his weakness, removing any sense of patriarchal authority he had. In doing so, he leaves his family vulnerable to further financial and social harm. Thus, Smith registers society’s authority even as she considers the complete restructuring of structures of power that is required as social authority destabilizes and replaces tyrannical patriarchal authority.

The importance of maintaining a respectable and proper social reputation undermines Sir Edward’s control over and relationship with his wife. He is powerless to stop her inappropriate relationship with Lord Danesforte as well as her careless lifestyle, not because he is physically incapable, but because to do so “would throw ridicule on himself, and suspicion on his wife” (2: 157). Smith questions Sir Edward’s authority as a husband, not simply because it is overpowered by his need to maintain his reputation, but because he purposely chooses not to use the influence he does have over his wife. Instead, her father attempts to convince her to change her lifestyle, but does so by

“represent[ing] to her, with tears, the disagreeable consequences” of her behaviour” (2: 246). Smith depicts a world of intense scrutiny and surveillance and establishes society as the ultimate unforgiving corrective force because not only does it encourage characters to abide by expectations, it manipulates them into participating in its governance. To save his daughter from social condemnation is to attack her incompetent husband, or even himself. Even his attempt at implementing sensibility as a method of patriarchal authority is useless. He undermines Sir Edward’s authority as her husband and fails to influence any change in Lady Newenden’s behaviour. Consequently, they both appear as weak and emotional men who are unable to regulate the entertainment and freedom of social activities and pleasurable company. Smith emphasizes the true power of society as it sees everyone and is thus able to condemn them for one thing or another – no one is safe from its constant gaze and judgement. Moreover, while typically women were less able to engage in disreputable activities without condemnation, Smith emphasizes the negative social effects on Sir Edward as he expresses his experiences and feelings in a letter to Ethelinde. The letter, in which he explains, “Lady Newenden is gone with Lord Danesforte, and now nothing remains for me but to return to England, and do what I ought long since to have done,” presents Lady’s Newenden’s promiscuous activity as fact, while at the same time emphasizing Sir Edward’s emotional injuries (5: 235). Through this letter, Smith shifts the focus of the female character’s immoral behaviour to the negative effect that it has on her husband, effectively adjusting the power balance between the two characters, as Sir Edward becomes a victim to societal gossip. He is not able to act freely, but only as he is required to fulfill social expectations. In reversing the

roles of Lady Adelina and Fitz-Edward in *Emmeline*, Smith draws attention to the traditional degradation of women and, by asserting the power of social expectation over Sir Edward in a similar situation, suggests equalization between men and women.

Just as Sir Edward's public reputation suffers because of his wife's actions, society teaches Mr. Maltravers about his mistakes as a father, rebuking him for indulging his wife and daughter. His sensibility causes him to fully feel sorrow at her death from her misconduct in society. However, he does not only feel sorrow for her but for himself, and he regrets his failure to assert his authority over her. Not only does Smith reveal his fault in not being able to enforce his patriarchal authority against the appeal of high social status and the accumulation of material things, she indicates how this decision makes him aware of his unconscious but inevitable submission to social expectations. When he hears of Lady Newenden's death, he is "taught so severely to repent of his fatal indulgence to her" (5: 273). Smith's choice of language indicates not only the detrimental effects of a lifestyle focused on social status and obtaining material wealth, but the degree to which Mr. Maltravers passively accepts instruction from this larger influential force and he willingly becomes submissive to it to improve his situation. Clarinthia Ludford wants to have a similar effect on her father and, after spending her life focusing on obtaining material wealth and popularity, she determines that "there [is] more heroism in giving herself to a man who [has] nothing, than in acceding to the mercenary views of her Father" (5: 99). In providing Clarinthia with everything she desires, in an attempt to maintain a respectable and even advantageous social status, Mr. Ludford ensures her rebellion as she understands that she can do as she pleases. Smith ironically portrays her

marriage to a poor man as heroic; Ethelinde perceives Clarinthia's love for sensational novels as ridiculous and consequently, Smith undermines Clarinthia's notion of "heroism" and emphasizes Mr. Ludford's lack of authority over her since she is rebelling against the material world she forced her father to create. By undermining patriarchal authority in this way, Smith advocates for women's independence in society, while asserting their need to act within respectable and reasonable social bounds.

Social Imprisonment

As Smith explores the possibility of a new position for women in the social world, one in which they are autonomous and reasonable, Smith juxtaposes their improved freedom with the physical and mental confinement of several male characters. Loraine Fletcher explains, "Fictional castles and prisons were also becoming recognisable as codes for a more specifically female confinement; Charlotte herself did much to focus this metaphor" (92). In *Ethelinde*, Smith refocuses the confinement as she imprisons male characters in literal gaols as well as in relationships and social situations. In direct contrast to the consistently moving male characters in *Emmeline*, Smith finalizes the end of patriarchal structure as she limits male characters' movement. Smith does not, however, simply recreate female confinement for male characters. Her male characters are not physically trapped and threatened in underground spaces by tyrannical male characters. Instead of constructing a complete gender role reversal, Smith uses social positions and social expectations to limit their ability to act and to elicit improved behaviour. Unlike other gothic novels in which female characters are physically confined

