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SHIRLEY JACKSON'S LEGACY:

A CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON THE LITERARY RECEPTION

PORTO ALEGRE

2012

UNIVERIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO SUL

INSTITUTO DE LETRAS

PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM LETRAS

LEM – LITERATURAS DE LÍNGUA INGLESA

LINHA DE PESQUISA: LITERATURA, IMAGINÁRIO E HISTÓRIA

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Tese de doutoramento submetida ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul como requisito parcial para a obtenção do grau de Doutor em Letras.

PORTO ALEGRE
Julho de 2012

To my parents, Jacob e Zoé

who taught me independence in place of ordered conformity

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Much gratitude to my advisor, Sandra Sirangelo Maggio, whose support has been and always will be essential, and to the members of the evaluation committee, Claúdio Vescia Zanini, Márcia Ivana de Lima e Silva and Helenita Rosa Franco. Your advice and assistance are deeply appreciated.

To CAPES, for funding this enterprise.

"Shirley Jackson was a very scary lady, indeed"

-Denise Mathisse Hill, *The Daily*

"…I have always loved to use fear, to take it and comprehend it and make it work and consolidate a situation where I was afraid and take it whole and work from there... I delight in what I fear.

-Shirley Jackson, from an unsent letter to poet Howard Nemerov.

"She was a rebellious young woman who was a disappointment to her mother, and later in life was a reclusive slightly mad genius, plagued by vices of excess, such as smoking and drinking, ala Edgar Allan Poe, which led to her premature death. When you read her stories, you can't help but believe she is either a genius, or a madwoman. I believe she was both."

-biographer Judy oppenheimer, *Private Demons*

RESUMO

A invisibilidade de Shirley Jackson e seu status de escritora esquecida são investigados nesta tese. Para tanto, reclamações da escassez de críticas avaliativas de seus trabalhos são estudadas no intuito de determinar o quanto estes rótulos danosos realmente refletem seu reconhecimento historicamente pela crítica especializada/acadêmica, pela mídia e pelo público leitor. Exemplos de atividade cultural intensa relativa à sua literatura são oferecidos como contraponto para expor as incongruências que contaminam grande parte de sua historiografia literária. O escopo deste estudo exploratório perfaz um amplo corpo de críticas a respeito dos trabalhos de Jackson desde os anos 1940 até o presente. Dentre as metas desta tese estão a investigação destas inconsistências e a oferta de *insights* em relação aos fatores que potencialmente as causam. Além disso, uma crítica ainda não realizada é proposta, uma que coloca a autora no centro do empreendimento analítico; em outras palavras, que usa o próprio material ficcional de Jackson como base teórica contra qual examinar sua ficção. Uma seleção de quatro contos compõe o corpus desta pesquisa, são eles "The Intoxicated", "The Daemon Lover", "Like Mother Used to Make" e "The Villager", todos publicados na seminal coleção *The Lottery and Other Stories* de 1948. Discussões acerca das conexões intertextuais que une os quatro contos são conduzidas com o objetivo de explicitar o quão penetrantes e influentes estes elementos temáticos comuns podem ser, especialmente no que toca os temas que formam o que aqui é chamado de *Shirley Jackson Lore*.

Palavras-chave: Shirley Jackson; *The Lottery and Other Stories;* Historiografia literária; Recepção literária; Crítica literária.

ABSTRACT

Shirley Jackson's alleged invisibility and status as a forgotten writer are investigated in this thesis. Thus, complaints of a shortage of critical assessment regarding her works were studied in order to determine how these detrimental labels actually reflect her recognition historically by specialized/academic critics, media and reading public. Instances of lively artistic and cultural activity stemming from her literature are offered as counterpoints that expose much of the incongruence that contaminates her literary historiography. The scope of this exploratory study spans a wide-ranging body of criticism about Jackson's works from the 1940s to the present. Among the aims of this thesis are the investigation of these disputable inconsistencies and the offering of insights into the potential factors that have caused them. Moreover, it tentatively proposes the critique that does not yet exist, that which places the very author at the center of the critical-source enterprise; in other words, one that uses Jackson's own fictional material as scientific-support and background against which to examine her fiction. A selection of four short stories compose the corpus of this research, namely "The Intoxicated", "The Daemon Lover", "Like Mother Used to Make" and "The Villager", all published in the cardinal 1948 short fiction collection *The Lottery and Other Stories*. Discussions of the restricted intertextual connections that binds the four stories are conducted so as to make conspicuous how pervasive and influential the essential common thematic elements spread all over her oeuvre can be, especially in what concerns the themes that form what is here called the Shirley Jackson Lore.

Keywords: Shirley Jackson; *The Lottery and Other Stories;* Literary historiography; Literary reception; literary criticism.

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INTRODUCTION

On July 14th 2010, senior writer for Salon magazine Laura Miller entitled an article of hers with an instigating question: "Is Shirley Jackson a great American writer?" – though this is certainly too complex a question for a simple answer, it is also a good starting point for an investigation. Miller subtitled her text: "the author of The Lottery is still not getting the respect she deserves" (MILLER, 2010, p. 1), which kindles the debate concerning the current status of Jackson's literary reception as a whole.

Upon studying the life and works of American writer Shirley Jackson (1916-1965) one may notice the presence of seemingly ambiguous aspects to the literary history that regards her career at large. One of these inconsistencies, involving mainly her fiction and its critique, is most noteworthy.

This inconsistency is formed by: a) the complaint of a shortage of critical assessment concerning her works – which should supposedly reflect her historically bland recognition by the public, the Academy and the media, and should consequently feed her historically alleged status as a forsaken writer; and, conversely, b) today, there seems to exist a lively artistic and cultural activity stemming from and surrounding her literature – including multimedia adaptations[1] of her works (to television, theater, cinema, the internet, etc.) as well as intense use of her literature in many areas within the academic world in fields as diverse as Economy and the Health Sciences and including, naturally, the humanities[2]. This particular incongruity constitutes one of the major (yet ambiguous) features that holistically describe Jackson's reception throughout history (counting from the 1940s to the present). In other words, that same forgotten writer whom Miller mentions and whom few seem to give credit to is still, in a sense, very much alive and well regarded as well as *present* in the minds and lives of many.

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[1] For examples, see Section 1.3, page 29.
[2] For examples, see Section 1.3, page 29-30.

As far as the contents of her literary reception *per se* are concerned, some critics praise her works as notable classics which are well worthy of being admitted to the celebrated literary Canon, others censure them, either by questioning their quality as canonical or by declaring them conspicuous and superficial. That, in itself, is not an inconsistency, since writers are always inevitably objects of disputable critical input regarding their work, nevertheless, Jackson's fitful reception is deservingly worthy of investigation.

The aims of this thesis are, thus, to investigate these historically disputable inconsistencies, to offer insight into the potential factors that have caused them, as well as to suggest what critics might have missed in the body of critical appraisal that may account for part of the negative sides of the aforementioned flickering reception. These aims invite a theoretical approach that acknowledges both historical and textual contexts. The text-oriented attitude applied in the present investigation implied the provision, in varying amounts, of close readings of four individual stories by Jackson, namely "The Intoxicated", "The Daemon Lover", "Like Mother Used to Make" and "The Villager". Furthermore, discussions of their (restricted intertextual) connections to Jackson's other stories are offered, as well as considerations regarding their contexts of production and their effects on both critics and reading public (whenever applicable). The context-oriented attitude applied here is dealt with commingled rather than separated from the text-oriented approach. Analyses were intended as relational, contextual and historical as often as possible, which basically summarizes the configuration of the current analysis as enjoying an analytical attitude rather than a scientific method as such.

The scope of the present investigation spans a body of critical accounts of Jackson's works (from the 1940s to the present) and the four previously mentioned short stories, all published in the cardinal 1948 short fiction collection *The Lottery and Other Stories*. These four stories have been selected as optimal examples of how pervasive and influential her essential *thematic elements* can be, especially in what concerns the interrelatedness that binds (and eventually alters the view of) the totality of her oeuvre.

In a sense, these *thematic elements* are at the heart of this investigation. The present hypothesis is that they are the missing link between the discontented reviews and the achievement of definitive critical and public acknowledgement. Thanks to them, all her stories may be viewed under a revolutionary glance that perceptually alters their interpretations. These thematic elements are distributed under the layers of meanings in each and all of Jackson's fictional texts; they comprise her creative cosmos, hereby referred to as the Shirley Jackson Lore.

It is important to point out that the reading of any *individual text* by Jackson is in itself a complete and fulfilling experience. The awareness of these cryptic thematic elements is not a *sine qua non* condition for its enjoyment. On the other hand, the discernment that stems from their awareness kindles a more eventful, instigating and at times disturbing experience.

These noteworthy thematic elements that comprise her lore are diverse in nature. Some are more plain and obvious; others are not so clearly visible. They range from disquieted mothers to discomfited wives, including even legendary demonic figures. They earn mythological status in the sense that they almost preternaturally inhabit the depths of the many-layered stories contained not only in *The Lottery and Other Stories* itself, but which are also spread elsewhere in the author's fiction.

The complexity that involves the intricacies of Shirley Jackson's life and works (contextually/historically) is addressed in the first Part of this thesis. The incongruence that lodges the lack of (critical and public) attention is presented and discussed in the second Part. The third Part houses the alternative critical views that may assist in bridging the gaps historically left so far by specialized criticism; hopefully it may also assist in approximating and thus elucidating the disparate parts that form the con/textual inconsistency that drives this study. The following is a short outline of these Parts and their respective subsections.

Part 1 brings basic facts about the author, her importance and influence in the literary world, her style, her literary output (highlighting its breadth and variety) and is divided in three parts. Subsection 1.1. acknowledges that Ms. Jackson was deemed a distinguished writer of women's experiences in the 1950s, though some of the themes approached in her fiction were considered much too subversive by mid-twentieth century American society. Perhaps *because* she was considered a historiographer of her times her literary discourse was labeled insidious and she was accused of being a feminist, which helped neither her career nor her reputation. This segment seeks to unravel some of the intricacies behind this brittle dichotomic balance of being both a woman and a writer at that country and at that specific historical moment in time. Subsections 1.2 taps on subjects such as Jackson as a forgotten writer, as a horror writer, as a comic writer, as a chronicler of social injustice, of feminist political struggle and other tentative categorical labels and mislabels. Subsection 1.3. brings to discussion the increasingly blooming creative attention Jackson is receiving nowadays. It presents the opposing viewpoint that haunts Ms. Jackson's history and ultimately legitimizes the incongruity that has plagued her so. This segment features many of the activities that, directly or indirectly, involve the author and her works as of late. Data obtained in the investigations contained here reveal an intense activity regarding the author and her writings

in diverse arenas. Its intention is to help better understand Jackson's contribution not only to literature but also to politics, education, culture and art.

Part 2 offers a comprehensive review of the critical literature produced about Jackson's works and is divided into three subsections. Subsection2.1. introduces and examines the alleged scarcity of the criticism that has been allotted to the author, both in her lifetime and afterwards, and subdivides the main critical studies informally in primary, secondary and graduate works (it is important to bear in mind that the allotted titles do not bear any judgment whatsoever over the quality of these studies, their nomenclature has been devised for reasons of didactic and organizational nature only). In its internal structure, the four major novel-length studies dedicated to different aspects of Ms. Jackson's universe are considered; they encompass the primary critical works category; Then, the professional investigations that have not been written by one author individually, and usually consist of collections of essays and reviews by different researchers, compose the secondary critical works category; finally, most of the academic theses and dissertations which subsume Ms. Jackson's works as cardinal or supplemental points of investigation are surveyed, mapped and briefly commented upon, thus forming the graduate works category. The intention of these segments is to provide informed data for the premise that claims little critical attention has been paid to the author. It is important to reiterate the evident fact that the small amount of criticism does not denote, in any manner, poor analytical quality, quite the contrary; the modest quantity extant can be said to be quite lucid and reliable. Subsection 2.2.demonstrates the exception to the previous circumstance, i.e., a huge amount of criticism, not always commendable, has been dedicated to the famous short story "The Lottery". Here, the trajectory of this tale is historicized and explained from its origins to its present ramifications. The intention of this particular segment is to help readers understand the reasons and causes that have spurred such rave reviews to this short story, that have given such a lingering detrimental label to its author and that have excited the fitful nature of her seemingly inconsistent literary reception. Subsection 2.3. brings forth some considerations on a set of diverse, often distinct, critical opinions regarding possible thematic divisions, mainly in the author's short fiction. Some thoughts contented by the most prominent Jackson scholars are examined and discussed at an introductory level, gently skimming the origins and repercussions of the applied thematic divisions under discussion. This segment also tangentially alludes to the thematic chains that bind the author's six complete novels, rendering thus a probationary attempt at a thorough view of the author's *oeuvre*.

If Part 2 succeeds in presenting the existing thorough-set of critique on Jackson's works (all in themselves informed by a series of diverse theoretical and methodological orientations), then Part 3 tentatively proposes the critique that does not yet exist, that which places the very author at the center of the critical-source enterprise. In other words, one that uses Shirley Jackson's own fictional material as scientific-support and background against which to examine the selection of stories featured in the present corpus. It is important to highlight, however, that due to the degree of invisibility of the writer under analysis – not so much by the reading public but mainly by the specialized critics – empirical data receives paramount attention in this thesis, often in detriment of more scientific and theoretical aspects (hence the amount of quantitative information).

Nevertheless, Part 3 features a blend between the conventional and the alternative analyses of the short stories selected for the corpus, namely "The Intoxicated", "The Daemon Lover", "Like Mother Used to Make" and "The Villager" with a view towards the surfacing of the cryptic thematic elements that compose Shirley Jackson's fictional cosmos as well as an introduction to the Shirley Jackson Lore that shapes this dissertation's critical attitude.

The choice of corpus was guided by the presupposition that the individual analysis of the totality of Jackson's works in the fashion thus proposed would be both a monumental and an overwhelming undertaking, thus, a criteria-based selection to narrow down the corpus to a more suitable size was necessary. Hence, the novels, the *memoirs*, the plays, and all the non-fictional texts – published both during Ms. Jackson's lifetime as well as posthumously – have been excluded from the present treatment. This line of reasoning allows for the short stories to remain. Yet, considering that the number of Jackson's short fiction is close to one hundred, a further selection was again deemed necessary. The material that naturally presented itself was *The Lottery and Other Stories*, Ms. Jackson's first collected short fiction volume ever published. From the twenty-five eerie tales featured in this collection, the first four (with the exception of "Trial by Combat") are optimal candidates for the present endeavor. They are sufficiently representative of the characteristics which this thesis wishes to emphasize.

Several common contemporary approaches to literary theories inspired Part 3's analysis. The four short stories under scrutiny were summarized so as to highlight certain pre-established literary elements from their texts. The practical critical attitudes applied in their interpretations were meant to highlight the interrelatedness that binds all of Ms. Jackson's fictional texts. These critical attitudes borrowed principles from several distinct literary-theoretical approaches.

Considering that the individual "who has things to say about a work of literature, but has no direction by which to shape his perceptions, finds his problem solved by taking on" a ready-made theoretical approach that certainly fit a certain place and period in time "*if he does not wish to try his own hand at practical criticism*" (SCOTT, 1961, p.13, my italics), then the present intention *is* to try an idiosyncratic approach to practical criticism. In practical terms this inevitably implies in touching elements of diverse theoretical approaches (using their strengths and trying to avoid, whenever possible, their limitations). At any rate, the present purpose was not to write a comprehensive treatise on all of Shirley Jackson's works but to conceive of sound and informed critical commentaries.

