

prescriptive, value process over product, encourage collaboration rather than competition, they come to appreciate the power and the freedom of assuming responsibility for their own learning. Knowledge flows in multiple directions, and professors and students are partners in the learning process. We learn from each other.

Our application of MI theory in the university community demonstrates and promotes a blending of teaching and scholarship. It also puts into operation three dimensions of Boyer's (1990) perspective on scholarship: (a) the scholarship of integration, in that it synthesizes the tenets of MI theory, interprets them for use in the university setting, and makes connections across disciplines; (b) the scholarship of application, in that it facilitates a learning environment in which individual differences are

respected, the needs of diverse learners are met, and all students can be successful; and (c) the scholarship of teaching, in that it bridges the gap between theory and practice and informs our teaching.

There have been many interpretations of MI theory and how it can be applied to schooling, but the focus has been mainly in the area of P-12 education. However, the tenets of MI theory have implications for practice in higher education as well. By constructing multiple teaching and learning strategies for college students and by engaging them actively in constructing their own knowledge, college professors assist in the cultivation of an educational community that endows its members with a passion for achievement, a lifelong curiosity, and an exuberance for learning.

The Fall of the House of Seven Gables and Other Haunted Tales of the Gothic as a Senior Seminar

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Winter Quarter, 1997, at Kennesaw State University, I taught a seminar primarily for undergraduate English majors on British and American prose Gothic. The ten-week course covered twelve novels from the 18th century to the present (and encompassing five Americans and four women authors). These were the texts: *Wieland* by Charles Brockden Brown, *The Collector* by John Fowles, *The House of the Seven Gables* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson, *Haunted* by Joyce Carol Oates, *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Tales* by Edgar Allan Poe, *The Italian* by Ann Radcliffe, *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, *The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde.

The great riches of the history and development of the English and American literary and cultural experience of the past three hundred years can be studied usefully from the perspective of the Gothic. The Gothic impulse is, in fact, a particularly rich subject for a senior seminar because its manifestations are international, interdisciplinary, and broad-ranging. Thus students who have become seniors can attempt in class and in long written projects to assimilate and reflect the generous span and scope of the material their major studies have presented to them. The issues that arise in studies of the Gothic that assist these kinds of assimilations would include the obvious, such as the supernatural and psychological and sexual, but extend as well into art, religion, class and economics, gender, education, social issues, the law, and many others. This complexity and multiplicity, by the same token, therefore, also contributes an additional and useful aspect to the topic.

Scholars know that a precise definition even of just the literary identity of the Gothic is elusive. Part of the project of this class, then, could well be to arrive at a definition.

The goal of this course, as a senior seminar, was to enable students to bring together the skills and knowledge of English studies, making interdisciplinary connections, and completing and presenting orally a significant and original research project. In addition, throughout the quarter, each student was responsible for one of the texts and had to prepare and deliver a short seminar paper on it for the class the day that book was assigned to be discussed. At the end of the quarter, the students completed an in-class, closed-book, final examination, which was a single essay designed to summarize their intellectual journey through the course.

The syllabus set forth the following expectations: We shall try to conduct this class as much as possible as a seminar, which means that the responsibility for the success of it resides with the students as well as with the instructor. Students are expected to have read and thought about every assignment before class. For each class after the second week, students will present short oral reports on the works to be discussed, handing in a five-page (minimum) paper at the same time. At the end of the quarter, students will make a longer oral presentation (fifteen to twenty minutes) on their original research and hand in a substantial term paper (fifteen pages or more) defending the thesis of the oral presentation with substantiation from published scholarship.

Ten students enrolled in the class, including two English Education majors and a History major (who, as it happened, was far and away the best prepared and most

serious student in the class). All of the students admitted to having been drawn to the class in the first place because of their own particular interest in the subject. The first day of class students selected the works on which they wished to present their short oral reports. Although obviously not everybody managed to claim his or her first choice (the early favorite was, not surprisingly, Poe, followed by Hawthorne, reflecting the stubborn Americanist roots planted by secondary-school literature studies these days and not easily eradicated), a number of students developed affinities for writers of whom they had previously heard little or nothing, in particular Charles Brockden Brown, Oscar Wilde, and John Fowles.