and left to internalize their physical fear so that they are essentially being buried alive, Smith's male characters, who are unable to act because of social expectations, do not experience their social limitations in complete isolation from others – their figurative confinement extends to their friends and family who are affected by the male characters' social limitations. Harry Chesterville, for example, is physically confined because of his inability to pay off his financial debt. More importantly, his physical imprisonment, which Smith constructs as a representation of his financial difficulties, extends to his other family members. When Montgomery, Ethelinde, and her father are visiting Harry in prison, a messenger warns them, “[t]he last bell has gone, and your honour's friends will be shut in” (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 3: 45). Unlike female characters who are confined in spaces by patriarchal authority figures, Harry Chesterville's confinement is detrimental not only to himself, but to his relations as well, since he is not confined as a threat to his virginity or his life, but to make reparations for his social misconduct. His feeling of confinement is magnified by his awareness of the effect his actions have on his family. Smith emphasizes his feelings of confinement that mirror his actual imprisonment as she states that Harry Chesterville “ha[s] [been] seized” by a “paroxism of passion” (3: 38) from which he “struggle[s] to disengage himself” as he questions, “[A]m I to be fettered like a boy?” (3: 39). By using this language of confinement, Smith reinforces the connection between emotional and physical imprisonment and suggests his and other characters ongoing struggle to evade figurative confinement, and instruction, from social expectations. Her language situates the characters in physically limiting spaces. Harry Chesterville debates whether or not he should “deprecate the anger he merit[s] by

imploring pardon, or evade it by escaping from the room” (3: 35). For Smith, Harry Chesterville’s imprisonment is less important in terms of his debt repayment, than in terms of his remorse and reparation to those he injured.

Smith uses different language to reflect Sir Edward’s imprisonment. He is confined, though less permanently, to a room because of social expectations. He, “more vexed with his wife than he desire[s] to appear, walk[s] about the room in silence” (1: 39). In this instance, Smith’s language depicts Sir Edward’s purposeless movement to indicate his confinement. Furthermore, she reduces him to silence because he is frustrated by the social expectations which prevent him using assertive force against her. Sir Edward effectively objectifies himself as he cannot prevent himself from being corrected by social pressure. His silence mirrors the expected silence of women; however, unlike them, Sir Edward is not able to use the silence to his advantage. Thus Smith simultaneously rejects the objectification of women and encourages men (and women) to be guided by morality and not popularity.

Through the imprisonment of male characters, Smith emphasizes that the consequences of social misconduct are fluid and easily spread to others and, in suggesting a similarity to the physical confinement of female characters in other gothic texts, she implies that society itself acts as an authoritative force that disciplines men, as well as the people, male or female, that they are associated with. The social world becomes the gothic space of the underground passageways and chambers. While acknowledging that typically “the element of terror is inseparably associated with the Gothic castle,” (Varma 18) Devendra P. Varma states that “the active agent of terror is the Gothic villain

[...since] [h]is function is to frighten the heroines, to pursue them through the vaults and labyrinths of the castle, to harass them at every turn” (19). In Smith’s novel, society replaces both the physical confinement of the castle as well as the active villain in pursuit of his prey so, even though the male characters are not physically confined as female characters are in other gothic novels, the limitations imposed on them by society trap them, as well as their friends and family members as a means of discipline in response to tyranny and superficiality.

Other male characters are restricted by the threat of social misconduct and its inevitable effects. Sir Edward must be very cautious of his behaviour towards his wife and Ethelinde in order to protect his reputation as a proper gentleman. He must avoid “betray[ing] the real situation of his heart” that will “confirm the suspicions [his wife] had proudly and darkly hinted” (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 1: 98-99). His social surroundings and the people around him force him to not only control his emotions, but to misrepresent them. Because of his sensibility – his feelings for Ethelinde, and even for his wife – he must contain and feign his true emotions so that he does not injure his own reputation or the reputations of both women. Social pressure limits his improper relationship and insists upon him acting with proper decorum. Through his struggle to display socially acceptable relationships, Smith devalues marriage and its associated family connections as she uses social pressure to elicit appropriate behaviour from everyone, not just the male characters. Sir Edward frequently “mak[es] involuntary comparisons between [Ethelinde] and his wife; and [feels] all the ill-humour and pride of the latter aggravated, while the sweetness, the spirit, the sense of Ethelinde proportionably [rises] in his mind”

(1: 54). Sir Edward's sensibility leads him to feel a socially inappropriate connection to Ethelinde that he is unable to control. Sir Edward is trapped in his marriage, and trapped in his own improper thoughts. Significantly, Sir Edward is not aware of the danger that his thoughts about Ethelinde pose to himself. She appears to be a form of relief from his confining marriage, but his relationship with her "instill[s] into his heart a slow and secret poison, which he detect[s] not till it [is] no longer in his power to expel it" (1: 55-56). Smith reinforces the connection between emotions and the physical body in order to confirm the extent of social pressure. The combination of sensibility and social authority insidiously destroys Sir Edward – his relationships and his sense of self – in order to discipline him and improve his moral sense. By the time he does realize that his feelings for Ethelinde will lead to his social downfall he is unable to change them. Although Smith reveals society to be restrictive and limiting, her depiction of this does not seem to function in the same way as the live burial that Eve Sedgwick discusses. This live burial occurs so clearly in *The Castle of Otranto* when female characters are trapped in "the continuation of a parallel activity" and thus forced to internalize their fear (*Coherence* 20). Smith's characters, on the other hand, recognize and accept the limits being placed on them by society in order to maintain a degree of respectability and proper decorum; they unconsciously submit to society's correction of their behaviour. Through their inability and unwillingness to rebel against the social restrictions they encounter Smith reveals the true strength of society's authority – it is both subtle and all-encompassing.