1. NOTES ON SHIRLEY JACKSON'S HAUNTED UNIVERSE

1.1. A Woman and a Writer: The Dual Role

Shirley Jackson was born in San Francisco in 1916 (though she often said she was born in 1919 so as not to be regarded as older than her husband). Most of her childhood was in California but most of her adult life was spent in New York State and in Vermont. She attended the University of Rochester for a while but actually graduated from Syracuse University. In the latter institution she met literary critic Stanley Edgar Hyman, whom she married in 1940. Five years later the couple moved to Bennington, VT, where she mothered four children (to whom she dedicated two family memoirs whimsically entitled *Life among the Savages* and *Raising Demons*). She was a successful writer, an engaging conversationalist, an indefatigable hostess, and a troubled woman who smoked too much and drank too much, who had bouts of depression and agoraphobic tendencies.

She wrote six complete novels, two (the previously mentioned) humorous family *memoirs*, four books for children, a juvenile stage play, some thirty non-fiction articles, numerous book reviews and four short story collections that, along with her uncollected pieces, yield *circa* one hundred individual short stories; the latter, the literary form in which she proved more prolific.

She was responsible for one of the most influential haunted house stories of American literature, *The Haunting of Hill House* (her fifth novel, published in 1959). It was adapted, at least twice, to big Hollywood productions (one in 1963 conducted by legendary director Robert Wise and the other in 1999 directed by Jan de Bont, featuring Catherine Zeta-Jones, Owen Wilson, Liam Neeson in the role of Dr. Montague and Lili Taylor as Eleanor Vance).

She wrote what is likely the most controversial piece of fiction ever published in the history of *New Yorker* magazine, the 1948 short story *"*The Lottery*"*. Its reception resulted in

hundreds of canceled subscriptions and in the largest volume of mail ever received by its editors and author; it was later adapted for television, theater, radio and, in a mystifying transformation even made into a ballet. Joined by Ambrose Bierce's *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* and Flannery O'Connor's *A Good Man's Hard to Find*, Jackson's "The Lottery" is one of three short stories most anthologized in American literary history (HWANG, 2009).

She was a chronicler and an eloquent voice of the *Age of Anxiety*[3]. She is considered a quintessential writer of women's experiences in the 1950s (HAGUE, 2005). Throughout her life, Jackson refused to fit society's limited concept of the woman's role (her mother wanted her to be beautiful and dull, she was never either one). In the first half of the 1960s her mental health improved but her physical health deteriorated. She died of cardiac arrest in 1965 at age 48 during an afternoon nap. As it frequently happened to purposeful women in her stories, fate was unkind and downright malicious. She could have produced so much more. It was a poignant loss for the world.

Jackson was not a quintessential American housewife of the post Second World War period. Stephens College critic Nancy Walker sees a paradox, if not a duplicity, in accepting women the likes of Phyllis McGinley, Jean Kerr and Ms. Jackson as representatives of typical American housewives of the postwar period because, according to her, it is exactly their successful careers as writers that make them, by definition, atypical (WALKER, 1985). Feminist revolutionary Betty Friedan agreed (angrily):

> "Laugh," the Housewife Writers tell the real housewife, 'if you are feeling desperate, empty, bored, trapped in the bedmaking, chauffeuring and dishwashing details. Isn't it funny? We're all in the same trap.' Do real housewives then dissipate in laughter their dreams and their sense of desperation? Do they think their frustrated abilities and their limited lives are a joke? Shirley Jackson makes the beds, loves and laughs at her son — and writes another book. Jean Kerr's plays are produced on Broadway. The joke is not on *them* (FRIEDAN, 1963, p. 50-51).

Ms. Jackson was "one of the 1950s most critically and commercially successful writers, and managed to achieve both critical acclaim and substantial popular success in a range of literary outlets" (MURPHY, 2009, p. 17). Trinity College Dublin professor Bernice Murphy (2004) says Ms. Jackson was a consistent bestseller; in fact, she was one of the most commercially successful female writers of her period. Her short fiction and essays were much sought after by many of the most famous magazines and journals of the day. Jackson's fifth novel, *The Haunting of Hill House* was considered "the most influential ghost story since *The*

[3] "The Age of Anxiety" refers to the period that spans the mid-1940s to the end of the 1950s. The term was coined by poet W.H. Auden who won the 1948 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for the long poem in six parts entitled *The Age of Anxiety: A Baroque Eclogue*. This poem inspired a symphony by composer Leonard Bernstein, *The Age of Anxiety (Symphony No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra)* and an homonymous 1950 ballet by Jerome Robbins.

Turn of the Screw" (MURPHY, 2005, p. 10). Sylvia Plath was one of her admirers (HALL, 1993; LOOTENS, 1994; HWANG, 2009), she hoped to meet Jackson in June 1953 and aspired a similar career. Plath's most celebrated novel, *The Bell Jar*, was clearly influenced by Jackson, more specifically by character Natalie Waite from Jackson's second novel, *Hangsaman* (MURPHY, 2005). Chuck Palahniuk wrote he hoped his short story "Guts" could be as shocking as Ms. Jackson's "The Lottery" (LAWLESS, 2005), one of the tales that inspired it.

Jackson wrote at least a thousand words a day in a house full of children and of toys on the floor. She was a mother of four, who cooked and cleaned, and still was responsible for writing some of the greatest pieces of twentieth-century American - and world - literature. In this context, the domestic woman's word and power unfold. She managed to combine the dual role, that of a housewife and a writer, in a bold, unique way.

Significantly, Jackson depicts her domestic life as a plunge into a well, into a gloomy underworld illuminated solely by the reading lamp of her desk, the world she associates with her other self, the woman "who finds spiritual sustenance in the moveable feast of letters" (BAILEY, 1999, p. 27). In 1949, in an interview for Harvey Breit featured in the *New York Times Book Review*, Ms. Jackson said:

> I can't persuade myself… that writing is honest work (…) For one thing, it's the only way I can get to sit down (…) but 50 percent of my life is spent washing and dressing the children, cooking, washing dishes and clothes and mending. After I get it all to bed, I turn around to my typewriter and try to – well, to create concrete things again. It's great fun and I love it. But it doesn't tie any shoes" (In: BAILEY, 1999, p.26).

More investigation is necessary to help unravel the intricacies behind this brittle balance. Even though things have changed a great deal since Ms. Jackson's time, women are still writing and being women; and being mothers; and being successful. How many women writers - particularly American women writers in the postwar era – the 'era without servants' – have both profited and suffered from the confusion of their dual role? Writer Alice Munro once said that she wrote short stories instead of novels because she was a young mother who had no time to write novels:

> When you are responsible for running a house and taking care of small children, particularly in the days before disposable diapers or ubiquitous automatic washing machines, it's hard to arrange for large chunks of time (In: FRANKLIN, 2010, p.1).

Journalist Ruth Franklin unequivocally understood this predicament when she subtitled her 2010 piece in *The New Republic*: "On Shirley Jackson and the challenge of being

both a mother and a writer". She goes on to say that, in the 1950s, just as much as now, women can only write when the baby naps or while the children are at school or after the dishes are done and the lunches are packed and the house is, at last, quiet. This sort of logistics has always worked with efficiency, once the woman understands that no matter how smoothly her thoughts are flowing, they will have to stop when the school bus comes. It works as a resignation to frustration (FRANKLIN, 2010).

At Bennington College, Jackson was known as Stanley's wife, that is, at least how the students thought of her (SCHENKAR, 2010, p.1), nevertheless, she did the family driving, the shopping, the cooking, the cleaning, the childcare *and* the creative writing.

Jackson was a chronicler, and an eloquent voice of the Age of Anxiety. She is considered a quintessential writer of women's experiences in the 1950s (HAGUE, 2005). Quite fortunately, the message of what it meant to be a woman in mid-twentieth century America was changing rapidly as Ms. Jackson was tending to babies and typing, all at the same time.

Concerning women's roles, the events that surrounded the Second World War may be described in the geometrical shape of a *parabola*, drawing itself in the United States as a whole. The women who, prior to the onset of the war were encouraged to stay home and tend to their husbands and children were then, during the war, called to work outside their homes in order to support the war effort. The very work they were called to do before 1939, and that was traditionally recognizable as *men*'s work. Suddenly and because of the war, it had changed. As the war was raging overseas, to the women who stayed it was considered patriotic to take over where the men had left off. And that was just the starting point of the *parabola*.

In a February 1942 edition of the magazine *Good Housekeeping*, an article (typical for this kind of publication) was published that represented (in its usual domestic, normative, prescriptive nature) what the ideal female attitude should be concerning this interesting shift in laboring expectations. In it, women allegedly said about themselves that they cheerfully set aside their routine duties to undertake emergency tasks as they are assigned to them.

The *parabola* met its other extreme-end as described by the words of American researcher Heather Strempke Durgin, who wrote that:

> Once the war ended (…) and men returned, ready to resume the jobs they had left in the hands of American women, these women were displaced. Notions of acceptable femininity, which had expanded during the war, *appeared to be contracting* (DURGIN, 2009, p. 10, my italics).

That *parabola* had reached its final destination. Shirley Jackson was caught in the middle of this curve, amidst a bidirectional divergence of ideas, in this rapid outburst of displacement. While standing in this crossfire, she captured with her literature the sound of those anthropological and sociological curves. Their echoes still live on in the pens of women writers who still need to cry for justice even today, for their success never comes without a price.

The functions traditionally assigned, required and expected of women were in frank turmoil. The popular notion of women's roles swiftly became unclear. One of the reasons is actually quite human, even from a methodological standpoint. Durgin (2009) contends that it is quite difficult for critics and historians today to talk about women from the 1950s when what lies in their subconscious are "the great, iconic women of that time: TV matrons (…) such as June Cleaver and Harriet Nelson" (p. 10) – especially when compared to how post-war era American women really lived. If one is to think about those women through the most impartial viewpoint, he or she can afford to try as much as possible to set aside the preconceptions that come with TV women "smiling while cooking, cleaning, and mothering (…) dreaming up the night's menu while vacuuming" (DURGIN, 2009, p. 10-11). The messages conveyed on television, in magazine articles, in politics and in advertising were, admittedly, that: married, white, middle-class women, who were exclusively homemakers, formed the norm. Shirley Jackson acknowledged that; after all, she had firsthand experience in being a housewife *and* a producer of magazine articles for *Good Housekeeping* (though not exactly like those).

The appearance of deference and of courteous yielding to man is seen over and over, in slightly different guises, in Ms. Jackson's stories. It is exactly in these stories, within the creation and representation of her characters, especially the female ones, that one can see the recalibration of the female identity exerted by Jackson: "in the midst of the 1950s recasting of femininity, the image of the madwoman took a startling new form in American popular culture" (CAMINERO-SANTANGELO, 2005, p. 52).

Ms. Jackson writes of the establishment and preservation of female power, however, in her fictional universe, women's power often invites oppression, and oppression often leads to madness. For example, after the events narrated by protagonist Mary Katherine Blackwood in the beginning of *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* take place, she lives with her sister in seclusion in the Blackwood mansion, and even after the whole family has been burked, they could still live contentedly enough had it not been for their neighbors' interference. As it happens in many of Jackson's stories, female self-sufficiency invites punishment, since

"women's forceful establishment of power over their own lives threatens a society in which men hold primary power and leads inevitably to confrontation" (CARPENTER, 1984, p. 32). To Carpenter, Ms. Jackson's last completed novel, which, by the way, was a bestseller, is the author's most extreme assertion on the causes and consequences of "female victimization and alienation" (1984, p.32). Women's self-determination does not yield a safe environment in Jackson's fictional world.

To scholar Jerry Wadden, the frustrations and individual rages of Jackson's female characters lead them to seek refuge in imaginary worlds. He contends that: "people are forced to search for love and happiness in fantasy when these goals are impossible in the real world" (WADDEN, 1970, p. 1). Curiously, many of Jackson's worlds of fiction are not exactly pleasant ones; and though this may be curious, it is not surprising, since the message she was probably trying to convey (if that is even possible to be retrieved) was that life in that moment of the twentieth century was not exactly pleasant for a woman. Her works painted a sensitive and accurate picture of those times: "Man's inhumanity to man--the apathy of parents, the cruelty of society, the perversion of human values--screams that her view of the world in the twentieth century was distressingly realistic (WADDEN, 1970, p. 71).

In her fiction, oppression not only leads to fantasy, it also leads to madness. Jackson produced an assortment of texts that explore the relationship between women and their society and how that relationship may or may not lead to insanity. Journalist Jackie McGlone wrote that "this was a time when women like her [Jackson] were going mad, imprisoned in their kitchens but writing marvelous Gothic fantasies" (2009, p.1). In her plots, several of her female characters seek to come to terms with society and with the patriarchal system that so often subdues them and, when all else fails, they succumb to mental illness as a means of escape. By internalizing the oppression they cannot overcome, they try to find a way of dealing with it. In their struggles, these characters sometimes lose their sanity, other times, their identities (or themselves as did Margaret in *The Beautiful Stranger*). To Noack: "the frustrations and individual rages of the characters [Jackson] creates are both horrifying and frighteningly familiar to those who have experienced the kinds of domination and problems described in her books (1994, p. 61).

Ms. Jackson undoubtedly mirrors the affirmation of a distinctly female experience reflected in her writing and, through her works, she argues for an improvement of the female condition, metamorphosing her own voice into a fictionally embodied contestation. This fictional embodiment is represented by her female characters, whom Middle Tennessee State University Professor Angela Hague describe as "lacking a core of identity [which] forces

them [Jackson's characters] to seek meaning and direction in the world outside themselves" (HAGUE, 2005, p. 76). In a sense, this is also true, as well as prophetic, if said of the contribution of the bulk of Ms. Jackson's fiction, which though lacking an overall unifying identity, accepts illumination via critical commentary from worlds other than her fiction. However, no theoretical method or critical approach seems to clarify her message (if that can be said) more than her own texts. In this sense, they form an intertextual web that offers the opportunity for the careful reader to withdraw all the necessary information to decode Ms. Jackson's latent messages.

To University of Mississippi Professor Joan Wylie Hall, Ms. Jackson`s characters "walk the same slippery plank Emily Dickinson described at the start of the modern era" (HALL, 1993, p. 90). She is referring to the female characters – generally young women in their twenties or thirties – who lead lives circumscribed by walls, in both connotative and denotative senses, and who are quite often susceptible to facing painstaking losses, especially regarding love, identity and, worst of all, existence.

These are truly meaningful pieces of evidence – gathered from the criticism on her works rather than from the fictional sources themselves – but significant nevertheless. What is even more significant is that, with her writing, Ms. Jackson touched issues concerning women of diverse social-economic conditions. Apparently women outside the ruling classes have been of little interest to historiographers, since there has been recently so little research dedicated to the lives and achievements of one half of the world's population. Giving credit where credit is due, Ms. Jackson did portray women in laboring, ascending and questionable social positions; examples can be found, respectively, in the short stories "My Life with R. H. Macy", "Trial by Combat" and "The Tooth"(all published in *The Lottery and Other Stories*). Questionable means of living are also subject of consideration in the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, where, in the end, the two protagonist sisters, Constance and Mary Katherine, end up living their lives in a damaged country-house severely ruined by fire, and readers are left to wonder how they will survive.

Not so much by virtue of economic condition, the majority of her female characters can be said to be marginalized in a series of ways. Marginalized women become the focus of attention in short works such as "The Summer People" and "The Daemon Lover" (both featured in *The Lottery and Other Stories*), whose characters suffer with prejudice, scorn, contempt and disdain; in the latter, the female protagonist, who goes unnamed throughout the story: "(…) is marginalized because of her inability to live up to the patriarchal standard of femininity which, at this time, entailed marriage" (DURGIN, 2009, p.12). In the former, the

protagonists are marginalized for being from another town. Somewhat similar representations can be seen even in the full-length novels, as Eleanor Vance, the protagonist of *The Haunting of Hill House*, who is evicted from her rightful home and abandoned by her own family; or the Blackwood sisters, from *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, who live as outcasts – with the acquiescence of their townsfolk - in their own village.

