

that conflict resolution, reconciliation, and prevention of violence cannot begin until we have a comprehensive understanding of the gendered politics involved in the causes and perpetuation of violence and of the interweaving connections of systems of oppression that define today's globalized politics. This is one of the volume's most important contributions and why it must be read in its entirety.

In analysing the gendered, racialized, and economic dimensions of violent conflict, the researchers reveal how systems of oppression and domination interconnect, support, and complement each other. They also show how these systems shape sites of conflict and influence the way contemporary wars are waged. The analysis of the Canadian Corporation Talisman Energies in the Sudan (chapter 4) provides a particularly vivid example of the "symbiotic" relationship between government military strategy and corporate militarization that is used to achieve secure conditions for the profitable extraction of resources—in this case, oil. As each layer of power is peeled away, it becomes clearer that military and corporate "security" take precedence over human security and the rights of thousands of Sudanese who are uprooted from their land and of women and girls who are abducted and raped. The Talisman case study also illustrates how civilians are incorporated into the conflict and how the violation of basic human rights goes unquestioned. The concept of "human security" has clearly shifted from the early 1990s version that included peace initiatives, human rights, and human development to one that justifies the militarization of the state and international military intervention so as to protect political, economic, and strategic interests [e.g. NATO in the Balkans war and the "coalition of the willing" in the current Iraqi war]. In this study as in others, the analysis underlines that no person, society, country organi-

zation or corporate company can exist in isolation from the transnational web of power relations and networks in which they operate—"everyone is at the battlefield."

Another significant finding is the "continuum of violence" concept, through which are made connections to the gendered violence that occurs before, during, and after a conflict and even in the absence of one. For example, patriarchal ideology of "male honour" and the practice of "honour killings" existed before the Iraqi-Kurdistan war. During the war, however, nationalist ideologues and religious and tribal male leaders "forged alliances" to impose controls over women's sexuality and carry out such killings in the context of the new political reality (chapter 5). Similarly, inter-ethnic marriages in the former Yugoslavia were encouraged by the assimilation of minorities into the dominant group—that is minority women gained acceptance by abandoning their national identity, changing their given, and family names, and adopting the religion and cultural ways of the husband. During the conflict such marriages were perceived by nationalist ideologues as "polluting" national identity. Women in inter-ethnic marriages—who were easier to attack than their husbands—were victimized by men of their own nationality and by others who perceived them as the "enemy." Significantly, mixed-marriage families were the first to leave the country (chapter 6).

But women in conflict zones are not passive recipients of gendered violence as the media would often have us believe. They may be *victimized* because of their gender and in gender-specific ways but at some point in their socialization, prior to or during the conflict, they develop a critical consciousness. The Women in Black in Belgrade are but one of many examples of how women resist war and protest against a ruling regime (chapter 13). In Guatemala and Ghana (chapters 3 and 7), women opted for a "culture of si-

lence" during the wars and during the post-conflict period as an act of resistance. The struggle to survive is not a passive one under multiple systems of oppression, even during "peace." Memories of violence and violation of human rights are ever present when oppression and injustice continue to prevail, and discerning when it is safe to speak out publicly is the challenge facing women in these conflict zones.

In the concluding chapter, the authors question how human security or the security of people can be thought of as a rights-based issue so that it "can address the distinct social and geographical locations that situate men and women differently in different sites of violence." Human security has particular relevance today, especially since it has become so intricately woven into the discourse of "global war against terrorism," which too often relies on racial profiling and usurps citizens' rights. The necessity of analysing this issue within a critical race and feminist framework is vitally important if we are to challenge and re-direct current understandings of this term. *Sites of Violence* has laid the groundwork for this understanding and for continuing action in this direction.

## THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO GOTHIC FICTION

Jerrold E. Hogle, Ed.  
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### REVIEWED BY NATALIE NEILL

"There has never... been any period of Gothic English literature, but the list of Gothic revivalists stretches completely

across its entire history, from the *Beowulf* poet to writers of our own day.”

—Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*

The centremost essay in *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Jeffrey N. Cox’s “English Gothic theatre,” opens with the above quote by Northrop Frye. Frye’s argument concerning the “persistent nostalgia” of Gothic romance can be seen to reflect the premise of this new collection of specially commissioned critical writings on the Gothic. Edited by Jerrold E. Hogle, *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* consists of accessible essays written by leading Gothic scholars who specialize in a range of periods, national literatures, and narrative forms. The fourteen essays comprised in the volume offer a loosely chronological survey of Gothic fiction from the 1760s to the present. Together they introduce the reader to key themes and conventions of the Gothic, describe various social and aesthetic contexts that shaped the genre, and represent the major critical approaches in Gothic studies.

Like Blackwell’s *A Companion to the Gothic* (2000), edited by David Punter, which covers many of the same topics and includes essays written by several of the same contributors, *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* emphasizes the flexibility of the Gothic as a genre. Each of the essays in the Cambridge collection focuses on a specific time period, location, or medium. That the book emphasizes a historical perspective is illustrated by the fact that the first seven chapters deal largely with Gothic fiction prior to the 1830s. In Chapter 2, for example, E. J. Clery discusses the rise of British Gothic from the 1760s to the 1780s, framing the Gothic’s blend of natural and supernatural in terms of the larger epistemological shift from romance to realism. In the next essay, Robert Miles brings into focus the various cultural factors contributing

to the “effulgence” of Gothic in the 1790s, a decade in which the First-Wave Gothic reached its height of popularity. In Chapter 5, Michael Gamer gives a lucid discussion of the relationship between the Gothic and the Romantic, foregrounding the issue of literary value. Chapters 8 through 14 address post-Romantic developments. Essays on Victorian Gothic (Alison Milbank) and Gothic fiction from 1885-1930 (Kelly Hurlley) describe the evolution of the genre in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An essay by the current president of the International Gothic Association, and sole Canadian contributor, Steven Bruhm, discusses contemporary Gothic literature and film (and “why we need it”) using psychoanalytic models.

Other chapters deal with the Gothic within the context of a national literature or particular medium. Essays on early French and German Gothic (Terry Hale), Scottish and Irish Gothic (David Punter), American Gothic (Eric Savoy), and colonial and post-colonial Caribbean Gothic (Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert) explore the way that specific cultural situations find expression in various national Gothic literatures. Essays that extend their discussions beyond literary Gothicism include Misha Kavka’s “The Gothic on Screen” and Fred Botting’s examination of the Gothic in the digital age, which rounds out the volume.

*The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* is very inclusive in terms of the texts it designates as “Gothic.” The primary works invoked range from Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1760) and the novels of Ann Radcliffe to twentieth-century Gothic “texts” such as Angela Carter’s short story “The Bloody Chamber,” the horror film *Dawn of the Dead*, and the video game *Doom*. The diversity of examples discussed raises the question of definition. In his introductory chapter, Hogle offers a set of loose parameters for the genre, but acknowledges that it is ultimately “unstable.” As

Gamer argues, the Gothic is a “‘mixed’ genre, assembled, like Frankenstein’s monster, out of other discourses.” In fact, in analyzing the Gothic texts of specific eras, nations, and media, each contributor is implicitly engaged in defining what it means to be “Gothic.”

In spite of the variety of perspectives and approaches represented in the volume, there is a thread that seems to run through it; namely, what Hogle refers to as “the persistence of the Gothic across modern history.” As many of the writers suggest, the Gothic dramatizes cultural struggles and ambivalences. It articulates our most profound fears and desires and narrativizes intractable social problems. Yet the Gothic is an aesthetic that transcends any one narrative form or moment in history. It negotiates between “high” and “low” culture, has been identified as both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary, and accommodates multiple interpretations. In short, the Gothic has survived and thrived because of its endless adaptability, as the range of essays in this collection suggests.

*The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* is a welcome addition to the Cambridge Companion to Literature series. Aimed chiefly at students, these reference books offer authoritative and comprehensive introductions to various areas of literary studies. Like other titles in the series, *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* has an extensive Chronology and Guide to Further Reading. A Gothic filmography is also included.