Self-Control, Respect, and Morality

Social expectations instruct the male characters to control their actions, their finances, their connections, and even their emotions. For example, though he is not married, Montgomery's feelings of love for Ethelinde are culturally inappropriate because neither he, nor Ethelinde, have financial resources to marry. The novel seems to condemn Montgomery for submitting to society's notions of beneficial financial connections as he determines to separate himself from Ethelinde to earn a living. However, his sensibility, which permits him to sympathize with Ethelinde and her family, actually encourages the reader to sympathize with him. His lack of finances becomes a matter of practicality for quality of life for Ethelinde instead of simply a disadvantageous marriage in relation to social status. Smith promotes sympathy for Montgomery and his compassion for Ethelinde's protection as he does not allow himself to openly pursue her. Instead, he vows, "I will as religiously watch over her [...] as if she were my orphan sister" (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 3: 48) and refrains from "even touch[ing] her hand, lest it should appear as if he took advantage of her situation" (3: 50). Montgomery actively prevents himself from communicating directly with Ethelinde because of the confines of social expectations – those which even he, Ethelinde, and Ethelinde's father seem to willingly support – and directs his visits, and his unguarded devotion, to her father instead. In this way, Smith complicates Eve Sedgwick's assertion that "in any male-dominated society, there is a special relationship between male homosocial [...] desire and the structures for maintaining and transmitting patriarchal power: a relationship founded on an inherent and potentially active structural congruence" (*Between Men* 25). The

social structure Sedgwick describes seems to be comprised of male figures interacting with each other and defining their own identity in relation to the objectified, inactive female figure in the center. This relationship is slightly repositioned in Smith's novel. Though Montgomery and Colonel Chesterville interact with each other, and with Ethelinde at the center of their relationship, their sensibility changes Sedgwick's triangular dynamic. Ethelinde is not simply an object; her feelings and well-being are so important to both male characters that they discreetly place her in an active position. Masculine identity then is not defined in terms of a connection to an objectified female figure, but in an ability to satisfy an active female character. Smith's description of Montgomery's reasoning and actions effectively undermines masculine authority as Montgomery not only fears to act on his true feelings, but objectifies another, seemingly more respectable, man in terms of social status, using him as a means of expressing his feelings for a woman. Smith's social world is a space of complete masculine vulnerability as the male characters struggle to express themselves, connect with female characters, and most importantly to prove that they are not at the bottom of the flexible social hierarchy.

Smith ensures that the male characters cannot credit themselves with any success or clout they do have. Davenant, like other male characters who are entirely focused on their reputations, and who pose somewhat of a threat to Ethelinde because of their lack of sensibility and desire to manipulate and exploit her, is "the mere creature of the day: his dress, his expences, his pleasures, his sentiments, being regulated by the opinion of others, rather than by his own inclinations" (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 1: 24). Nothing about

Davenant is authoritative; superficial social opinions construct his personality and appearance, while simultaneously stripping him of all agency and power. Through him, Smith criticizes those who focus only on social opinion and reputation, recognizing that although sensibility may leave a man vulnerable to social expectations, it is the only way that a man is able to maintain a sense of authority and honour; social discipline is the only method of achieving self-improvement. Furthermore, by feminizing him, Smith does not so much remove his masculinity as she clarifies the nature of the society in which he exists – it obsesses with material wealth and appearance and Smith asserts this focus as the negative gothic force. Men and women are equally subject to this environment as well as its more constructive discipline. More importantly, they both contribute to its repressive and corrective authority as they participate in the gossip and indulge in frivolous spending. Smith argues that the dominating force of society affects both men and women, just as it is perpetuated by them both, as long as their sensibility makes them receptive for improvement.

Social condemnation as it affects relationships between male and female characters and their perceptions of each other is instrumental in replacing masculine power with the larger, unstable force of public opinion. Sir Edward recognizes the society's criticism of Colonel Chesterville that he is oblivious too. More importantly, Sir Edward, "not only suffering under his own uneasiness, but grieved to remark the avidity with which Colonel Chesterville join[s] those who [play], [goes] out to conceal his concern" (2: 146-47). Sir Edward's sensibility doubles his sense of suffering and has a physical expression, since his lack of authority to correct Colonel Chesterville's

behaviour or people's opinion of him, leaves Sir Edward with no option but to physically remove himself from the situation, effectively isolating him from society for the moment. Harry Chesterville, unlike his father, is very aware of the public's changing opinion of himself as his social and financial status improves. He questions Lord Hawkhurst's behaviour towards him: "Did you observe how civil he grew when he learned that I was related to opulence? The fellow will like my feet if at any time I should be possessed of a fortune" (4: 18). Through his comments Smith asserts the instability of social opinion as Chesterville acknowledges Hawkhurst's dramatic change in opinion of him. Moreover, he expresses his own dramatic improvement in his opinion of himself. He is no longer the disgraced son who, while imprisoned for debt, exclaims, "I never can appear again. I am disgraced; I am undone. There is but one step left for me to take. Reconcile yourself to it, and forget that you ever had a son. Oblivion—long, long, eternal oblivion is best—it is best for us all!" (3: 42). Chesterville seems convinced that it is more respectable to die than to be alive and socially condemned, even if it forces suffering upon his loved ones. However, with a significant improvement in his family connections and financial status, Chesterville forgets his previous hopelessness and becomes obnoxious in his opinion of himself. Through this change in character, Smith determines the complete powerlessness of Chesterville; he is burdened by his low social status just as he is injured by his improved status since he doesn't recognize that his high opinion of himself isolates him from the people he loves. Smith emphasizes his separation as she presents Ethelinde's opinion of him. She has "found him become proud, reserved, and ungrateful,avaricious, ambitious, and ostentatious; valuing himself on his birth" (5: 190).