The afore-mentioned unnamed character from the short story "The Daemon Lover", who seemingly lives in 1940s America, is depicted in the day of her supposed marriage, which is when, according to researcher Strempke Durgin, she is to be validated and normalized through this long-expected ritual ceremony (2009), since:

> her single status obviously causes her distress and she feels devalued; marriage, she believes, will establish her as a whole person who matters (…), though this female character is attempting to reconcile herself to the patriarchal definition of the perfect, or at least acceptable, woman, she is nonetheless tormented (…) for being an outsider. As her dreams of normalization fall apart, she begins to panic, realizing that she might never attain acceptance in her hegemonic culture (DURGIN, 2009, p.12).

The hegemonic culture represented in "The Daemon Lover" is sufficiently organic and complex to have its innards exposed, showing the insidious nature of the hierarchical structure that controls the female character devoid of power and destitute of influence. This oppressive invisible structure not only determines the female character's thoughts and behavior, but also makes her reliant upon its power for both survival and acceptance. This short story spares no efforts in building itself as a "demonstration of the extent to which oppressive systems can be internalized and an investigation into the psychological damage that such internalized hegemony does" (DURGIN, 2009, p. 13).

Concerning "The Daemon Lover", Lenemaja Friedman (1975), cuts all bonds with reality by accepting the possibility that the strange man who oppresses the protagonist is in fact a demonic creature, i.e. she tackles with the supernatural components present in the story as if they could be real, though she also acknowledges the elements of mystery and ambiguity in the story. On the other side, Joanne Wylie Hall (1993) finds this story to be one of psychological terror. Strempke Durgin (2009) believes that the truly frightening elements in it are the political implications of gendered power structures such as they were explored by its author:

> In this story, Jackson examines the effects of living as a subjugated woman in a patriarchal culture by allowing the lead female character's world to be disrupted by patriarchal expectations (…); Jackson weaves (…) elements (…) with contemporary gender politics, represented by a spurned woman panicked because she is on the verge of becoming a "spinster." In addition to her unmarried status, this character

> challenges the accepted housewife role, she supports herself by working. (…) This combination (...) allows Jackson to explore the tenuous role of women (…) and the ways in which [their] behavior was regulated (DURGIN, 2009, p. 20-21).

The story can almost be seen as one of ecofeminist[4] tendencies, since it develops a series of analyses of injustice and exploitation focused on racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, imperialism, speciesm and environmental degradation (STURGEON, 1997). Even though Ms. Jackson's stories heavily tap into some of these notions, especially those of injustice and exploitation stemming from racism or other kinds of bigotry, hers is not a political struggle, at least not in the sense described by Sturgeon, which consequently disqualifies "The Daemon Lover" from the ecofeminist category.

Without any fear of being misunderstood, Jackson may have touched too incisively society's sensitive nerve with some of her gloomy accounts of motherhood. Dauntless, she describes, in an essay for soon-to-be mothers, the sense of isolation and entrapment a woman can feel through the comparison with a caged bird, "implying what marriage, home, and childbearing actually mean to the new mother herself" (HWANG, 2009, p. 103). To her, the sense of imprisonment comes when the woman looks outside the window of the nursery and sees what Jackson calls a vast and unattainable world. Furthermore, there is no escape for the mother, for everywhere she goes, the nursery goes with her, for every place she visits turns into an extension of the nursery.

In a 1960 essay entitled "Why Doesn't Grandma Stay Home Any More?",Jackson explains that:

> No caged bird, singing its sad sad song of captivity and beating its little wings against the bars, is more poignant than the mother of a new baby, looking out at the vast unattainable world beyond the nursery windows (In: HWANG, 2009, p.103).

But not everything is as gloomy. In most of her essays and family stories, Ms. Jackson assumes the voice of an experienced housewife: "sounding confident in sharing her wisdom with less-experienced housewives. Her witticisms and the sensible nature of her stories encourage the reader to forget the dark side of family life that lurks beneath the surface" of her texts (HWANG, 2009, p. 104).

[4] "Ecofeminism" according to the Ecofem Journal staff, housed at Lancaster University, is "the social movement that regards the oppression of women and nature as interconnected. It is one of the few movements and analyses that actually connects two movements [and] (…) more recently, ecofeminist theorists have extended their analyses to consider the interconnections between sexism, the domination of nature (including animals), and also racism and social inequalities. Consequently it is now better understood as a movement working against the interconnected oppressions of gender, race, class and nature." Available at: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/staff/twine/ecofem/whatisecofeminism.html>. Accessed on: 13 July 2012.

Ms. Jackson's works, thus, provide an alternative, or perhaps simply a fresher critical way of thinking about gender relations, unlike traditional feminist analyses. And that by no means mean that traditional feminist criticism is unable to provide the conceptual tools with which to analyze these stories and their entrenched connections between female character representation and h impact in the surrounding fictional community.

Even *"*The Lottery*"* is fertile ground for a feminist perusal. Though the story plot supposedly takes place in a contemporary setting, the societal values of the community portrayed are inherently and manifestedly patriarchal in nature**.** Gender roles are firmly set (BREITSPRECHER, 2000). The narrator first introduces the male characters in instances of mid-conversation regarding tractors and taxes, creating the images of men likely to be solid farmers. Significantly, the women characters are presented only after the men. The first information the reader receives concerning the characteristics of the latter refers to their appearance, to the fact that they are all wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, and are, behaviour-wise, following shortly after their menfolk: "their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed (...), they greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands (JACKSON, 2005, p.292). One character, however, stands out:

> When Mrs. Hutchinson comes running late all the men are sure to mention her to her husband before conversing with her. This is suggestive of how males might be respectful in not treading in the fellow male‘s domain. There seems to be no chance for a change either (BREITSPRECHER, 2000, p. 8).

The children display their own parent-rooted gender roles. The narrative is explicitly built to demonstrate first the boys, playing and gathering piles of stones, and then the girls, standing out of their way and watching. With clearly defined roles, these boys and girls show their own distinguishing principles of upbringing. They mirror Simone de Beauvoir‘s children from the *Second Sex*. Ms. Jackson's children mirror the French existentialist's formulations of the defining roles for boys and girls:

> The little girl (...) is allowed to cling to her mother's skirts, (...) she wears sweet little dresses, her tears and caprices are viewed indulgently, her hair is done up carefully, older people are amused at her expressions and coquetries (…) the little boy, in contrast, will be denied even coquetry; his efforts at enticement, his play-acting, are irritating. He is told that "a man doesn't ask to be kissed .... A man doesn't cry." He is urged to be "a little man" (BEAUVOIR, 1989, p.270).

In that village, not even age seems to make a boy respect a female: "Bobby Martin ducked under his mother′s grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His

father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother" (JACKSON, 2005, p.292). In view of that:

> In a certain perspective, one could say that the stones symbolize money that the boys will need to gather, hoard, and fight for when they are grown up. Girls have to stay out of the way since their role cannot be soiled with working among an economic world (KOSENKO, 1985, p. 28).

Kosenko's analysis reveals a complex social structure deliberately and carefullly developed throughout the story. Subtle details and persistent occurrences within the narrative frame continuously hint to samples of gender pattern creation, consolidation and maintenance since: "even the rules of the lottery itself favor a woman who knows her place and has borne several children; in a large family, each person has less of a chance of being chosen (OEHLSHLAEGER, 1988, p. 265). More examples are provided by Kosenko in his description of Tessie Hutchinson′s defiance:

> Tessie′s rebellion begins with her late arrival at the lottery, a faux that raises suspicions of her resistance to everything the lottery stands for. [...] When Mr. Summers calls her family′s name, Tessie goads her husband 'Get up there, Bill.' In doing so, she inverts the power relation (...) between husbands and wives (...). Her final faux pas is to question the rules of the lottery which relegate women to inferior status as the property of their husbands" (KOSENKO, 1985, p.26).

This last example is particularly meaningful mainly for two reasons. First, it concomitantly explains and asserts the role of Tessie as the town's scapegoat. Second, it elucidatively discloses her stoning as much more than just the fulfillment of a ritual tradition, revealing her fate as a punishment for heresy and sedition; an event not so much more unlike the Salem witch trials.

1.2. A Forgotten Writer?

It is impressive how much critics remember to state that Shirley Jackson is a forgotten writer. This impression, led to an extreme, may seem as if they want her to actually be forgotten. Variations on this same theme are that Jackson is "sorely overlooked" (MURPHY, 2009, p. 17), and that "despite her popularity during her time, she was soon forgotten" and "she was not accepted as a writer significant enough to be canonized" (HWANG, 2009,

p.104). Hwang's words are corroborated by Harold Bloom's statements concerning Jackson's status as a canonical writer[5]. Some critics question the validity of these statements:

> This lack of recognition is incredible in light of the fact that *The New Yorker* received more mail concerning its publication of "The Lottery" than any other piece of fiction it had ever published (WADDEN, 1970, p. 2).

Other critics back them up by saying that notwithstanding all that, Ms. Jackson is considered a forgotten author (DIRDA, 1988; PASCAL, 2000; FLOOD, 2010). A reporter from *The Washington Post* once asked: "is there any author, so nearly a major figure, who is so underappreciated and half-forgotten as Shirley Jackson?" (DIRDA, 1988, p.1). The almost unaniomous consensus among critics seems to be that "Jackson's name has indeed been largely forgotten" (CARPENTER, 1994, p. 67). When the word *forgotten* is not used, other takes its place. Sometimes it is *marginalized*, an adjective which is unfortunately not that rare when used to describe women writers throughout history.

Some critics have searched reasons to understand that sad label. Researcher Stephanie Bowers, who wrote her doctoral dissertation (*Magic, madness and "The Judicious Administration of the Bizarre": the forgotten fiction of Shirley Jackson*) claimed that what happened to Ms. Jackson is that she was "a prolific writer of some acclaim in her day, (…) [who] has nonetheless failed to achieve the kind of lasting fame she seemed promised throughout her professional career, cut short by her early death in 1965" (BOWERS, 2001, p. 0). Other critics went for the *niche* excuse, stating that "[Jackson] has been categorized as horror or as humor, as 'popular' or as 'women's' writing *and* (…) relegated to the boundaries of the academic canon" (LOOTENS, 1994, p. 160, my italics).

More potential reasons have been concocted. To Hwang "[Jackson] was not highly acclaimed by critics, especially male critics, for various reasons" (2009, p. 104). Hwang means the active participation of her editors in the establishment and maintenance of this detrimental label[6]. When one juxtaposes her texts with the products of academic research and literary criticism, it becomes possible to see the efforts her editors have expended on trying to *sell* Ms. Jackson and her writings, and this "implicitly suggests how such endeavors may have helped to ensure both Jackson's immediate success and her later critical neglect" (LOOTENS, 1994, p. 160-161). There sure was a tension between the artist's wishes and the wishes of those who sell the art product. Hall notes Jackson's dilemma in writing fiction marketable to such magazines as Mademoiselle and Ladies Home Journal while at the same time resisting

[5] See Section 2.1.2.1., pages 49-50.
[6] See Section 2.2.1., page 69.

the typically romantic storyline these publications favored. She further underscores Jackson's frequent attention to issues of racism, anti-semitism, and class bias. (CARPENTER, 1994, p.68)

More philosophical, cultural and political reasons have been found, such as : [Jackson] did not have to resort to gore or violence; she simply looked at humanity and, in a calm tone, stated what it is that scares people -- their own lives" (NOACK, 1994, p. 68). The *fear of identification*[7] seems to be a recurrent motive, after all, Jackson excelled at demonstrating "social criticism at its most terrifying, and the short story's generic power at its most concentrated" (LOOTENS, 1994, p. 160). Teachers and critics would find much to explore, both in Jackson's depictions of American anxieties over class, gender, and race and in her work's ambitious, densely allusive responses to a wide range of literary, folk, and popular traditions (LOOTENS, 1994). Perhaps because of that her books have been censured more than once in different historical times and in different places (inside and outside the USA). In 1982, Jackson's books and library materials related to the author were called for removal from the classroom by parents of a certain school in the city of Mexico, Missouri. Even though the Mexico Board of Education unanimously refused their request, parents formed parent-watchdog groups and the episode was seen to reflect a national trend (EDWARDS, 1983). The materials chosen for banning were a film based on "The Lottery" and the book *The Lottery and Other Stories* (called at the time The Lottery*: Adventures of a Demon Lover*). In Canada, "for over five decades now ["The Lottery"] has been the target of censorship efforts when it has appeared on high school reading lists" (STANOVICH, 2003, p. 6). This is what one means when the term *active* involvement in the preservation of Jackson's most infamous label is exercised. Despite these efforts, readers who are not specialized critics seem to have a different story to tell, and that is the subject of the following subsection.

1.3. Not That Forgotten: The Testament of the Present

To base an argument on the claim that Ms. Jackson has not been widely read or recognized due to her belonging to a specific reading *niche* or any other excuse is really to ignore the far-ranging scope of her literary creation. All the data presented herewith strongly suggest that an entrance to the coveted literary canon implies much more than satisfying

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[7] See Section 2.2.1., page 71.

reading audiences and specialized critics, Admittedly, the path to Canonical recognition sometimes seems so crooked that one is led to question if admittance is really positive or even desirable.

The non-professional reading public seems to agree that "Jackson's work has not disappeared" (LOOTENS, 1994, p. 160), in fact, is possible to notice a crescent interest in the literature of Shirley Jackson in the Academy in the last couple of decades alone. Her influence can be felt now in the beginning of the twenty-first century much stronger than in the second half of the twentieth, in the years that followed her death, perhaps that is why "Shirley Jackson is only recently gaining recognition as an important figure in American women's literature" (DURGIN, 2009, p. 7). In life, she managed to garner substantial acclaim, a success which was both bittersweet and fitful.

There is nowadays an intense and lively activity surrounding Jackson's works. An ordinary web-based query using "Shirley Jackson" on the major search tools reveal notable results. Among the most prominent findings (mostly freely derived from Ms. Jackson's writings) are theatrical productions (both amateur and professional); filmic adaptations for cinema and television (in short and long features, as well as other experimental forms); appearances (that go beyond mere citation) in fiction and non-fiction books (including children's literature and literature for all ages); didactic books (SILBERSTEIN et al., 2008; KAY & GELSHENEN, 2007 – see Appendix D for supplementary references) for school level, for university level, and for specific purposes (such as creative writing courses or with extra-academic educational aims); the realization of dramatic readings (with or without adaptations) for university or general public; dance number adaptations (such as *ballet*, *jazz dance*, among others); the creation of websites, blogs, posts, communities in social networks and other internet-based virtual environments; and appearances in news, journalistic articles, and criticism, in specialized venues or otherwise (circulating only in American domestic territory and/or overseas); and translations (both formal and informal) to various languages (including Brazilian and European-Portuguese).

Unexpected data has been found too, such as the utilization of some of her stories in accountancy offices and labor unions (both using the short story *"My Life with H. R. Macy"* as example for debates concerning the massification of human resources and the banalization of the human being by great corporations). Another interesting case is the use of the short story "The Lottery" as an exercise of 'bibliotherapy' in a correctional incarceration facility in the U. S. (the activity refers to the comparison of the printed *versus* the filmic version of cited story as an educational *medium*):

> an informal experiment with two groups each of eight incarcerated men who were already involved in a bibliotherapy program. One week, the first group read the short story version of Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery"; the second group viewed a film version which is remarkably faithful to the original both in concept and in dialogue. The group which watched the film reacted immediately and emotionally (…) The reading group, however, reacted slowly (…) A month later, the readers were still talking about the story, while the film group had lost interest (RUBIN, 1978, p. 77).

In the Academy, it was not possible to ascertain when Shirley Jackson's works have been used for the first time for study in undergraduate and/or graduate level disciplines. The earliest record found was Professor Jessie O. Sizemore's use of selected short stories and/or novels by Jackson in the discipline *Interpreting Ideas in American Literature* at Yale University. The following is an excerpt of professor Sizemore's curriculum description:

> Short stories and novels will be compiled from such authors as Hawthorne, Melville, Faulkner, James, Wright, Ellison, Jesse Stuart, James Baldwin, Toomer, Shirley Jackson, and others if time will permit. These stories will be taught not only as examples of art, but in order to increase student's awareness of the variety of human experience. All aspects of the short story and the novel will be taught (SIZEMORE, 1978, p. 1).