We began the course with Horace Walpole, traditionally seen as the founder of the movement, while I urged students to begin reading *The Italian* so that they would not have an enormous amount to absorb after the first week when we reached Radcliffe. The gaucheries of Walpole, of course, amused them, and the vaporizings of Radcliffe bogged them down. Thus, in a way, the class got off to a bit of a slow start, reflecting changing tastes and differing popular cultures from the time when Northanger Abbey's Henry Tilney read the much longer *Mysteries of Udolpho* in two days with his hair, he claims, on end the entire time [83]. My experience suggests that these two novels do need to be included in a course such as this (and certainly *The Italian* is the shortest of Radcliffe's triple deckers). But another, more accessible (i.e., more conventionally horrifying) text might be selected as a touchstone or starting point, with, then, a detour to lay the historical foundation of the subject. On the other hand, throughout the course, as time went on, students found themselves in discussion and even later in written work referring to Radcliffe and Walpole as points of comparison and contrast for the subsequent development of the Gothic sensibility and craft. One of the great values of Gothic for a course such as this one is indeed the opportunity it provides for a historical survey of both developing aesthetics and conventions and changing tastes. Students have already been exposed through other classes to a variety of works from differing times; thus, they can usefully make comparisons of Gothic texts to contemporary works written with apparently dissimilar sensibilities and speculate about the implications of those observations. For instance, they can situate *Frankenstein* within English Romanticism or contrast fin de siècle Gothicism with contemporaneous naturalism and realism.

In any case, we next proceeded in quick succession to *Frankenstein*, Wieland, Poe's stories, and then to *The House of the Seven Gables*, and by then we were clearly underway and moving surely and effectively through our canon. The last named work was particularly provocative at this point, too, because its happy ending enabled us to consider the conventions of the genre as they appeared to be developing and to think about whether Hawthorne

betrays the original impulse of his narrative by the striking turn toward a comedic resolution.

What I would like to do in this essay is to mention some of the other issues raised, by both the instructor and students, and in general report on the experience of, I think, a highly effective approach to teaching the Gothic and using it in a college curriculum. I encouraged the students to apply the critical approaches and strategies with which they were most comfortable to the texts they were treating in their oral and written analytic presentations, while I made certain in the discussions that alternative views, literary and cultural considerations, and a developing sense of the Gothic were aired and encouraged. Fowles's book, for example, builds upon the fractured, embedded, competing or divided narratives, and thereby consciousnesses, like the structures earlier seen in *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*; the Gothic, accordingly, becomes a useful vehicle for explorations of form. Students may or may not comment upon this development on their own, given the natural tendency to prefer theme over form, but they readily became adept at evaluating the effectiveness of differing strategies of narration.

The class, too, was increasingly bemused by the context of the works in terms of society and psychology. What did these works say about the makeup of the worlds and of the peoples within them of the authors' own times? Similarly, the discussion often hinged on so-called external vs. internal Gothic; which is to say, is the problem in our stars or in ourselves? In particular, too, frequently these works pose questions of science and technology and industrialization, which also proved to be a fertile field for further examination, for example, in the case of the scientist figure in *Frankenstein* vs. the one in *The House of the Seven Gables*. And questions of class and economics matter in Fowles and Jackson, as my students discovered. On the other hand, the class was unwilling to entertain a question I found challenging: what does publication in *Playboy* say about a Joyce Carol Oates story concerning the bloody vindication of a wife and daughters against their philandering husband and father. Such psychosexual questions sailed over their heads. However, the students were eager to discuss family romance and Freudian family dynamics issues within these texts such as Poe's stories and the novels by Brown and Walpole revealed them. Society seems particularly scrutinized in most of these works, too, and the students eagerly pursued those threads.