Chesterville is not aware of the change that social status has on his character; it is only observed and presented as Ethelinde's acknowledgement. Smith asserts that his rejection of social correction leaves him segregated and disgraced.

The Emerging Woman

Female characters use social status and public behaviour as a method of judging and comparing male characters. For example, Ethelinde witnesses Davenant ignore the distress of another woman. Instead of helping the woman, he goes “to the window, and look[s] out of it till she [is] about to withdraw, as if to avoid the necessity of taking out his purse” (1: 52). Ethelinde's recognition of Davenant's selfishness and complete dependence on material wealth allows Ethelinde to place him in a lower moral position than her. Through Smith's depiction of Davenant as a fop and Ethelinde's blatant disdain for his behaviour, Smith critiques blind dependence on superficial social pressures more openly than she does in *Emmeline* with her depiction of Elkerton. In this way, Smith uses the force of social status as a means for female characters to assert some power over the male characters, even though their ability to judge does not directly force these male characters to change. Lord Danesforte also lives immorally because of his high social and financial status. The narrator explains that “he plunged early into every species of debauchery, to shew his spirit: and it was now become an invincible habit” (1: 71). Smith reiterates that his personality is exacerbated by his social standing, justifying Ethelinde's negative opinion of him and placing her in a higher moral position than him. Ironically though, other female characters equate high social status with morality, which as Smith

indicates, is disgraceful. Mrs. Ludford, for instance, questions Colonel Chesterville's actions in her discussion with Ethelinde. She asks, "To Bath do you? What!—I suppose your father likes Bath on account of the *sort of society* so easy to meet with there?" (2: 189). Mrs. Ludford's authority comes from her ability to discuss society and implicate morality, but as she offends Ethelinde in her questioning, Smith suggests that female characters do not derive true authority to manipulate or exploit others through their discussion of society. Instead she implies that no one, whether male or female, is exempt from possible social condemnation. Smith uses Mr. Royston's love of gossip and scandal in a similar manner:

[H]e had acquired an habit of retailing, in all companies and on all occasions, scraps of scandal, which were generally not the less eagerly listened to for being oftener false than true; and such a resource of defamation to the vacant head, such a gratification to the malignant heart, that Royston, who was derided as having hardly common sense in other conversation, was eagerly listened to in this. (4: 46)

Like Elkerton in *Emmeline*, he uses scandal about others to improve his own status. However, Elkerton provides the reader with specific instances of gossip which are obviously false. Because the listeners, as well as the reader, have no specific information about the contents of Royston's gossip, they seem to enjoy listening to it with no regard to its veracity. Smith implicates everyone for their role in judging and disgracing others, whether they deserve it or not, expanding the authority of society to include the reader. Moreover, as with Davenant, Smith partially feminizes Mr. Royston to indicate that men

and women experience similar social correction. They are equally subject to the demands of the public and experience the subtle discipline of this society in the same manner. By focusing on Royston, Smith highlights the gothic nature of society's pressure on the characters as she emulates the oppression female characters encounter from patriarchal tyrants in other gothic texts, while exploring the positive ramifications of the corrective force of society. While she reveals the authority that gossip provides to the character who is using it to his advantage, she ridicules gossip and the command it has over people's behaviour as she portrays Royston who is only listened to because of his idle talk. He is never taken seriously. Patricia Meyer Spacks explains that this type of gossip "involv[es] little real consideration of the issues its discourse touches, [and] it constitutes moral avoidance" (5). Therefore, by priding himself on gossip, Royston confirms his immorality just as Smith undermines the authority of his morally corrupt followers, and thus provides incentive for improvement.

Masculinity in Social, Private, and Natural Spaces

Smith uses the physical social space itself to make male characters vulnerable to the changing opinions of others based on relationships, reputation, and financial status. While in *Emmeline*, these public spaces exist mostly in characters' homes or in smaller public gatherings, Smith exposes larger parties and opportunities for recklessness in *Ethelinde*. For example, Harry Chesterville, who, like his father, has gambled extensively, and who is "always out at parties," is at first oblivious to "his uncle's extraordinary attachment to Mr. Harcourt" (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 5: 239). His presence in

social spaces ensures his absence in the private spaces of the home. Consequently, he is unable to effectively fulfill his role as the head of the household after his father's death; he cannot influence his family if he, himself, is not present. Sir Edward cannot reveal his genuine admiration for Ethelinde in public spaces for fear that people will misinterpret it for an inappropriate attachment. For him, "one of the most painful circumstances of his suffering was, that he dared not see Ethelinde but in company with others; and that their reading, their conversations, their innocent and friendly confidences, so soothing to his heart, were of necessity suspended" (2: 25). The public space itself undermines masculine authority and independence because so much value is placed on what is seen and able to be interpreted without true understanding. The public space, because it is just as, if not more dangerous for the reputation of women, undermines masculine authority as the male characters are subject to the same scandal as women. Ethelinde's being alone with Montgomery is considered more improper for her than for him. She is concerned that "to be consigned at such a time in the evening, and in such a conveyance, to the care of so young a man, and to have no place to receive her but a public hotel, struck her as a great impropriety" (3: 50). However, Smith mirrors Ethelinde's expected concern with Sir Edward's effectively undermining his independent male authority. Even Ethelinde recognizes the harm their friendship may incur for him. For Ethelinde, that "the moments she pass[es] with Sir Edward [are] particularly tintured with this tender melancholy—which, delicious as it [is] to both, [is] full of danger to him; who, escaping from vapid and irksome company, found it doubly delightful to lay out his whole soul in the soft and sensible society of Ethelinde" (1: 94). Significantly, Smith depicts the relationship as