That same year at the same institution Professor Bernice Thompson used the short story "Charles" (from *The Lottery and Other Stories*) in the discipline Woman Emerging in the Twentieth Century in which she asked the following questions to her Yale student's:

> 1. Why did Laurie behave as he did at school? Why did he say that it was Charles who was guilty of all this unacceptable behavior? Have you ever seen this sort of thing happen to people, not only little people like Laurie or Charles but people of high-school age? What is the cure for this sort of behavior?
> 2. Did you suspect the outcome of the story? Look for the clue given you very early in the story.
> 3. Notice that Laurie describes Charles as being bigger than he, as wearing no rubbers or jacket. What does this tell you about Laurie?
> 4. Did you like the way the story ended or would you rather have had the whole thing spelled out to you?
> 5. What do you think was going on in the kindergarten teacher's mind as she was talking to Laurie's mother? What do you think was going on in the mind of Laurie's mother as she spoke with the teacher? (THOMPSON, 1978, p. 1)

Yale University would continue to use Jackson's fiction periodically ever since. Many other professors from other institutions and from other countries would have the same idea. This section presents a survey of the universities, the academic disciplines, the professors and the years that Ms. Jackson's works have been used for study in undergraduate and graduate courses. In order to gather this data an ordinary survey was conducted with the objective of constructing (also for the first time) a descriptive plan of the specific subjects and/or topics under which Shirley Jackson is used in higher learning curricula. The research method applied in this survey consisted of an online query using ordinary web-search mechanisms to collect

data remotely in selected university curriculum databases, syllabus databases, course descriptions, course plans, unit plan and in faculty (personal and professional) webpages.

Table 2 below shows the universities (both in the United States and overseas), the academic disciplines (sometimes referred to in the sources as Subject or Topic from the curriculum), the professors (their last names in bold – for the complete names and respective references see Appendix F) and the years that Ms. Jackson's works have been used for study in undergraduate and graduate courses.

Table 2. Curriculum subjects utilizing Shirley Jackson's fiction

	University	Academic Discipline/Subject/Topic	Prof./Year
01	Stanford University	Ghost stories: why the dead return and what they want from us	BERMAN, 2010
02	University of California at Berkeley	Madwomen in the Attic: Literature and Female Insanity	FALCONE, 2006
		Modern Horror	OYAMA, 2008
03	Cornell University	The misfit and the mainstream: cultural conformity and rebellion	ANDERSON, 2004
		The Mystery in the Story	DAVIS, 2007, 2010 GARCIA, 2010
04	University of Michigan	Writing and literature	RUBINSTEIN & GLASS, 1999
		Deconstructing mysteries: the element of suspense	HOLDEN, 2006
		Daemons, princes and saints: views of love across the disciplines	BURKAM, 2010
05	University of Minnesota	Connections - from family to short story	HAMLIN, 2003
		Bizarre Twists of Fate in the Short Story	SCHINGEN, 2003
		Three critical theories: psychoanalysis, Marxism and feminism	PIERCE, 2008
		Gothic Tales of Terror/Women Writers	SIGLER, 2010
06	University of Washington	Intermediate expository writing	CHANG, 2010
07	University of Texas	The idiom of haunting	GUNN, 2009
08	University of Pennsylvania	Gender, terror, and the 19th century	AUERBACH, 2005
		Topics in gender, sexuality, and literature: home and hearts	AUERBACH, 2008
		The modernist short story	ESTY, 2010
09	Columbia University New York	Logic and rhetoric	ORLANDO, 2002
		Cannibal house: modern family dwelling after the zombie wars	ALONSO, 2009
10	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Women writers	BAUER, 2010
11	The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Intermediate Fiction Writing	KRAWIEC, 2008
12	University of Florida	The American nightmare: race, place, gender and family in American horror after World War II	NICKS, 2005
		American literature II: (re)forming the American identity	HODGES, 2008
13	Rutgers University	American Literature, Children's and Young Adult Literature	BLACKFORD, 2010
14	New York University	Intro to Creative Writing	MICHELSON, 2005
		Reading & writing the short story	ZOREF, 2009

		American Fiction since 1945	HARPER, 2010
15	North Carolina State University	The Female Gothic: Then and Now	MAY, 2004
		Inquiry, Discovery, and Literature; Haunted America: The Haunted House and its Landscape in American Fiction	HOOKER, 2010
16	Yale University	Interpreting Ideas in American Literature	SIZEMORE, 1978
		Woman Emerging in the Twentieth Century	THOMPSON, 1978
		Dramatize English	BENNETTO, 1980
17	University of Toronto	Fantasy & Horror	JUSTICE, 2010
18	Dalhousie University	The Short Story	OWEN, 2006
		Introduction to Prose and Fiction	WHETTER, 2010
19	Duke University	Reading Genres	HARRIS, 2009
20	Pittsburgh State University	American Gothic	NICHOLS, 2009
21	Ohio State University	Critical Writing	TANNENBAUM, 2000
		Fiction: Novel and Short Story	LANGFORD, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005
		Intermediate Essay Writing	CARDER, 2009
22	University of Georgia	The Grotesque of the Gothic: From Poe to the Present	PHILLIPS, 2007
23	University of California Davis	Creative Writing	McGEE, 2010
24	University of California Irvine	The Hardy Personality in Theory, Research, and Practice	KATZ, 1999
		Great Books/Great Conversations (extension)	SOLMOR & NOWICK, 2008
25	Iowa State University	Topics in the Study of Literature: Allegory and Its Antecedents	YAGER, 2008
26	Johns Hopkins University	Ghost Stories	HANN, 2010
27	Arizona State University	English	DUERDEN, 2005
		Writing about Literature	HACKER, 2005
		Critical Reading and Writing about Literature	COOK, 2009
28	Université de Montréal	English Composition	LAPIERRE, 2010
29	University of Tennessee at Knoxville	Inquiry into Evil	PENCE, 2010
30	University of Oregon	The Gothic in Literature	COGAN, 1992
		Introduction to Fiction: Violence, Dystopia, Apocalypse	BILLINGS, 2010
31	University of California Santa Cruz	Writing	SHOTWELL, 2009
32	Università di Bologna	English Language	SYLVIA, 2006
33	University of Kentucky	English Pedagogy in the Secondary School	SPALDING & BERRYMAN, 2000
		The Woman Writer	BAUER, 2002
		Introduction to Women's Literature: American Women Writers	DAVIS, 2004
34	University of New Mexico	Expository Writing: American Gothic	WALKIEWICZ, 2006
35	Washington State University Pullman	American Literature	CAMPBELL, 2006
36	University of Delaware	Ghosts	WHITE, 2008, 2009, 2010
37	FreieUniversität Berlin	American Gothic	BRANDT, 2007
		Power and Paranoia	BRANDT, 2009
38	State University of New York at Buffalo	Short Fiction	SCHMID, 1999
39	University of Rochester	Reading the Tradition: University of Rochester Writers	LAVIGNE, 2001

40	Ludwig MaximiliansUniversitätMünchen	Gothic Fiction	DECKER, 2009
41	Humboldt Universitätzu Berlin	The Ghost Motif in Film and Literature	BLAZAN, 2006
42	University of Warwick	North American Women Writers: Variant on the Female Gothic	DENNIS, 2010
43	University of Illinois at Chicago	Women and Literature: Women and Horror	MILKS, 2010
		Understanding Literature	RUTTER, 2010
44	University of Kansas	American Literature	SOMMERS, 2007
45	Georgetown University	Trials, Crime, and Punishment in Literature and Film	SCHOTLAND, 2007
46	Emory University	Writing about Literature: Alternate Endings	BRADY, 2007
47	Utah State University	Reading strategy: drawing inferences	ANDERSON, 2006;
		Intro to the American Short Story	CHRISTENSEN, 2010
48	Syracuse University	Writing	OBERG, 1999
49	Texas Tech University	Introduction to Fiction: The Fantasy of Fiction	RONN, 2003
50	Rochester Institute of Technology	Honors Writing: The Mystery in the Story	JOHANNES, 2010

These findings point out that Ms. Jackson’s texts are currently being, and/or have recently been, used in American universities traditionally by professors of English and of literary studies (among these, typically in gothic, horror, fiction or fantasy literature; as well as women’s literature; lesbian and queer studies; and, of course, twentieth-century American and world literature). Besides these, she is also required (or suggested) reading in various and diverse university courses, both in America and internationally. In the United States, Jackson is also required (or suggested) reading in courses other than English or literature, such as in Medical School (MARTA, 2006); Political Sciences courses (KIRKPATRICK, 2007); Musical Theatre and Drama (WHEELER, 2000); Anthropology (CREW, 1996); Psychoanalysis, Sociology, Bible and Folklore (MODIANO & MERRELL, 2010); Nursing Sciences (BROWN, 2010; ESTY, 2010); Logic and Rhetoric (ORLANDO, 2002); Architecture, Planning and Preservation (ALONSO, 2009); Accountancy (CURTIS et al, 2005); Law (LUNA, 2009; REYNOLDS, 2010b); Community Studies, Public Health (STOLLER, 1998); History (FREDERICKSON, 2006); and Youth and Society (“CENTER”, 2009)[8].

At high school level Shirley Jackson is the object of study in many American schools (PENDERGAST & PENDERGAST, 2000; HAGANS & PHILLIPS, 2003; SMITH & RABINOWITZ, 2005; ZIMBARDO, 2005; ANDERSON, 2006; “BISHOP FENWICK HIGH SCHOOL”, 2010: “LINCOLN SUDBERY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL”, 2010; PELANEK, 2010). Not only in America; Atlantic Bilingual School in Puerto Cortés,

[8]For full references from this paragraph see Appendix D.

Honduras, teaches Shirley Jackson for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders (WIGFALL, 2007). In 1999, Ms. Jackson was featured in a book that provides biographical profiles of authors of interest to readers' ages nine and above, contending that Jackson creates appeal to young readers (HARRIS & ABBEY, 1999)[9].

Adaptations of her works have existed since their original publications; special mention should go to *"*The Lottery*"*, *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, which will be discussed in the next paragraphs correspondingly.

The 1969 Larry Yust adaptation of "The Lottery"in video format, shot on locationin Fellows, California, was cited by *The Academic Film Archive* as one of the two bestselling educational films ever. When it was made, it had an accompanying ten-minute commentary film, *Discussion of "*The Lottery*"* by University of Southern California professor Dr. James Durbin. It starred Olive Dunbar as Tessie Hutchinson.

In 1996, American television network NBC mounted a new adaptation of *"*The Lottery*"* for the small screen directed by Daniel Sackheim. It was said that the project lost something in the translation from paper to TV format. It aired on a Sunday, September 29th, at 9 o'clock pm, starring Joe Cortese (of MTV and of the remake of *Route 66*) and Keri Russell (from *Malibu Shores*) in the central roles. Critics have called it "unwatchable" and "a big mistake" and advised viewers to read the short story because it would take less time and linger much longer in the reader's mind (BIANCULLI, 1996). The episode reappeared as a text being studied by 'problem students' on the TV series *Dangerous Minds* (DISCH, 1997).

On March 2000, there was a reading of her short stories, including *"*The Lottery*"*, on Broadway in a session of *Selected Shorts* called *All in the Timing* in New York City (KING, 2000). That same March, in Chicago, Harrison McEldowney headed the darkly comic ballet *"*The Lottery*"*, drawn from the macabre short story. It was the main feature of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's three-week session at the 2,000-seat arena Chicago's Shubert Theater (BARZEL, 2000).

On September 2008, Colorado University students Alex Hughes and Patrick Cooney directed the theatrical production of *"*The Lottery*"*, adapted from and homonymous to Ms. Jackson's story. The play was presented at the University Theatre Loft, in Boulder, CO.

On October 2008, the theatre department at West Virginia University at Parkersburg included in the 2008-2009 Theater Fest adaptations from *"*The Lottery*", The Haunting of Hill House* and *The Summer People*.

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[9]For full references from this paragraph see Appendix D.

In 2009, a jazz dance choreography inspired by "The Lottery" was produced by Joanna Brooks at Stone Mountain Academy of Performing Arts in Georgia (BROOKS, 2009).

"The Lottery" is still (up to 2010) being adapted to theatrical plays and in performances at high schools, universities and theaters in the United States (ROSENSTEIN, 2005; DOYRON, 2008; OSTER, 2009).

On October 2008, the theatre department at West Virginia University at Parkersburg organized a production of Hugh Wheeler's adaptation of *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, as part of their continual celebration of Ms. Jackson's works (CLOVIS, 2008).

In 2009, Ms. Jackson's 1962 novel was being developed into a film by Michael Douglas' production company, Further Films. The project would be carried out along with Literal Media, the firm that represented, at the time, Ms. Jackson's work, and Laurence Hyman, Ms. Jackson's son and literary executor, would have a role in production. Mark Kruger was to be responsible for the screenplay and, as of August 2009, he had a first draft in hands (ZEITCHIK, 2009). Kruger was the screenwriter for the supernatural series *The 4400*, that aired from 2004 to 2007 on the USA Network and for the sequel *Candyman II: Farewell to the Flesh*. As of August 2010, the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) lists *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* as "in development" and to be released in 2011.

In 2010 a project was commissioned, a new musical by Adam Bock and Todd Almond based on the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* was scheduled to begin its rehearsals and to have its premiere on The Yale Center for New Theater in September (COHEN, 2010).

Still in 2010 a musical play based on the novel premiered in September at Yale University Theatre. Directed by Anne Kauffman, written by Adam Bock with music and lyrics by Todd Almond, the play is a darkly humorous musical highly praised by *Time Magazine* (BOCK, 2010).

In 2009, a stage adaptation of *The Haunting of Hill House* was produced by The Old Schoolhouse Players from Pittsburgh and was performed at Bud Allison Memorial Auditorium (OSTER, 2009).

Ms. Jackson's is still on the news. On September 19 of 2008, Syracuse University selected Ms. Jackson to be the (posthumous) recipient of *The George Arents Pioneer Medal*, the highest alumni honor the University bestows. The Alumni Association Board of Directors annually selects (former) students based on excellence in their field of endeavor (HAILEY, 2008). The award exists since 1939, this means it took 69 years for this recognition to come.

She is still, however indirectly, in the news. In the case of Ms. Ashtiani, the Iranian woman convicted of adultery that, as of August 2010, was to be stoned, *New York Times*

reporter Robert Worth mentions that "in the West, death by stoning is so remote from experience that it is best known through Monty Python skits and lurid fiction like Shirley Jackson's short story *"*The Lottery" (WORTH, 2010, p.1).

On September 24, 2010, Jackson scholars Rich Pascal[10] and Joan Hall gave an interview for ABC (Australian Broadcasting Company) Radio National's *The Book Show* commenting about Library of America's recent publication of a commemorative edition of Jackson's best works (edited by the eminent contemporary writer Joyce Carol Oates). In that occasion, a few literary critics questioned if "Shirley Jackson [should] sit beside such figures as Mark Twain, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry James?" (MARES, 2010, p. 1). Pascal and Hall, naturally, championed Jackson.

Currently, there is a prestigious literary award named after her. The *Shirley Jackson Awards* (henceforth *SJA*) are presented annually to writers for outstanding achievement in the literature of psychological suspense, horror, and dark fantasy. They are voted upon by a jury of professional writers, editors, critics, and academics, with input from a Board of Advisors. The awards are offered to the best works, appearing for the first time in English, published in the preceding calendar year in the following categories: Novel, Novella, Novelette, Short Story, Single-Author Collection, and Edited Anthology. The *SJAs* were originally conceived in recognition of the legacy of Shirley Jackson's writing, and established with permission of the author's estate. According to the official website[2], the last awards were presented on July 12th 2009, at Readercon 20, Conference on Imaginative Literature, in Burlington, Massachusetts. The award comes with a trophy that includes an engraved stone; homage to the stones from *"*The Lottery*"*.