The following is a list of topics on which the students made their "short" oral presentations, most of which grew into their longer presentations and major papers. One student, in fact, who wrote about Hawthorne, later expanded her original paper following the class into a formal submission to a national convention of the undergraduate English honorary, where it was accepted and delivered. Other students used their essays later in support of applications for prizes and as writing samples for graduate pro-

grams. Here are some of the more successful and interesting topics: "Does Frankenstein's Monster Have a Soul?," "Eighteenth-Century Abnormal Psychology in *Wieland*," "Dr. Jekyll as Drug Addict," "The Sensuality of the Senses in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*," "The Importance of Space and Dwellings in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*," "Boundaries and Marginality in *The Collector*," "The Historical Moment in *The House of the Seven Gables*," and "Violence as Curse or Cure in the Short Fiction of Joyce Carol Oates." Thus, religion, psychology, aesthetics, and history all contributed to the cultural and literary appreciation of these books, and one can see common literary themes here rendered transparent.

Interestingly, the student who outmaneuvered his peers into securing the much coveted Edgar Allan Poe for his short presentation abandoned that much cherished author for his longer paper in favor of the iconoclastic H. P. Lovecraft. The rest of the class particularly enjoyed hearing about a writer whom they had not read but to whom they could respond as a result of the expertise and insights this most recent survey of literature had provided them. And that was true, as well, for the young man whose subject this was; he chose to examine a writer whom he had previously read rather unreflectively and thoughtlessly and discovered new value and appreciation for what that author was attempting to accomplish.

According to the students' own testimony, they learned a great deal from the class, and I did, too, though there are indeed aspects to the class that I might do differently, upon which I might elaborate. For instance, I probably need to administer almost daily reading quizzes to the class because there was a temptation, sometimes indulged in, not to prepare as completely for classes for the discussion of which other students were responsible. And then the discussion inevitably sagged. Also, I might shorten the minimum length of the long paper. Undergraduates do not necessarily know how to deal with additional limits beyond recourse to padding and redundancies. And, a review of documentation procedures and techniques is never wasted on them.

As far as the texts are concerned, I debated beforehand including satires of the Gothic, such as the aforementioned *Northanger Abbey* or works by Thomas Love Peacock

such as *Nightmare Abbey*. The last, in particular, is short and perhaps on a semester system, as we have now adopted, there would be time, with fifteen rather than ten weeks, to consider parody as an aspect of the mode. Of the books, too, I might replace *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* with *The Haunting of Hill House* so that a later ghost story might be paired against Hawthorne's earlier tale. Students found some of the Oates stories obscure and baffling, although I wanted to include some very current but fairly literate exemplar of the genre (as opposed to best-selling but less literary books). In general, Stevenson, Fowles, Stoker, and Shelley were the best received and most widely enjoyed of what the class read. Frankenstein's monster and Dracula are ever enduring, it appears!

The students in their anonymous evaluations at the end of the quarter were particularly enthusiastic about the seminar structure of the class, enabling them freely to try out and to try on ideas and interpretations and to exchange and learn in informal and non-directed manner. And certainly the exciting nature of the research today in Gothicism supports such hypothesizing. Many of the students expressed pleasure at reading works previously unfamiliar to them and found the subject in general highly provocative. Two students indicated the challenge in reading works they would not have read otherwise and learning to appreciate an alien perspective as a particular maturation stage in their education.

At the very end of the quarter, though, when we were reviewing before the final examination, it was apparent that we had covered so many texts in such a short period of time that it seemed as if we had considered one great big stew of Gothicism, a veritable Fall of the House of the Seven Gables and Other Haunted Tales of the Gothic. That is one way, too, in which this course would be better served by a semester term than a quarter.

What my experience does reveal, however, is that the Gothic is indeed a mirror of ourselves and reflects both privately and personally as well as culturally and historically. From the Gothic, we can take the measure of our times, and our students and our understandings can be broadened and enriched.