more dangerous for Sir Edward than for Ethelinde. Though Ethelinde would lose her dignity, Smith emphasizes social authority. Since Ethelinde is already without social and financial status, her loss would not be as great. Sir Edward, on the other hand, risks his reputation. His sensibility and desire for genuine human connection, specifically to Ethelinde, make his inability to connect with her in public spaces painful. His experiences in public are made worse as his sensibility makes him sympathize with the pain that he causes her as well. For example, after his duel with Lord Danesforte, “while he was yet uncertain of the life of his adversary, and himself wounded, [that] he should fly to the house where he had placed Ethelinde, could hardly fail of attracting observations as prejudicial to her as corroborating the suspicions which Mr. Maltravers and his family had affected to believe” (4: 225). Smith determines that Sir Edward and Ethelinde are subject to the same threats to their reputations and social status, despite their different social standings and their different genders. Moreover, by voicing characters’ consistent concern about the “report[s] of the world,” (4: 4) Smith constructs society as an expansive, inescapable space governed by public opinion. While Elkerton, in *Emmeline*, relates a false account of his victory in his duel with Delamere, Sir Edward has feelings of “horror rather than compassion and regret” as he defeats Lord Danesforte (4: 214). Through their different reactions, Smith emphasizes the progress of the corrective nature of society. Unlike Elkerton, who desires victory without any consideration for the victim of the duel, Sir Edward at least feels horror. However, Smith, through the narrator who seems to be representing the voice of the public, still reprimands Sir Edward for his lack of sympathy towards his victim. In this way, Smith

draws attention to the sense of society's collective judgement and ability to correct behaviour.

Smith contrasts these public spaces where the male characters are confined by and vulnerable to social expectations with private spaces in which the male characters are able to exert emotional freedom, though they are still in physically confining spaces. Several of the male characters prefer the solitude of private rooms to the criticism and effort required to succeed in public spaces. Colonel Chesterville, as his illness worsens, “prefer[s] the ease he obtain[s] in his bed, and the solitude of his bed-chamber, to the effort which, in the presence of his daughter, he thought himself compelled to make” to hide the severity of his illness (3: 143-44). Smith juxtaposes the effort required in the public space compared to the ease of the private space and ironically indicates that Ethelinde, the caring and dutiful daughter, is a component of the hardship of the social space. Chesterville's sensibility and concern for her well-being contribute to his desire to be completely alone in order to feel at peace. He is too weak to be able to thrive in or overcome the public discipline. Similarly, Sir Edward, realizing that others recognize his reliance on Ethelinde for consolation as an impropriety, “retire[s] to his study, and there indulge[s] the anguish of his spirit without observation” (2: 159). Only when he is completely alone can Sir Edward express his true feelings without being judged by others and without incurring sympathy from Ethelinde and making her feel guilty. Similarly, Sir Edward expresses his frustration towards his wife in private. When he “find[s] that all his tenderness for Lady Newenden [can] not check the anger which this proud and contemptuous spirit provoke[s], now hastily [leaves] the room” (1: 41). Once again Sir

Edward must remove himself to a private space to express his true emotions. Unlike Colonel Chesterville's use of the private space to hide a specific fact from Ethelinde, Sir Edward uses private spaces to hide his feelings. These feelings are even kept private from the readers. Smith only hints at the emotions he is experiencing; the readers do not witness the emotional expressions. As Smith promotes the romance of solitude where characters simply exist, without conforming to social expectations or correction, they seem keen to exist without the pressures of society – a state which is necessarily impermanent as they must return to public locations. Smith implies the extent of the corrective nature of society as her characters recede to a private space to cope with social pressures, and then return to society, not only changed, but elevated above the trivial social pressures.

By presenting the use of private spaces in this way, Smith actually aligns the reader with the powerful social force thereby asserting that complete separation from society is not only impossible, but shameful. Readers are, in a way, participating in the gossip of the society. They read about Smith's characters, their emotional experiences and their social faults, and participate in society's objectification of these characters. Spacks affirms that "[e]ven 'innocent' forms of gossip objectify the person considered; those talking [or reading] communicate at the cost of another" (34). Because this gossip is in written form and the readers are seemingly passive contributors to the gossip, Smith challenges them to become active in their relationship to the characters within the larger social structure. This gossip is in written form; "[t]his apparently simple fact [...] in itself helps to free the reader of fiction from the guilt likely to afflict not only the retailer of