In present day New York City there is a developmental preschool which follows an inclusionary model called Merricat's Castle School. The name of the institution is a reference to one of the protagonists of the novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, Merricat Blackwood.

Today it is possible to find translations of her texts in French (REINSCH, 2004; NGUYEN, 2009), European Portuguese (LAGARTINHO, 2010), Brazilian Portuguese (JACKSON, 1983) Spanish (PORTILLO-CAMPOS, 2007), Dutch, Italian, German, and Japanese (REINSCH, 2004), among others. Interestingly, Portuguese-speaking reading communities had to wait for twenty-four years to have access to her fifth novel, *The Haunting*

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[10] Rich Pascal is a Visiting Fellow at Australian National University and Joan Wylie Hall is a Lecturer in English at University of Mississippi.

of Hill House (translated in 1983 by Edna Jansen de Mello) and forty-eight years to have access to Ms. Jackson's sixth novel, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*[11].

Judging by these data, the end of the twentieth century served almost as a prelude to a possible Shirley Jackson revival to be triggered in the twenty-first; Now, more than ever, Jackson's works are being criticized, adapted, and read by a growing number of people.

[11]For full references from this paragraph see Appendix D.

2. THE CRITICAL HERITAGE

Shirley Jackson's critical reception is one of the aspects of her literary history which is in entreating demand for review. Depreciated by scarce critical attention from one side and besieged by a flood of abundant though not necessarily commendable criticism from the other, Ms. Jackson's literary reception was, and still is, fitful and impulsive. Roughly a contemporary of Hemingway, Faulkner and Steinbeck, and holder of a rather significant creative production, her career measured itself against American literature's greatest.

Reasons for this instability in the appraisal of her works are not hard to discern. Darryl Hattenhauer, in his book *Shirley Jackson's American Gothic*, poses that "the first error of Jackson criticism is the same as that applied to other protopostmodernists such as Kurt Vonnegut and John Barth: the notion that they write private, apolitical fiction (…) [for] even the unconscious, of course, is political" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, 191). Though arguably private and domestic, her literature spoke of largely universal themes, such as family, prejudice and evil, and was, as it inevitably must be, political – in an energetic sense about a diverse myriad of themes, including social, familial and gender roles, among others.

Attempts at fixing labels onto Ms. Jackson in order to best appreciate her creative production have permeated her career – and also as means of explaining her reception. Though critics heavily disagree as where to place the author under the existing literary niches, they are practically unanimous over the predicate that too little critical attention has been paid to her *oeuvre*, therefore, "it is important to note that a surprising lack of critical work has been done on Jackson (…) for one would assume she represents an obvious case for scholarship" (MURPHY, 2005, p. 4).

This first section of Part two is an annotated review of the primary, secondary, and graduate-level critical texts that aim at appraising Ms. Jackson's works, ranging from the short fiction to the major novels. The terms *primary* and *secondary* have been chosen to

reflect the length and the scope of the research materials and are not, any way, shape or form, meant to reflect the quality of the criticism proposed by their authors. One-author novel-length texts are considered in the *primary works* category; Multiple-author novel-length texts are considered in the *secondary works* category; academic dissertations and theses compose the *graduate works* category.

2.1. Scant Critical Assessment

2.1.1. Primary Works

Since her death in 1965, all but four novel-length books have been exclusively dedicated to the study and investigation of the author and her works. They are: Lenemaja Friedman's *Shirley Jackson*, published in 1975; Judy Oppenheimer's biography of the author, *Private Demons*, published in 1988; Joan Wylie Hall's *Shirley Jackson: A Study of the Short Fiction* that, as the name suggests, is dedicated mainly to short story criticism and was published in 1993; and *Shirley Jackson: American Gothic*, that came out in 2003, written by Daryl Hattenhauer. Naturally, these are not the only works that investigate her life and literary production, however, they are the only ones which are exclusively dedicated to this task. These four studies will be presented in the following subsections. It has been almost half a century since Ms. Jackson passed away and sadly the number of academic treatments and scientific criticism remains relatively small. The following four subsections present the critical texts that belong to the *Primary works* category.

2.1.1.1. Lenemaja Friedman's 1975 "Shirley Jackson"

Lenemaja Friedman[12] wrote the first major study on Jackson since the death of the author in 1965. It took ten years for the book, simply entitled *Shirley Jackson*, to appear. Published in 1975, through Twayne's United States Authors Series, the book covers the life and times of its honored author as well as her short stories and novels (published to that date).

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[12] Lenemaja Friedman received her B.A. from the University of Washington, her M.A. from the State University of New York and her Ph.D. from Florida State University. In 1969 she was appointed Professor of English at Columbus State University and she is currently part of the emeritus faculty and chair of the Department of Language and Literature of that same university.

Set against a background of literary criticism that searches for the total effect of Jackson's works, especially in terms of their narrative techniques, Friedman writes that "in order to present a fair estimate of her [Jackson's] work, we must examine not only her literary strengths but also her weaknesses and limitations" (1975, p. 9-10). She adds that her aim was to try to present the author under two distinct guises, that of "an important writer" and also "despite her seriousness of theme – an entertainer, a born storyteller" (1975, p. 10).

The notion of theme is a chief concern in Friedman's book. She auspicates her treatment of themes by conjecturing that even the serious pieces were primarily meant to entertain. By that she does not purport that Jackson's insights and observations about man and society in her literature are not important, rather she acknowledges that they are so, but also likewise disturbing, and perhaps even shocking. Very sensible, Friedman avows openly and bluntly that Ms. Jackson's themes were not, in themselves, new, exclusive or unweathered; themes such as "evil cloaked in seeming good; prejudice and hypocrisy; loneliness and frustration; psychological studies of minds that have slipped the bonds of reality; studies of persons subjected to suspense and terror; and the humorous helplessness of parents in the inevitable crises of family living" (1975, p. 44) had already been approached by several writers before her. The distinctive contribution was the markedly peculiar treatment they received.

Friedman engages in a didactic attempt to enlighten the readers as to the reasons that render these stories so characteristically unlike in nature from others and more so distinguished than others. Her explanation involves a continuum of themes that go from the very broad, from outside the human body, to the strictly narrow, into the insides of the human mind. In her words, from "the larger universe of crowds and cities", funneling "away from the problems of ecology and population growth" (1975, p. 44) and into the confines – created equally by the walls of the house and family life – and the depths of the human mind. This final stage, the ultimate point of destination – and hence the brilliancy of Jackson's viewpoint – not a normal mind, but one afflicted by mental illness, a subject that Ms. Jackson was perhaps too painfully acquainted with, considering she herself had suffered for years from bouts of depression and anxiety. Friedman legitimizes her statements by stating that "the isolation, the loneliness, and the frustration that plague Miss Jackson's characters have many causes; but one of the major sources (…) is mental illness" (1975, p.45). The symptoms she felt do not have so much of mental illness as source, in other words, they are not only caused by it, but *it* is also causing *them*, in a bidirectional flux. Ms. Jackson was always fascinated by the mysteries of the human mind, not only by the mighty powers they exert, but also by the

confusions precipitated by the lack of its proper functioning; hence, disturbed thoughts and repressed anxieties are recurring themes in her fictional creations.

> She sees the psychotic and emotionally disturbed as victims of some demonic spirit whose capricious nature feeds on loneliness and unhappiness. And, though man manufactures many of his own problems, evils exist over which he has little control; among these are his own fears. His anxieties trap him. As a result, her people – those whose vision of reality is no longer clear-cut – are very much alone (FRIEDMAN, 1975, p.45).

Friedman's discussion was obviously limited by the stories that were available in her day, namely the short stories that featured in the collections: *The Lottery and Other Stories*, published in 1949 – the only short story collection published in Ms. Jackson's lifetime – *The Magic of Shirley Jackson* and *Come Along with Me*, published respectively in 1966 and 1968 and the six complete novels. One must bear in mind that there were no widely available critical studies or biographies on the author, and that alone is sufficient to render Friedman's book on criticism and interpretation as the first novel-length investigation to fully pay homage to Ms. Jackson. In the forthcoming years, however, that was about to change.

2.1.1.2. Judy Oppenheimer's 1988 "Private Demons: The Life of Shirley Jackson"

Though not literary criticism *per se*, Judy Oppenheimer[13]'s book, *Private Demons*, is Ms. Jackson's only biography to date. Released in 1988, it is the result of an extensive research that included mainly interviews with her family, friends and colleagues and Ms. Jackson's personal and professional papers and correspondence. It painted a compassionate portrait of Shirley, for Oppenheimer tried vigorously to explain the madness and the sadness that helped shape Jackson's literary output. She also tried to write about Ms. Jackson and her so-called 'monstrous acts and little murders', describing the clash and the reconciliation between domestic life, lavished in agoraphobic tendencies, and the writing-as-a-professional life. Then and there, the reader clearly understands that Jackson did not write because of her torments, but rather that she wrote despite them. They have, nevertheless, arguably granted her work with a special vision celebrated with a firsthand knowledge of the darker side of the human mind. Oppenheimer explains quite didactically that Ms. Jackson was an outsider in her own town, was self-conscious about her obesity and plain appearance and, even as a child, she

[13] Judy Oppenheimer is a reporter at *The Washington Post*, a movie critic at the *Philadelphia Daily News*, a contributing editor at *Washingtonian Magazine*, and an associate editor of the *Montgomery Sentinel*. Her texts have been published in noteworthy publications such as *Ms.*, *The Village Voice*, and the *Manchester Guardian*.

always did prefer spending time alone in her bedroom than socializing with other children (1988). During most of her lifetime, the hostility of her townsfolk was directly and indirectly responsible for shaping her psyche and consequently her art. The reader is left with the impression that Jackson was feared and resented and occasionally persecuted. As time passed, the hostilities increased in power and magnitude, and so did her art – so much so that eventually the latter fed the former. But Oppenheimer also reminds the reader that Ms. Jackson was also a mother and a wife, who served as a chauffeur for her four children and as a hostess to her husband's colleagues from Bennington College – presiding over a chaotic household for the likes of Ralph Ellison, Bernard Malamud and Howard Nemerov. The book explains that Jackson wrote in a time when moms did not do anything as odd as write. According to her children, there was always the sound of typing in the house, pounding away into the night (OPPENHEIMER, 1988).

> Shirley's daily life, documented by her biographer Judy Oppenheimer in the book *Private Demons,* was structured by the conventions of domesticity. Whatever her fictional fantasies, Shirley herself ran her house and raised her kids and made dinner every night for her family, and often for a coterie of friends and Stanley's Bennington students. Whatever its ups and downs, her life was all about home (MERRELL, 2010, p.1)

The biographer's account of what may have caused Ms. Jackson's strange reception[14] can be summarized by her take on the reception of the short story *"*The Lottery*"*, in that:

> its effect was instant and cataclysmic. Nothing in the *magazine* before or since would provoke such an unprecedented outpouring of fury, horror, rage, disgust (…) readers acted as if a bomb had blown up in their faces and in a sense it had (OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 128-129, my italics).

Oppenheimer is referring to the *New Yorker* magazine, in which *"*The Lottery*"* was published. Because of this story the author and the magazine editors received letters:

> filled with abuse, with anger. They insisted, these letter writers, that they did not understand the story; but their emotional reaction, raw and defensive, showed on the deepest level they understood only too well (OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 129).

That public's understanding and consequent reaction denotes the unwanted identification that lies as a potent reason for their bitter reaction against the story and its writer. Ms. Jackson responded by saying:

> I suppose I hoped, by setting a particularly brutal rite in the present and in my own village, to shock the readers with a graphic dramatization of the pointless violence and general inhumanity of their own lives" (In: OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 131).

[14] For more on Jackson's strange reception see David Morton Michelsen's master's thesis (2006).

Her good intentions did not fare as well as she had hoped. Instead it provided her with an everlasting animosity and infamous 1abels: “The number of people who expected Mrs. Hutchinson to win a Bendix washer at the end would amaze you” (In: OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 131). Tessie Hutchinson, one of the main characters of the story, does win the lottery but not exactly a washing machine, instead, she gets to be stoned to death by all her town peers, including her four-year-old son Davy.

The disproportionate reaction would not stop there; in fact, it may not have stopped at all. The reaction has been so lasting and enduring that it lingers to this day. According to Stanovich (2003) the story repeatedly shows up on the American Library Association’s list of banned materials. The fact is that the story makes readers think of their current cultural practices that could be like the lottery in the story, i.e., perversely dysfunctional but nonetheless carried out just the same due to tradition and social pressure.

As to its own reception, *Private Demons* was, for different reasons, often put down by critics. Some have claimed that, for as much as Oppenheimer seemed to mourn the neglect Ms. Jackson suffered as a writer, she was more convinced about the staying power of Ms. Jackson’s fiction than she is convincing about her own. They say there is a “partisan ingenuousness” to *Private Demons* that “undermines its power” (CALDWELL, 1988b). The book has been called “an anecdotal biography” (MURPHY, 2005, p. 4).

Even though Oppenheimer tries to relate Ms. Jackson’s life with her fiction, it is not really a literary study. It has been said to seek the sensational instead of the factual, sometimes using the supernatural themes on her fiction to try to describe real events concerning the life of its author. She even speculates on the possibility of childhood incest in order to explain Ms. Jackson’s gothic-prone strain. Still it is the most complete account to date on the author’s life.

Not all criticism was abrasive or unkind, though. To *The New York Times Book Review*, Oppenheimer’s “narrative is full of telling detail and illuminating anecdotes” and she “gives us back both a woman and an artist we should honor” (In: OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 308). *The Washington Post Book World* acknowledges that the biographer “chronicles Jackson’s life with thoroughness and is clearly a crackerjack researcher and interviewer” (In: OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 308). Despite the commercial appeal of the latter criticism, genuine praise is due to this enterprise that still stands as the most complete novel-length account of its honored subject’s complex, gifted and tragic life.

2.1.1.3. Joan Wylie Hall's 1993 Shirley Jackson: A Study of the Short Fiction

Joan Wylie Hall[15]'s book entitled *Shirley Jackson: A Study of the Short Fiction* is the third major study on Jackson and the first to follow Judy Oppenheimer's *Private Demons*, the biography published five years earlier, in 1988. It has, however, scant reference to biographical data, since its main point is not to plunge into comparison regarding the relationship between Jackson's disturbed characters and the author's own troubled life. Hall offers her work as a correction against the potential misreading of Jackson's art that can stain a writer's career through careless or inattentive analogies with the target-author's life. Hall wants Jackson's work to stand on its own merits: "Hall's insistence on treating Jackson as the consummate literary artist she was serves as a useful corrective to tendencies by some critics (…) to be distracted by extra-literary questions" (CARPENTER, 1994, p. 67). Hall suffers as well with the delicate question that can afflict any critic whose audience may or may not be fully familiar with the specific works she is discussing and incurs in the challenge of having to summarize stories whose very strength lie in their ambiguity (LOOTENS, 1994).

The book is roughly divided into three parts. In the first part, Hall endeavors to critically examine Ms. Jackson's short fiction. In the second part, she includes reprints of excerpted letters and writings about Jackson's fiction, an essay by Stanley Edgar Hyman, Shirley's husband, as well as critical essays about Jackson's work. In the third part, she brings a selection of commentaries on Jackson's fiction as brought forth by critics assigned for these specific purposes. She complains about the lack of secondary bibliography on the subject matter and claims that this "reflects a general lack of attention to Shirley Jackson's work" (HALL, 1993, p. 149).

The bulk of the analyses presented by Hall seem to rest on the short story *"*The Lottery*"* and in the collection where it was featured: "This discussion represents the heart of the book, because it introduces the themes, characters, and plot devices to which Jackson will return again and again in the stories discussed in chapters on *Come Along with Me* and the uncollected stories" (CARPENTER, 1994, p. 67).