gossip but even the passive recipient” (Spacks 14). Smith challenges the readers to judge the characters carefully. Ethelinde comments on the judgmental nature of society and the problems it contributes to by gazing on private spaces. She explains to Sir Edward, “My strongest hope under heaven is in your friendship; but let it be exerted any where rather than under your own roof, since we live in a world where the most generous actions are the most liable to evil interpretations from those who are capable only of base ones” (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 4: 36). Ethelinde’s statement cautions readers to consider carefully what they are witnessing in public spaces as well as to be careful speculating about the goings-on in private spaces. Her warning emphasizes the power that society has since its members do in fact have the ability and authority to make judgements and speculations. Moreover, by implicating the readers in the gossip, Smith challenges the conventional understanding of the public as a predominantly masculine space. Just as Matthew McCormack asserts that the domestic sphere is not solely feminine since “masculinity is commonly located in relation to women, children and other dependants” (“Introduction” 5), neither is the public sphere solely masculine since the conventionally assumed female gossip actually implicates and affects men and women, as well as the characters and the readers. By developing this complex positioning of the reader, especially within the public sphere that can no longer be assumed to be a predominantly male space, Smith establishes society, both as a physical space and an immaterial force, as an inescapable gothic force of authority.

Through her depictions of natural spaces and various characters’ reactions within these spaces, Smith suggests that within a world that is governed by a social force, one

that overpowers even patriarchal authority, male characters must exert their independence from social manipulation without isolating themselves from others in order to live fulfilling and successful lives. Smith criticizes those characters who are dependent on public opinion, superficial social interactions, and material goods. Lady Newenden, who sees “but little beauty in those dreary looking mountains” acknowledges the difference in her perception of the natural surroundings of Grasmere compared to Ethelinde’s (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 1: 31). She sarcastically praises Ethelinde’s “*sublime taste*” compared to her own inability to understand and enjoy the surroundings (1: 31). Smith uses Lady Newenden’s sarcasm to criticize her as she in fact does not have the faculties to enjoy the natural world; she is too reliant on the social world. Ethelinde, on the other hand, perceives Grasmere in its natural surroundings as a place of security and stability. Guides to the Lakes circulated by Thomas Gray, William Gilpin, and Thomas West depict the solemn beauty of the area, which Smith replicates through Ethelinde’s notion of the peaceful lifestyle she hopes to live in Grasmere away from social pressures. Thomas West describes the benefits of visiting the lakes: “Such as wish to unbend the mind from anxious cares, or fatiguing studies, will meet with agreeable relaxation in making the tour of the lakes” (3). Furthermore, he states that a visit to the lakes is helpful in improving health since the air is “in the purest state” (4). His detailed descriptions of the sights as well as the tranquil lifestyle appear quite separate, and elevated, from the social world. Ironically, Grasmere is emerging as a tourist destination even though an influx of tourists would present its own dangers “with an increasing volume of traffic,” which would overwhelm the picturesque, solitary landscapes (Rollinson 140). Grasmere is not

excluded from social pressures. Even West's description hints at consumerism as he explains how to look at the scenery through a mirror to avoid glares from sunlight. He specifies, "if the glass be too flat, the perspective view of great and near objects is less pleasing, as they are represented too near" (13). His language suggests the ease with which the purifying effect of the natural landscape can be tainted by material social pressures. However, just as with Ethelinde and Sir Edward who love Grasmere simply for its calming effect, the natural surrounding has a purifying effect on its visitors, as long as they are able to separate their minds from material social expectations to fully experience the natural world.

Although Smith implies that even this secure natural space may become inaccessible to Ethelinde because of Mrs. Montgomery's substantial decrease in finances, the memory of the space and the people within it are still a source of comfort to her. It is the place where "Montgomery had first told her he loved her" and where "he had written those little pieces of poetry which she had with so much pleasure heard him repeat; and there yet remained a memorial of his usual way of passing his time in this sequestered spot, for on one of the masses of rock he had engraved her cypher" (C. Smith, *Ethelinde* 5: 256). This natural space is a place where neither Montgomery, nor Ethelinde are manipulated to act according to social norms; they do not have to rely on their financial status to obtain contentment – they can simply share their mutual feelings. Ethelinde voices her understanding that within the natural space financial status and social reputation are not important. She exclaims,

How much superior is Mrs. Montgomery, in her cottage, to the most affluent among them, surrounded with splendor! How much superior is her son—good God! how much superior to such a man as Lord Danesforte, with his title, his figure, his immense estate, and powerful interest! How much more respectable than Davenant, with his five thousand a year, his university education, his stud, and his ridiculous indulgences, is the unattended, unassuming Montgomery! (1: 209)

From Ethelinde’s perspective, Montgomery is superior, not because of his social status, or lack thereof, but because of his genuine honour that does not originate from a desire for his own advancements, but from his desire to make her happy. Davenant, on the other hand, is obsessed with material wealth. He, in connection with others in society, has perverted the purpose of social expectation so that it places values on material goods instead of morality. Through him, and characters and people like him, society becomes a predominantly visual culture lacking any genuine substance. Smith carefully differentiates between this society of “things” that causes pressure to obtain wealth and status, and a society that pressures its members to elevate themselves above the superficial to a state of meaningful and compassionate relationships.

Despite the physical dangers that the natural space inflicts upon Ethelinde, she feels secure because of Montgomery’s sensibility and selfless devotion towards her. He stops her from falling “from the suddenness and violence of the shock” of a thunderstorm when he first meets her (1: 61). He also rescues her from drowning after she is “dashed instantly into the water” while boating with others (1: 81). Smith contrasts

Montgomery's selfless action with the somewhat selfish action of Sir Edward, who also attempts to save her. Despite his good intentions, Sir Edward desires Ethelinde's recognition and admiration, but Montgomery, who at this point in the novel is still a stranger to Ethelinde, is a selfless hero. The narrator describes, "Sir Edward had already thrown himself in, when a person was seen to approach the landing place, swimming with one arm, while with the other he bore Ethelinde" (1: 82). Smith does not incorporate any dramatic emotions from Montgomery here; she simply relates the facts of the incident, maintaining the selflessness of his actions.

Within the natural space Smith demands that masculine sensibility overcome social and financial barriers. For example, when Ethelinde is assaulted and threatened by Davenant while she is alone outdoors, she is rescued by servants. These men, despite their low financial status, embody genuine honour in their desire to protect Ethelinde. With this honour and with no regard for Davenant's wealth and status, the men are able to save her. When Ethelinde approaches one servant for assistance, he, "convinced that she had reason for her fears, and who, humble as his station was, had English spirit enough to resist a tyrant in defence of innocence, very calmly told his master that he might strike if he pleased, but that he should not let Miss be frightened by the best man in England" (5: 46-47). The servant is not threatened by Davenant's social status or by his physical threats against him and Smith asserts that a more powerful masculine authority comes from the honour of selflessly protecting others and ultimately being able to exist and act outside of the influential social space.

Rising Above Social Pressure

Montgomery successfully elevates himself above the pressures and expectations of society and is able to attain Ethelinde's love. He controls his own emotions enough to completely put Ethelinde's needs before his own. He determines, unlike Sir Edward who is cautious in his behaviour towards Ethelinde, "lest his emotion should become to evident" (1: 222), that "he should have command enough over himself to conceal his partiality in the presence of Ethelinde" (1: 212) and only discloses his love for her in order to calm her tears and to ease her "feeling [of] pain at their separation" (1: 213). Furthermore, the narrator reiterates that Montgomery demonstrates "an emotion which only true passion [can] produce;" it is not driven by a desire to improve his own status or to exploit Ethelinde (1: 213). Montgomery is so unconcerned about the opinions of others that he discloses his love to Ethelinde when he determines it is necessary without any concern for the social implications. Smith values his openness as he makes himself completely vulnerable to Ethelinde and public ridicule as he professes his love without any means of supporting her. He explains to Colonel Chesterville, "I open that heart to you without reserve; and trust to the noble and candid spirit of a soldier and a man of honour, to see my conduct in its true light" (2: 72). Instead of hiding feelings, he acknowledges them, accepts the consequences from Ethelinde's father – to stay away from her – and trusts that his genuine and honest love for her will persevere. In doing so, he is able to help her family without causing any scandal by his proximity to her and he is able to prove his worthiness. Even as he is forbidden to marry her, his "calm, manly spirit [...] his ardent love, his disinterested friendship, were present to her" (3: 43). Smith

advocates for Montgomery's selfless devotion as he makes himself vulnerable to others in order to obtain his love – and even that he only does because it is also Ethelinde's desire, his "soul being occupied by his concern for Ethelinde" (3: 152). Smith asserts that Montgomery's true authority derives from his ability to align himself with Ethelinde by acknowledging and embracing his own vulnerability. He acknowledges his dependence on her reciprocal love as well as his acceptance of his low social status. Through him, Smith portrays a revised masculinity, one that encompasses charity, sympathy, and selflessness. Smith stresses a reconfiguration of the patriarchal tyrant into a benevolent patriarchal protector and guardian who is aware of, but beyond, social pressures. Montgomery exudes these qualities as he explains to Ethelinde, "Gracious heaven! can any thing be my real interest but my happiness? Would the highest titles, the most unbounded affluence, afford me even the shadow of it without you? Would not the humblest cottage, the remotest obscurity, be a terrestrial paradise *with* you?" (4: 23). He is able to voice Ethelinde's feelings of love and her desire to live with him at Grasmere because of his sensibility. Montgomery recognizes that he has "a spirit which would feel no degradation in embracing any honest means to support the woman [he] adore[s]" (4: 236). Smith values his selfless actions. By placing other's feelings above his own and by not placing any importance on his reputation he completely lowers himself, ridding himself of patriarchal authority and the need for social discipline, and eventually achieves his one true desire – Ethelinde.

Smith mirrors a similar behaviour in Sir Edward. Though he is more concerned about social status and reputation than Montgomery, even though it is mostly on behalf of

Ethelinde, he is unable to achieve her love. However, eventually Sir Edward risks his reputation and asserts, “I hold myself bound in honour to protect [Ethelinde] as her father” (4: 4). Only when Sir Edward admits this to his wife, does he release himself from the confines of social discipline so that he is able to freely accept Ethelinde’s admiration. He states that it is not in his nature “to accept a compromise where [his] own honor is concerned” (4: 127). By focusing on his own honour he necessarily acts in the best interest of others instead of himself. Thus, he stops worrying about public reputations and the selfish demands of his wife. Instead he focuses on protecting and ensuring the happiness of Ethelinde, even if it means accepting her love for Montgomery. Once again Smith values his acceptance of social correction. Though he does not experience Ethelinde’s love, he eventually experiences peace: “He returns to Grasmere, with his heart as partial as ever to his charming friend, but divested of all the painful sensations which had formerly attended that partiality” (5: 337). Sir Edward is able to freely live the life he desires. He returns to Grasmere and renews his friendship with Ethelinde. Smith indicates that his true authority originates from his ability to elevate himself above the confines of patriarchal authority and the need for social discipline.