Hall's chapter dedicated to Jackson's second short story collection, *Come Along with Me* (1995), reflects in the choice of its subtitling, i.e., *Three Decades of Stories*, the failed

[15] Joan Wylie Hall earned her BA at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, IN, her MA and her Ph.D. in English and American Literature at the University of Notre Dame. Currently, Dr. Hall is a professor at the University of Mississippi. Her research and teaching interests are mainly in Southern literature, 19th and 20th century American literature, and literature by and about women.

attempt at finding common thematic threads in the stories hat compose it (that, of course, does not detract from Hall's analytic ability in absolute, but it does say something about the dissimilar assortment of themes which are present in those sixteen short stories). Edgar Stanley Hyman, Jackson's husband, organized this compilation after his wife's death in 1965. He explained his choice by saying that those stories were chosen from over seventy-five uncollected stories as "the best, or the best showing the range and variety of her work over three decades" (In: HALL, 1993, p. 56).

Hall's final chapter is dedicated to Jackson's uncollected stories and is ingenuously subtitled *Seeking the Self*. In it, she finds a coherent motif throughout the stories. She defends that one piece of writing, entitled *Fame* "embodies in essay form many of the themes of Jackson's short stories" (1993, p.75). Hall is referring to the transcription of a telephone conversation that supposedly was real and purportedly took place right after the publication of Jackson's first novel, *The Road Through the Wall*, from 1948. In it, a certain Mrs. Lang calls Shirley in search of news for a simple neighborhood newspaper, *The North Village Notes*. During the conversation, old Mrs. Lang writes down all information of domestic relevance – with quite a few mistaken data at that- and not the single piece of real significant news which was Jackson's first national publication of a novel.

> In treating the Hymans – three-year residents – as newcomers to the village, Mrs. Lang anticipates the city-country tension of "Flower Garden" and "The Summer People". The conflict between the "sweet old lady's" domineering voice and the suppressed voice of the young respondent parallels the generational clashes of women in "Trial by Combat" and "The Little House". In her futile effort to assert her personal worth, the narrator resembles female protagonists in "The Daemon Lover" and "Elizabeth". The doubleness of the writer housewife is echoed not only in the strange doubles of "The Beautiful Stranger" and "A Visit" but in Jackson's career-long fascination with the complexities of personality (HALL, 1993, p. 75-76).

The triumph of the domineering voice over the suppressed voice, as stated by Hall, finds resonance in slightly similar degrees in many of Jackson's fictional texts. One might argue that the notorious character Eleanor Vance undergoes loss of identity and eventually of existence in the closure of the novel *The Haunting of Hill House* in her suicide attempt.

Jackson's third short story collection, *The Magic of Shirley Jackson* (1966), does not receive a whole chapter to itself for the simple reason that it is constituted by reprints from the previously published compilations. Nevertheless, Hall dedicates much effort to seeking a unifying theme for the short story collections she investigates:

> So persuasively does she argue for the unity of the collection, in fact, that by the time she arrives at "The Lottery" itself, this story no longer seems an anomaly but

> rather the inevitable final expression of the situation Jackson has explored throughout (CARPENTER, 1994, p. 67).

By the "inevitable final expression", Carpenter means the figure of the woman who has lost her identity, her sanity, and sometimes, her existence, as is often the case with Jackson's protagonists. Hall notices that writing stories with female characters holding these characteristics was a tough sell to publications such as *Mademoiselle* and *Ladies Home Journal*, magazines that frequently published Ms. Jackson's short fiction. Characters such as *"*The Lottery*"*'s Tessie Hutchinson were hardly marketable. All things considered, "Hall's analysis is meticulous and insightful" says Carpenter, adding that:

> Her resurrection of uncollected stories is *likely to invite interest* in a new edition of Jackson's short fiction. Indeed, the collection of so much of Jackson's writing on writing can only benefit Jackson's reputation, reminding us that if she wrote happy housewife humor to earn a living, she was a careful craftsperson who gave all of her writing an edge that distinguished it from that of her ladies' magazine neighbors. Shirley Jackson deserves our consideration, and Hall's book goes a long way toward advancing that process (CARPENTER, 1994, p. 68, my italics).

Invite interest in a new edition she did. In 1997, Laurence Jackson Hyman and Sarah Hyman Stewart, Jackson's children, edited a new selection featuring thirty unpublished and twenty-two uncollected stories in an anthology entitled *Just an Ordinary Day*, published by Bantam Books. Tricia Lootens, of the University of Georgia, was also right when she stated that the prospicience asserted in Hall's book offered critical readings, primary sources, and bibliographical groundwork "of the kind that can inspire and support studies to come" (1994, p. 160). It worked.

Lootens also stated that the book should "not only engage its readers but send them to their bookshelves, their libraries, and perhaps even to their computers, to rethink Jackson's work" (1994, p. 162). Perhaps the present text substantiates Looten's allegation and, in turn, render it cogent evidence.

2.1.1.4. Darryl Hattenhauer's 2003 Shirley Jackson's American Gothic

Darryl Hattenhauer[16] wrote the fourth major study on Jackson. His *Shirley Jackson's American Gothic* was published ten years after Hall's book. Unfortunately, the general

[16] Darryl Hattenhauer earned his BA and MA at California State University at Sacramento and his Ph.D. in American Studies at the University of Minnesota. Currently, Dr. Hattenhauer is an associate professor at Arizona State University at Phoenix, AZ. He has experience with the historical development of non-realist genres and has taught courses such as "American Literature to 1865", "American Literature Since 1865", "The Short Story",

reading public, as well as academic critics, did not seem to have gotten substantially more acquainted with Jackson's texts, nor with their respective criticism (perhaps Hall's inspiration to third parties did not live long). Hattenhauer's study on Jackson's Gothic-prone strain seemed, however, to be aimed at an audience who already *was* knowledgeable of her life and works, thus narrowing the reading public considerably. Two examples taken from Washington State University at Vancouver critic Carolyn Siegel (2004) may serve as illustration to corroborate this claim. The first, despite being relevant to his argument, there was a mention about Shirley's obesity without any prior explanation of when she became obese, the danger it posed to her health, or what his definition of obesity was, for that matter. The second example was the mention of a certain Leslie Jackson, whom the reader is left to figure out, through the context, that he is actually Shirley's father. All in all, Hattenhauer's intention was to show that Jackson's difficult life and her family-driven neurotic psyche heavily influenced the contents and the style of her stories.

The choice of the title of his book – *Shirley Jackson's American Gothic* – is a particularly interesting one, for the very fact that he acknowledges from the beginning that Ms. Jackson only uses Gothic motifs tangentially, as a tool for other means, namely to explore the entrapment of her characters/female victims, and that is to say, Gothicism is nowhere near the main choice, or frame of reference, through which all her plots and narrative devices are built upon.

Furthermore, he offers his book as a "corrective" against the general misreading of her work – as Joan Wylie Hall did a decade earlier –, which include literal interpretations that take as a given that she was writing about the "supernatural" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 9). Conversely, Hattenhauer's overall thesis seems to be that through "nonrealist forms such as disunified characterization, discontinuous plots, absurd settings, illegible narrative point of view (…) [and] intertextuality" (2003, p. 2), Jackson may as well be classified as a postmodernist, since he justifies that her works really anticipate postmodernism and should, therefore, be more widely studied. He also charts the development of what he calls "protopostmodernist techniques"[17] and of devices such as "psychological doubling, the

"Science Fiction and Fantasy", "American Gothic", "American Comedy", "Western American Literature", "African American Literature", "Major American Novels", "American Novel 1900-1960", "American Novel Since 1960", "American Cultural History to 1865", "American Cultural History Since 1865" and "American Popular Music to 1965". His publications include articles whose main themes are American literature. His book on Shirley Jackson appeared on SUNY Press.

[17] The term proto-postmodernist is confessedly infelicitous; however, Hattenhauer deems it precise because, in his words, it "denote[s] late modernist writing that shows traits of what will become postmodernism" (2003, p. 2).

disunified subject, unreliable narrators, and incomplete or absurd plots and settings" (BRANSON, 2003, p. 416).

His book is a great reading not only to Ms. Jackson's fans but also to scholars of women's literary traditions and of American and general literature. It does, however, contribute in establishing Jackson as a significant Gothic writer, for whatever good *that* brings: "Hattenhauer's passionate sense of mission about ensuring Jackson's reputation shines through on every page. And the perceptive close readings of dialogism throughout Jackson's *œuvre* do convey the complexity of her fiction's politics (SIEGEL, 2004, p. 90). His analysis is "erudite, complete, and interesting to those readers who value style over content and psychobiography rather than generic criticism. His stated aim, to bring Jackson's work back into the limelight (…) is a laudable one" (BRANSON, 2003, p. 416-417).

Further criticism on Hattenhauer's book is divided mainly as to the extent of the use of Freudian theories in his analysis. Whereas some critics, of whom Siegel (2004) is the most representative, defend that he draws on recent psychoanalytic theories, giving special attention to Jane Gallop's interpretations of Lacan, which consequently establishes that he, theretofore, overlooks the influence that living in a post-Freudian world poses in the psychoanalytic-related literary discussions; others, such as University of Wisconsin at Platteville critic Stephanie Branson (2004), contend that several of the treatments Hattenhauer offered Ms. Jackson's short stories and novels *do* make primary use of Freudian psychology, often pointing out direct references to 'phallic mothers' and 'feminized fathers'. When Siegel's argument is examined closer, one finds that her contention is actually that:

> instead of assuming that Gallop's Lacanian adaptation of the figure of the phallic mother explains Jackson's vision of the maternal and of mother-daughter relations, it might have been more productive to look to relevant Freudian theory popularized during Jackson's periods of literary productivity, and before. Contextualization of this sort of influence is also neglected. It would have been interesting to see how Jackson's use of fragmented consciousness, heteroglossia, multiple maternal imagoes, and so on, compare to similar motifs in the works of her contemporaries, especially writers she admired like Elizabeth Bowen and Flannery O'Connor, as well as her fellow Marxist, Christina Stead (SIEGEL, 2004, p. 90).

In this sense, leaving more recent Freudian-based theories aside was, in fact, potentially problematic. In addition, Hattenhauer uses theories of Narratology to attempt an interpretive unification of Ms. Jackson's work, and that is not to say that he does not use Freudian theories at all to explain her literary vision, quite the contrary. But psychology is not the only tool of analysis. Approaching the conclusion, Hattenhauer states that society selected Jackson as its object, and her production, as the record of its contradictions (2003). What he probably meant to say was that more attention to the social, cultural and literary contexts of

the production of her writings was necessary to better understand her, as a writer, and her fiction, as an influential personal and political statement to history.

2.1.2. Secondary Works

Three books that do not fit the primary works criteria and that also deserve attention are Harold Bloom's *Shirley Jackson*, published in 2001 as part of *Bloom's Major Short Story Writers* collection; Paul N. Reinsch's *A Critical Bibliography of Shirley Jackson, American Writer (1919-1965): Reviews, Criticism, Adaptations*, also published in 2001; and Bernice Murphy's *Shirley Jackson: Essays on the Literary Legacy*, published in 2005. They have not been considered in the above *primary works* selection for two reasons. First, although Bloom's book is the work of a single author, as the other four are, it has little over 60 pages of plain text (almost a third of which dedicated to plot summaries);secondly, Bernice Murphy's and Paul N. Reinsch's books are not the works of a single writer, but rather a compilation of essays by different researchers/authors.

2.1.2.1. Harold Bloom's 2001 Bloom's Major Short Story Writers: Shirley Jackson

Critic Harold Bloom[18] published in 2001, as part of his own *Bloom's Major Short Story Writers* collection, the parsimonious piece entitled simply *Shirley Jackson*. It contains a small biography of Jackson, plot summaries of the short stories "Charles" and *"*The Lottery*"*, plot summary of the novel *The Haunting of Hill House*, some twenty-three critical views by distinguished critics of these three stories, plus his own commentaries on a select few. Bloom's first words in the introductory section of the book are already questioning whether Jackson's *"*The Lottery*"*, will ever be regarded as canonical. His tone is somewhat of half-concealed disdain:

> Like so many of Shirley Jackson's stories, "The Lottery" makes me brood upon the element of tendentiousness that renders her so problematic in aesthetic terms. Jackson always had too palpable a design upon her readers; her effects are as calculated as Poe's. Poe alas is inescapable: his nightmares were and are universal. This salvages him, despite the viciousness of his

[18] World renowned critic, Sterling Professor of the Humanities at Yale University, Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Professor of English at New York University Graduate School, Harold Bloom is the author of more than twenty books. He earned his Ph. D. from Yale University and is currently the editor of numerous Chelsea House volumes of literary criticism.

> prose style, and absence of nuance in his work. Since he is greatly improved by translation (even into English), Poe has endured, and cannot be discarded, or even evaded (BLOOM, 2001, p. 9).

Bloom goes on to say that although most of Jackson's stories are "crisply written and cunningly plotted", *"*The Lottery*"*, in particular, "scarcely bears rereading, which is (…) the test for canonical literature (2001, p. 9). In his matter-of-factly coercive prose, Bloom makes statements such as "literary judgment depends upon comparison, and so *it is* valid to contrast…" (my italics) (2001, p. 9) that often leave no place for healthy philosophical dispute and he does so through his rhetorical frippery, ever emphasizing style at the expense of thought. He ends his unsavory and unflattering introduction by stating that:

> Jackson certainly aspired to be more than an entertainer; her concern with sorceries, ancient and modern, was authentic and even pragmatic. But her art of narration stayed on the surface, and could not depict individual identities. Even 'The Lottery' wounds you once, and once only (2001, p.10).

The rest of his text is relatively free from his bromidic and platitudinal prose because it is mainly descriptive in nature and, whenever opinions are concerned, they are that of the critics he has selected to compose the work, not his own. The book leaves the reader wondering why Bloom chose Jackson to be part of his collection anyway or – should that be the case – why he accepted to be forced by his editors to write about her in the first place.

Joyce Carol Oates disagrees. To her, Ms. Jackson's "achievement is not so broad, ambitious or so influential as the 'major' writers—Melville, James, Hemingway, Faulkner", rather she was a writer "whose work exerts an enduring spell" (LOA, 2010, p.1).

2.1.2.2. Paul N. Reinsch's 2001 "A Critical Bibliography of Shirley Jackson, American Writer (1919-1965): Reviews, Criticism, Adaptations"

Published in November 2001, *A Critical Bibliography of Shirley Jackson, American Writer (1919-1965): Reviews, Criticism, Adaptations* is volume 45 of the *Studies in American Literature Series* and contains 226 pages with some illustrations. It is also a handy instrument for finding secondary materials concerning Jackson's works. As its name suggests, it includes reviews from the period the original fictional texts appeared as well as the later criticism. The author, Paul Reinsch[19], acknowledges that the fallacious labels attributed to Jackson have led

[19] Paul N. Reinsch holds a Ph.D. in Film Studies from Department of Critical Studies in the School of Cinema-Television of the University of South California and is currently adjunct faculty at the Lawrence and Kristina

to a series of misreadings and misinterpretations of her creative production. The publishers in Edwin Mellen Press (at Lewiston, NY) brag that "no previously published study catalogues the texts which include stories by Jackson". The volume also brings a list of anthologies, editor's comments, the presence of Jackson's work in textbooks, and a section on adaptations of her literature. Reinsch also discusses the treatment of the fantastic in Jackson's works, as well as the ways in which she pushes its boundaries; plus the handling of the supernatural with the way she represents her contemporaneity using it as a tool. Two chapters are dedicated to *"*The Lottery*"*, some peer into her other texts, individually or in selected groups. There are also interviews along with biographical comments and other materials.

2.1.2.3. Bernice Murphy's 2005 Jackson: Essays on the Literacy Legacy

Bernice Murphy[20] worked as an editor to the collection entitled *Shirley Jackson: Essays on the Literacy Legacy*, published in 2005. The book allowed new audiences and a new generation of academics to submit a new perspective on Jackson's work. The editor recognizes that the majority of the critical discussions on the author tend to focus on the short story *"*The Lottery*"* and in the novel *The Haunting of Hill House.* Murphy's main task, therefore, seemed to be to introduce new readers to a variety of otherwise unknown texts "which ranged from fairly conventional tales for the women's magazine market to the ambiguous, allusive, delicately sinister and more obviously literary stories that were closest to Jackson's heart and destined to end up in the more highbrow end of the market", as stated in Murphy's publisher's note (2005). Once granted that Jackson has a much wider scope of literary accomplishments than commonly believed, and that she was engaged with the pressures and preoccupations of postwar America, Murphy admits that the honored writer merits more discussion. In other words, the main objective of her collection of essays is really to widen the reach of Jackson scholarship with new views on otherwise forgotten texts such as the novel *The Road through the Wall* and the mildly celebrated *We Have Always Lived in the Castle.* What makes her enterprise different from other endeavors is the fact that her collection of essays range from topics as varied as domestic fiction, ethics, cosmology, and

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Dodge College of Film and Media Arts in Chapman University located in Orange, CA. He is the author of "Rediscovering Steinbeck (Suny Series in Special Education): *Revisionist Views of His Art, Politics, and Intellect".*

[20] Bernice M. Murphy earned her BA and MA at Queen's University Belfast and her Ph.D. at Trinity College Dublin. Currently, Dr. Murphy is a professor at the School of English in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at Trinity College Dublin, Lecturer in Popular Literature, Head of Senior Freshmen (2010-11) and Director of the M. Phil. Program in Popular Literature**.**

even eschatology. Other than that, her book allowed the criticism produced in the previous two decades, which were typically intended to more limited-circulation media, to appear in book form and hopefully to be distributed to a broader spectrum of readers.

2.1.3. Graduate Works

By 2012, one of the most common complaints Jackson researchers have issued was that there was too little critical material on her life and works. Drake University's Jerry Wadden, who is, to my knowledge, the first scholar ever to conduct *graduate*-level research on Jackson (the master's thesis entitled *Come Along with Me into a World of Fantasy: An Analysis of the Illusive World of Shirley Jackson*) wrote in 1970 that:

> (…) to date, Shirley Jackson has received little critical acclaim except for "The Lottery", no one has written a book on her; and again, except for "The Lottery", she is only briefly mentioned in a few books of contemporary American literary criticism. Half of her books are now out of print. (WADDEN, 1970, p. 2).

That may as well be the first historically-recorded formal complaint on the subject matter. This picture is but moderately different over forty years later. Scholarship on Jackson is still very far from the desirable, this means too many topics and themes have not yet received due scientific attention. There are now, naturally, more critical material than in Wadden's time, but there is still far too much ground to be covered.

In 1993, Ohio State University research Sue Veregge Lappe wrote in her doctoral dissertation that "only four dissertations have been devoted to Shirley Jackson's works" (p.3)[21]up to that point in time. She goes on to cite John Parks's *The Possibility of Evil: The Fiction of Shirley Jackson*, Raymond Miller's *Shirley Jackson's Fiction, An Introduction*, Michael Nardacci's *Theme, Character and Technique in the Novels of Shirley Jackson* and Linda Metcalf's *Shirley Jackson in her Fiction, a Rhetorical Search for the Implied Author*. Lappe left out other six master's theses that had been equally dedicated to the same topic. Be that as it may, a number of about ten graduate-level researches for such an important author seems pitifully low. Fortunately – if one can call it so – this number has little more than doubled since Lappes's last survey and tripled since Wadden's, but the truth is it still remains shamefully inferior to the number of works dedicated to other major writers of the American literary tradition. These few existing studies have examined a series of richly distinct nuances and unexpected aspects of Jackson's literary production, from her vanguard conceptions of

[21]For full references from subsection 2.1.3.see Appendix E.

motherhood (GARY, 2002), through her contribution to domestic literature (TOMLINSON, 2004), to contemporary issues related to trauma studies in literary theory (HAUSER, 2008). The following subsection presents a survey that aimed at mapping the academic dissertations and theses directly related to the analysis of Jackson's works produced since the 1970s.

2.1.3.1. Theses and Dissertations

Academic interest in Shirley Jackson and her works has been recorded since 1968. Graduate level research in the form of theses and dissertations since 1970. They are presented in this subsection and are briefly commented upon with special attention devoted to the diversity of literary features they explore. In order to gather this longitudinal data an ordinary survey was conducted with the objective of constructing, for the first time, an annotated-descriptive plan of the main academic research on topics directly or indirectly related to Shirley Jackson and her works all over the world. The second half of the twentieth century was responsible for the bulk of critical production (academic or otherwise) on the author's literary production and contributed with important exploratory pieces, the extent of material thus spawned was certainly scanty in magnitude.

The research method applied in this survey consisted of an ordinary online query using the main web-search mechanisms presently available to collect data remotely from more than two-hundred individual sources, among selected university library databases, higher learning institutional websites and websites exclusively specialized in the storage of academic theses and dissertations (and/or their abstracts). The procedure of data collection involved the remote gathering of information concerning the number of graduate level researches conducted on the subject; their year of defense (and/or publication when available); their advising personnel; their extent (through number of pages); their corpus (of one or more of Jackson's literary works); their theoretical affiliation; their thematic affiliation; their status regarding general public availability (if researchers outside their institutions of origin can gain access to the full text or to restricted portions of it, or even to solely its abstract); their institutional source and place (department, library, university, city, state, country), and the actual site where they are stored (physically and/or online).

The table below shows the complete title of the research, its academic level (M stands for Master's thesis and D for Doctoral dissertation) and number of pages (when available), the name of the author and of the advisor (the latter's presented between parenthesis, when

available), the date of defense and/or publication (online or otherwise), and the locality and university where the research was conducted.

Table 1.Graduate-level research on Shirley Jackson

	Title of thesis or dissertation	Level (page)	Author (Advisor)	Date	Locality/ University
1	Come Along with Me, Into a World of Fantasy: An Analysis of the Illusive World of Shirley Jackson	M (76)	Jerry M. Wadden	Jan 1970	Des Moines: Drake University
2	The Possibility of Evil: The Fiction of Shirley Jackson	D (222)	John Gordon Parks	1973	Albuquerque: Un. of New Mexico
3	Shirley Jackson's Fiction, An Introduction	D (258)	Raymond Russell Miller (Prof. Ronald Martin)	1974	Newark, DE: University of Delaware
4	Shirley Jackson as a Modern Gothic Writer	M (133)	Jo Lynn Hicks	1974	Texas A & M University
5	Theme, Character and Technique in the Novels of Shirley Jackson	D (246)	Michael Louis Nardacci	1979	New York University
6	Existentialism in Shirley Jackson's Last Novels	M (70)	Guy A. Argenziano	1983	Florida Atlantic University
7	Shirley Jackson in her Fiction, a Rhetorical Search for the Implied Author	D (273)	Linda Trichter Metcalf	1986	New York, NY: University of New York
8	A Feminist Analysis of Shirley Jackson's *Hangsaman* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*	M (106)	Desirée Varner	1988	Grand Forks: University of North Dakota
9	Feminists Have Always Lived in the Castle: Shirley Jackson and the Feminist Gothic	M (50)	Christine Delea	1991	Huntington, WV: Marshall University
10	The Lesbian Politics of Transgression: Reading Shirley Jackson	M (117)	Karen Jeanne Hall(Debra A. Moddelmoq)	1991	Columbus, OH: Ohio State University
11	The Haunted Reader: An Aesthetic Approach to Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*	M (65)	James J. Clark	1992	Greenville, NC: East Carolina University
12	""The Lottery"'s" Hostage: The Life and Feminist Fiction of Shirley Jackson	D (233)	Sue Veregge Lape (Prof. Barbara Rigney)	1992	Columbus, OH: Ohio State University
13	An Overview of Recurring Themes and Concerns and Usage of Genre Conventions Within the Fiction of Shirley Jackson	M (91)	Robert Jeff Warren	1992	Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina
14	Shirley Jackson: Contexts, Intertexts, and New Conclusions	M (65)	Donna L. Burrell	1993	Natchitoches: Northwestern State University of Louisiana
15	The Mysteries of the Gothic: Psychoanalysis/Feminism/"The Female Gothic"	D (297)	Lorna Ellen Drew	1993	New Brunswick, Canada: The University of New Brunswick
16	Shirley Jackson's Troubled Women: Agoraphobia and the Fiction of Fear	D (169)	Joyce Jackson Bender	1994	Oklahoma State University
17	Shirley Jackson—Escaping the Patriarchy through Insanity	M (70)	Jennifer Noack	1994	Charleston, IL: Eastern Illinois University
	Reclaiming Women and Race in	M	Cara Michelle	1996	San Franc., CA:

18	World War II Society: Shirley Jackson's Fiction	(54)	O'Callaghan		San Francisco State University
19	A History of Hauntings: A Critical Bibliography of Shirley Jackson	M (226)	Paul N. Reinsch	1998	George Mason University
20	Magic, Madness and "The Judicious Administration of the Bizarre": The Forgotten Fiction of Shirley Jackson	D (220)	Stephanie P. Bowers (Prof. Douglas Fowler)	2001	Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University
21	Motherlands: Re-imagining Maternal Function in Contemporary Women's Fiction	D	Lara Karine Gary (Joanne Fei Diehl)	2002	University of California
22	Journeys End in Lovers Meeting? : Gender and the Anti-Domestic in theNovels of Shirley Jackson	M (75)	Jennifer H. Tomlinson	2004	Denver, CO: University of Denver
23	The Tall Man in the Blue Suit: Witchcraft, Folklore and Reality in Jackson's "The Lottery"	M (144)	Håvard Nørjordet (Per Winther)	2005	Oslo, NO: University of Oslo
24	A Creature of Conformity: The Housewife in the Post-War American Literature of Jackson, Plath, and Sexton	M	Kathleen Coggshall	2005	Princeton, NJ: Princeton University
25	Ivory Towers and Ivory Soap: Composition, Housewife Humor and Domestic Gothic, 1940--1970	D	Jennifer Diamond (Prof. Linda Brodkey)	May 2005	San Diego: University of California
26	Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery"A Biocultural Investigation in Reader Response 1948-2006	M (134)	David Michelson (Prof. Phil Rogers)	2006	State Univ. of New York
27	Echoes: A Novel	M	George Hulseman	2006	University of South Florida
28	"Frightened by a Word" : Shirley Jackson and Lesbian Gothic	D (234)	Colin Haines (Rolf Lundén)	Apr 2007	Uppsala University
29	Bluebeard Revisited in Atwood, Carter and Jackson	M (87)	Kristine Bunde (Prof. Tore Rem)	2007	University of Oslo
30	The Materiality of the Female in Shirley Jackson's Short Fiction	M (73)	Lydia Marie Pearson	2008	California State Univ.
31	Haunted Detectives: The Mysteries of American Trauma	D (263)	Brian R. Hauser (Jared Gardner)	2008	Ohio State University
32	-	D	Ann Lucille Patten	2008	Dublin: Trinity College Dublin
33	Patriarchal Power and Punishment: The Trickster Figure in the Short Fiction of Jackson, O'Connor, and Oates	M (75)	Heather D. Strempke Durgin (Peter Betjemann)	Jun 2009	Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University
34	Looking for the Gaze of Love: Paranoia, Hysteria, and the Masochism in the Gothic (Dacre, Bronte, Radcliffe, Jackson)	D	Chiho Nakagawa	2010	Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University

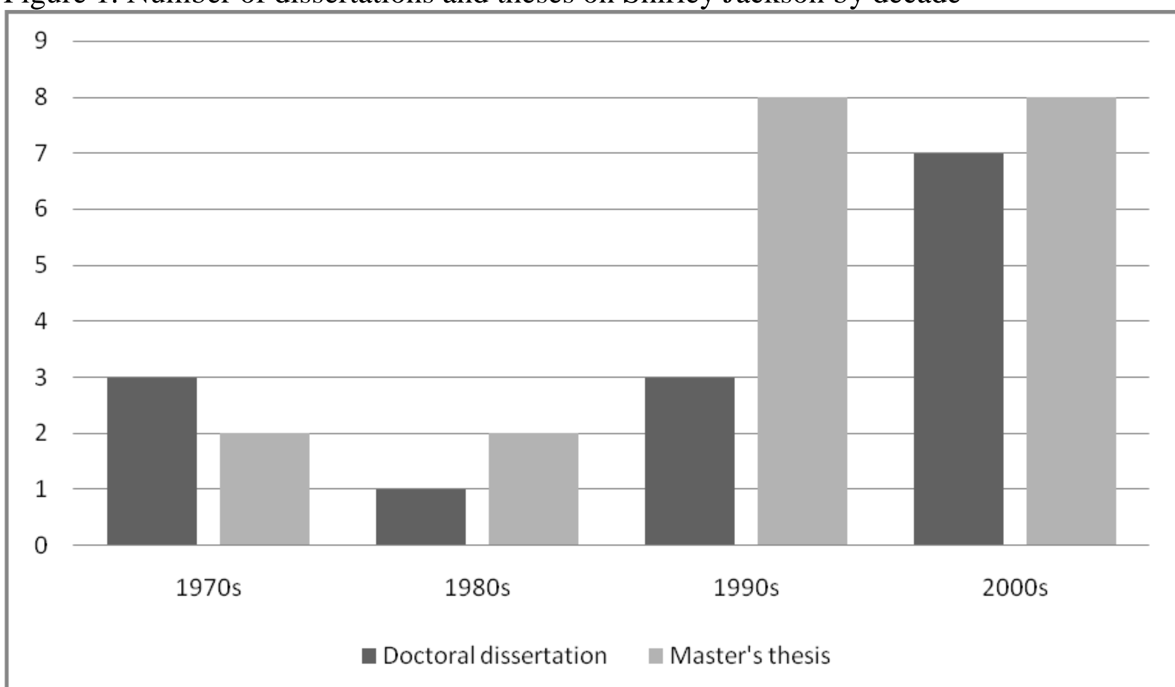
It is really surprising how little graduate work has been done on Jackson, especially when one takes in to consideration the recent: "revisionist academic climate in which some scholars [devote] entire careers to the rediscovery of marginalized writers – and from which a wealth of valuable feminist criticism has emerged – Jackson seems (…) like a perfect choice for further study" (MURPHY, 2005, p. 4).

Of the thirty-four studies found, only five were conducted outside the United States (two in Norway at the University of Oslo, one in Sweden at Uppsala University, one in Canada at New Brunswick University, and one in Ireland at Trinity College Dublin). Interestingly, Scandinavian countries seem to have a candid interest in Shirley Jackson's works, especially those related to Gothic themes and supernatural literary elements. Specifically at the University of Oslo, Jackson's *"*The Lottery*"* is required reading in the disciplines ENG4365 and ENG2325, both entitled *The Short Story in English*, offered by the Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages, on and off since 2004 (confirmedly up to Spring 2011). Curiously, it was in the year of 2007 that two of the Scandinavian studies were defended.

Five graduate researches in the 1970s, three in the 1980s, eleven in the 1990s, and fifteen in the first decade of the new century suggest that academic interest in Jackson more than doubled (even tripled if comparing the 1970s with the 2000s) in the last couple of decades all over the world, sustaining the idea that "Jackson's reputation has grown rather than diminished" (MILLER, 2009, p. 1). Comparing the 1990s with the 2000s, though the number of master's theses remained the same (8), the number of doctoral dissertations more than doubled, as it can be observed in Figure 1.

Figure 1 shows the data from table 1 organized by decade including the number of doctoral dissertations and master's theses defended on the topic *Shirley Jackson*. Its aim is to better visualize the increase in graduate interest in the topic in the last years.