Ultimately, Smith reveals that in order to attain happiness, male characters must be aware of and sensitive to others’ desires, while differentiating between superficial social expectations and honourable and selfless values. They must reveal their vulnerabilities, using sensibility to act outside of their patriarchal authority. Moreover, they must overcome their desire to dominate others, whether it is through physical or social means, disregarding social expectations and social pressures, focusing only on

those people who are most important to them. Smith examines the instability of social expectations as she values male independence from these pressures. In doing so, Smith maintains that the male characters must exhibit honour, compassion, and selflessness, while completely disregarding material wealth and social standing in order to prove their own worth. Only in relinquishing all control in this way, are male characters able to obtain authority through achieving genuine respect from others. By developing this new form of masculinity through gothic elements, Smith presents masculinity as fragile and vulnerable, similar to femininity. She complicates this further as society is the ultimate source of authority, which controls both male and female characters alike. This public authority that she constructs in the novels guides the characters, but more importantly, Smith extends the gothic elements outside of the novel by suggesting that confinement, fear, and instability affect men and women equally. Through gothic conventions, not only does Smith change the perception of masculinity, she exposes the force of society as it has the power to elevate or destroy, just as it encourages everyone to live selflessly, compassionately, and in union with others.

Conclusion Smith and Sensibility

In her novels, *Emmeline: The Orphan of the Castle* and *Ethelinde or the Recluse of the Lake*, Charlotte Smith does not entirely discredit or condemn male characters' ability and willingness to dominate others. However, by integrating gothic elements and sensibility she challenges the oppressive nature of masculinity in other gothic novels. Like Horace Walpole in *The Castle of Otranto*, Smith critiques patriarchal power as a social structure, but, as I have shown, she goes farther than Walpole in that she constructs an alternative form of social authority and order in her novels. Her depictions of society and her characters' interactions in a wide variety of social settings, combined with their constant awareness of social expectations, constructs society and public opinion as the dominant corrective force. In replacing patriarchal authority with social authority, Smith seems to appeal for female independence. More importantly, though, this transfer of power permits her to incorporate gothic elements with sensibility to advocate for strong, respectable male figures in order to emphasize the interdependence of men and women, ultimately arguing that masculine authority originates and functions as an ability to interact and connect with others, both male and female. Smith requires male characters to support others, while they simultaneously receive support.

In using gothic elements to criticize social order, Smith emphasizes the authority of society to direct and correct behaviour. Because she uses the gothic to implicate both male and female characters as well as the readers, the instructive nature of society is not so much negative as it is necessary. She is not degrading male characters in order to advocate for a complete equalization of genders. Instead, she incorporates the gothic to

present an ideal masculinity that is respectable, compassionate, and strong. Men's ability to influence others is no longer tyrannical and fear-inducing; rather, it originates from a state of respect and admiration. Combined with Smith's suggestion for the possibility of female independence, her novels propose an ideal masculinity that all of society, and every individual, participates in constructing, ultimately preventing tyrannical behaviour and enabling everyone, both male and female, to thrive with their distinct and valued qualities.

Though Charlotte Smith is well known for her contributions to Romantic poetry and her novels have been studied in terms of her portrayal of marriage, economics, politics and her own life,³ her contribution to understanding eighteenth-century society cannot be overlooked. Sensibility has been understood as a bodily expression of sympathy for other people's experiences. Markman Ellis explains that a "philosophically minded columnist in *The Monthly Magazine* stated that 'Sensibility is that peculiar structure, or habitude of mind, which disposes a man to be easily moved, and powerfully affected, by surrounding objects and passing events'" (*Politics* 5). Barker-Benfield reiterates that it requires "a particular kind of consciousness, one that could be further sensitized in order to be more acutely responsive to signals from the outside environment and from inside the body" (Barker-Benfield xvii). Sensibility involves a conscious awareness of morality as it relates to manners and proper conduct. For Smith though,

³ Studies examining Smith as a gothic writer focus on "defiant" women (Ledoux) and gothic as a space to act on "subversive impulses" (K. Ellis). Others examine specific novels or poems in more depth, such as "Things as They Were: the gothic of real life in Charlotte Smith's *The Emigrants* and *The Banished Man*" in which Antje Blank argues that Smith uses two of her texts to explore the horrors of current events and politics under the pretense of gothic themes and spaces, ultimately demonstrating the degree to which Smith's writing was affected by her own life and the Revolutionary wars in France.

masculine sensibility requires much more than an independently powerful man becoming a “man of feeling” and caring for others; it requires him to become completely submissive to society, while differentiating between its superficial and meaningful demands. It is more of a way of life than an experience of feelings. Van Sant states that “moral and aesthetic life was experientially (subjectively) a form of feeling,” (95) but for Smith, as she incorporates sensibility, masculinity is not at all subjective. By positioning society as more powerful than masculine authority, she uses its corrective force to outline clear expectations for masculinity that involve more than proper conduct. Smith demands masculine sensibility that is not a conscious act, but an innate way of being – an active and willing submission to the needs of others, without any consideration for personal gain. Ultimately, Smith erases the aesthetic quality of morality that is attributed to sensibility as “moral judgements [are associated with...] judgements of taste” (M. Ellis, *Politics* 12). She repositions men in relation to women, other men, and society as a whole, to challenge the accepted notion of sensibility as a bodily or superficial moral reaction to others’ suffering. Instead, Smith argues that sensibility is an acknowledgement of interdependence between all people, despite class, status, or gender.

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