Figure 1. Number of dissertations and theses on Shirley Jackson by decade



The first graduate study recorded here dates back to 1970, however, this is not the earliest academic research on record. In 1967, Kentucky Southern College student William D. Payne defended a 64-page long undergraduate thesis entitled *The Element of Magic in the Works of Shirley Jackson*, thus being the earliest research endeavor ever to be registered on the topic of Shirley Jackson and her works. In Brazil, the first and only academic research (with the exception of the current) to date was defended in June 2001 at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS); an undergraduate thesis entitled *The Haunted World of Shirley Jackson*, written by Gustavo Vargas Cohen and advised by Prof. Edgar Held.

The following paragraphs present commented data (organized chronologically) from a selected number of the theses and dissertations shown in table 1 (few information could be found digitized from texts prior to the 1990s).

In 1979, Michael Nardacci defended a 246-page long doctoral dissertation entitled *Theme, Character and Technique in the Novels of Shirley Jackson*. His text has been described in the *1980 Bibliography of Gothic Studies* compiled by Gary Crawford, Frederick Frank, Benjamin Fisher and Keny Ljungquist as “an attempt at a comprehensive investigation of Shirley Jackson’s novels with occasional comments on gothic conventions” (CRAWFORD et al., 1983, p. 15). In his text, he comments that: “one gets the feeling that the subject of Women’s liberation would have meant nothing to her” (NARDACCI, 1979, p.15), referring to the absence of the discussion of gender issues in most critical texts on Jackson. Misunderstanding the dialogic style of *The Haunting of Hill House*, Nardacci complains that “the satiric passages seem to grate on the rest of the work” (p. 126). His dissertation can be found at the New York University library in Albany, NY and is not available online at present.

In 1992, Sue Veregge Lappe defended a 233-page long doctoral dissertation entitled *“*The Lottery*”’s Hostage: The Life and Feminist Fiction of Shirley Jackson*. She examines the history behind the short story *“*The Lottery*”* and its implications plus three novels, *Hangsaman*, *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. The protagonist of the first novel is scrutinized in accordance to the *Bildungsroman* genre typology in which the focus lies on the psychological and moral growth of the main character from youth to adulthood. The notion of the double and the rhetoric of the House trope are studied against the second novel and the heroines’ dilemmas concerning madness, suicide and murder are the center of attention in the analysis of the third. She concluded that in the three novels investigated “there is a discernible thematic dilemma: how can an intelligent, perhaps

event artistically gifted woman reconcile her desire from freedom and independence with the condition of being female in a culture that obstructs their rights?” (LAPPE, 1992, p. 182). Lappe’s dissertation is available online through the OhioLINK ETD Center, the Ohio State University’s library catalog.

In 1993, Lorna Ellen Drew defended a 297-page long doctoral dissertation entitled *The Mysteries of the Gothic: Psychoanalysis/Feminism/“The Female Gothic”*. In it, she provides critical strategies for examining the gothic novel. She studies the maternal space demarcated Jackson’s *The Haunting of Hill House*. According to her: “Shirley Jackson's disturbing text documents more unambiguously than any gothic novel of my reading acquaintance the terrible mother as devouring monster” (DREW, 1993, p. 54). The *Haunting*’s protagonist, Eleanor Vance, is seen as “linked to the textually dead mother through that most feminized of functions, nursing” (p. 54). The *House* trope, in gothic tradition, is seen “as much a conveyor of meaning as any of the characters, [it] comes equipped with a covering veil of darkness beneath which gender relations are never normalized” (p. 194). Besides these themes, the researcher investigates six other novels from six other woman writers of gothic fiction. Drew dissertation can be found at the *Memorial University Library* in the *Digital Archives Initiative* of the New Brunswick University library division of *Electronic Theses and Dissertations* online.

In 1994, Joyce Jackson Bender defended a 169-page long doctoral dissertation entitled *Shirley Jackson's troubled women: Agoraphobia and the fiction of fear*. Her research reviewed Shirley Jackson’s published fiction and the unpublished material found at the author’s papers in the Library of Congress. According to her, it was Jackson’s agoraphobic tendencies that led her to make use of gothic conventions and consequently to subvert the contemporary modernist attitudes, especially the ones regarding alienation. The writer’s woes are investigated and the dissertation argues that these real-life sufferings are passed onto the fictional characters. The writer’s mental health’s highs and lows are perceived in the changing behaviors of the protagonists of Jackson’s gothic stories mainly. The depiction of this fitful illness ends up by painting an accurate picture of the troubled times in mid-twentieth century America. Bender’s dissertation can be found at the Oklahoma State University library in Stillwater, OK and is not available online at present for researchers from outside the institution.

Also in 1994, Jennifer Noack defended a 70-page long master’s thesis entitled *Shirley Jackson—Escaping the Patriarchy through Insanity*, in which she analyzes Shirley Jackson’s description of insanity as a means of eloping patriarchal society. Characters Eleanor Vance,

from *The Haunting of Hill House*, Mary Katherine Blackwood, from *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, and Aunt Fanny, from *The Sundial*, are studied as different representations of the same core character. To her, Jackson shows through her works that (patriarchal) dominance and oppression can be fought. The author, however, is not naïve to believe that when oppression is defeated, life automatically becomes perfect or peaceful. To Jackson, escape is not permanent, and insanity *is* a way out, though admittedly counterfeit. She questions the quality of life that remains after the battles are fought; and that is true for Eleanor Vance, Merricat and Aunt Fanny. Her argument is based upon feminist archetypal theory. After establishing the personality disorders displayed by each character, she uses Joseph Campbell's mythical quest theory to explore each of the three aforementioned novels and elucidates the struggles of each protagonist accordingly. She concludes by pointing out that the three fictional women may win their individual battles but are incapacitated by reality of winning the war against society's deep-rooted patriarchal structure. Noack's thesis is available at *The Keep*, Eastern Illinois University's library program at the *Student and Theses & Publications* section in Charleston, Illinois. It is also available online through *The Keep*'s webpage.

In 2001, Stephanie Patnychuk Bowers defended a 220-page long doctoral dissertation, entitled M*agic, Madness, and "the Judicious Administration of the Bizarre": The Forgotten Fiction of Shirley Jackson* with the intention of helping redeem and restore Jackson's due literary merit, whom she calls 'a talented writer'. She examines the 1951 novel *Hangsaman* and the 1954 *The Bird's Nest*, plus fifteen short stories. Her focus is on the recurring themes and techniques the author craftily used. Early on her text, she admits that Jackson was a prolific writer of some acclaim in her own day who failed to achieve a potentially lasting fame, a circumstance worsened by her early death in 1965. She describes Jackson's narrative technique as a 'judicious administration of the bizarre', an expression borrowed from one of the author's characters when referring to the practice of witchcraft. Bowers uses a highly relativistic approach that approximates to a practical close reading mode of critical analysis. She argues that Jackson's recurrent concern was with the generic global struggle to remain intact under the burden of everyday human existence. To corroborate that, she divides the discussion of the short fiction into three component analytical parts, namely 'evil from within', that emerges from a tormented mind, 'evil from without', that stems from collective or individual maliciousness, and 'charms against evil', which seeks to keep these dangerous forces at bay. She argues that Jackson supplies her readers with a friendly means with which to confront the terrors of the human condition, the writers most relevant legacy to the fragmented

modern times. Bowers's dissertation was advised by Florida State University Professor Douglas Fowler and can be currently found at that institution's library.

In 2005, Håvard Nørjordet defended a 144-page long master's thesis, entitled *The Tall Man in the Blue Suit*: Witchcraft, Folklore and Reality in Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery", or the Adventures of James Harris, about the only collection of short stories published in its author's lifetime, the 1949 *"*The Lottery*", or the Adventures of James Harris*. Nørjordet attempts to demonstrate the importance that the references to Joseph Glanvill's 1681 *Saducismus Triumphatus* and the 'James Harris' ballad, found in Child's *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*(1882-1898) have to the reading and comprehension of the collection. He draws on recent short story theory, privileging aspects that negotiate the dynamics of the short story "composite" or "cycle" with Gérard Genette's notion of 'paratext'. According to him:

> These paratexts, used as epigraphs and an epilogue respectively, not only allude to the central idea of the demon lover in various historical and religious contexts, thus emphasizing the importance of history, they also help underline and, to a certain extent, explain the mysterious presence of James Harris, a recurring character identified as a demon lover. These "marginal" texts also shed light on some of the book's thematic developments. In addition to these unifying devices, disruptive strategies are also discussed; the use of uncanny and fantastic elements serves to underline the fragmentary and distorted sense of reality in this complex composite(Nørjordet, 2005b, p.1).

His thesis utilizes Gothic theories and criticism and an essentially historicist-hermeneutic approach to "The Lottery", in other words, literary allusions and other "re-enactments of the past" are entertained as seditious ways of questioning the reality of the book's present time frame, "a reality Jackson seems to have a fairly misanthropic view of" (p.1). He also sheds new light on a long held view that claims that the presence of witchcraft and folklore – as evoked in the bulk of the criticism of the author's oeuvre – is actually an effort to supply the reader with some historical understanding of the problem of evil in Jackson's post-war America and, most importantly, are not meant to simply mystify her stories, as it has been strongly suggested previously. Furthermore, the presence of supernatural elements aims to aid in the representation of a foreboding coloring of reality and not an escape from it, he argues. The full text of Nørjordet's thesis, advised by Professor Per Winther, is available online in the digital publication section of the University of Oslo library.

Also in 2005, Jennifer Diamond defended a doctoral dissertation, entitled *Ivory Towers and Ivory Soap*: Composition, Housewife Humor and Domestic Gothic, 1940--1970 (Erma Bombeck, Jean Kerr, Shirley Jackson), focusing on the post-World War II United

States' socio-cultural *status quo* as scenery for women's domestic humor writing. This writing is seen as an original and important tool for questioning gender roles, feminist issues, cultural practices and fictional creation. She argues that the New Critical approach contributed to *untheorizing* domestic humor and marginalizing genres, thus yielding disenfranchised writing practices that would not permit housewife humor to fulfill one of its most important roles, that is, to serve as a resistance agent:

> Understanding that contemporary feminist evaluations seek to reconcile the critically acclaimed "other" work of writers such as Jackson, who also wrote gothic short stories and novels (…), I generate an understanding that "serious" writers of other genres can also be serious writers of personal domestic struggle. I argue housewife comedy as a genre haunted by mother figures and rooted in a female body coded as an abject body (a shared subjectivity with the student body). This dissertation asserts that housewife humor can be theorized through looking at the genre's haunted/haunting spaces that provide its powerful and sustaining aspects as well as protest the entropic, liminal nature of work required of women(DIAMOND, 2005, p.1).

Diamond's doctoral dissertation, advised by University of California Professor Linda Brodkey, can be found at that institution's library in San Diego, and is not currently available online.

In 2006, David Morton Michelson defended a 134-page long master's thesis, entitled *Shirley Jackson's "*The Lottery*": a bio-cultural investigation into reader-response, 1948-2006*, seeking to understand the reception of Jackson's most controversial short story, *"*The Lottery*"*. His study offers a bio-cultural explanation for the fierce criticism received upon and after its publication in 1948. He also observes the manner in which readers react to the short story nowadays. He contends that the diversity of responses has rendered it underappreciated, and it may as well be elucidated through personality psychology:

> I contend that the infamous, "instant and cataclysmic" response in 1948 is accounted for by human beings' innate attentiveness to cost/benefit rationalizing in social contexts, and by an antiauthoritarian tendency of our evolved human nature. I also argue that the socio-political climate of mid-century America was especially conducive to reinforcing these inborn propensities. "The Lottery" is still taught today because it is an instructive launching pad for discussing American and individual social values; multiculturalism appears capable of tempering strong moral responses to the story (MICHELSON, 2006, p. *iv*).

Michelson's master's thesis, advised by State University of New York Professor Phil Rogers, can be found in printed form in that institution's library at Binghamton, NY. Its online edition can be currently purchased at *ProQuest*, a website specialized in the collection of academic dissertations and theses.

In 2006, George Hulseman looked to *The Haunting of Hill House* for inspiration to develop his master's project, the graduate research turned into the novel *Echoes*. There are intense similarities between his novel, a haunted house story, and Ms. Jackson's supernatural thriller. According to Hulseman, *Hill House* focuses almost exclusively, nearly to a claustrophobic intensity, on Eleanor Vance, its protagonist. His novel focuses on its protagonist with similar energy. *Echoes* openly shares other characteristics with *Hill House*; for example, both main characters are shy and somewhat emotionally disturbed and both are single women. Furthermore, the supernatural events occurring on each setting are seen by others in the story but seem to have a particular connection to their protagonist's individually.

In 2007, Kristine Bunde defended an 87-page long master's thesis, entitled *Bluebeard Revisited in Margaret Atwood, Angela Carter and Shirley Jackson*, dedicating a whole chapter (the fourth) to Jackson's short story *The Honeymoon of Mrs. Smith*, in its two versions (named version 1 and version 2). The objective of her thesis was to perform contemporary revisions on some stories, written by the authors mentioned in the title, which hold references to the fairy tale motif of *Bluebeard*, inspired by the homonymous 1697 French story by Charles Perrault.

> My aim is to give attentive and close readings of these short stories, and to examine the effect the intertext of the "Bluebeard" tale has on them. I will do this within a reception study paradigm. These texts are complete works in their own right, but I intend to show that when they are read with the tale of "Bluebeard" in mind, something happens to the way in which they are understood(BUNDE, 2007, p. 3-4).

She explains that she has chosen both versions of the same story not only because they were written by same author and are similar in several ways, but mainly because their differences may account for a good deal of interpretation on regards to one another. She explores notions of reality and myth, woman's invisibility, social differences, satire, submission and many other elements that eventually corroborate her investigative intent. She also acknowledges that although in the other stories she has studied the Bluebeard figure is overtly mentioned, in none of the versions of Jackson's stories it is openly stated.

> Jackson's stories display the greatest discrepancy between the text and the myth of the intertext. While the two short stories by Atwood explicitly mention both the tale "Bluebeard" and the character Bluebeard, there is not the slightest whisper of either the tale or its protagonists in either version of "The Honeymoon of Mrs. Smith". Nevertheless, the fairy tale is present in the suspicions of a murderous husband. I have read these two tales as commentaries on society in America during the mid 20th century (BUNDE, 2007, p. 83).

The full text of Bunde's thesis, advised by Professor Tore Rem, is available online in the digital publication section of the University of Oslo library.

Also in 2007, Colin Haines defended a 234-page long doctoral dissertation, entitled *"Frightened by a Word"*: Shirley Jackson and Lesbian Gothic[22], with the intention of examining representations and configurations of lesbianism in literary narratives. He selected Jackson's 1951 novel *Hangsaman*, the 1959 *The Haunting of Hill House* and the 1962 *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. His objective was, considering that the representations of sexuality between women in literature often tend toward the ghostly, the Gothic, to explore the ideological import of these representations. His study also sought the consequences of hiding lesbian motifs that way. Another important issue was that of subjectivity. Methodologically, he drew on theories of performativity and subjectivity as presented by feminist/queer theories, attributing special attention to the ideas of Judith Butler. His other themes involve parody, the abject, "compulsory heterosexuality", ideology, Louis Althusser, psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud and Julia Kristeva. Haines's dissertation, advised by Uppsala University Professor Rolf Lundén, is available at that institution's library and can be bought online through that same university's online shop.

In 2008, Brian Russell Hauser defended a 263-page long doctoral dissertation, entitled *Haunted Detectives: the Mysteries of American Trauma*, on the theme of how detectives in American motion picture narratives deal with supernatural elements. He specifically looked into movies from the 1990s, early in his text acknowledging that even though films containing these traces are not necessarily originary from this moment in time, it was in this decade that they started having a more remarkable and widespread reach. After discussing and analyzing a series of other topics, he concludes that the astonishing predominance of these kinds of narratives in the 1990s is due to a plangency between the mechanics of trauma and memory and the patterns of millennial thinking in the United States in that decade. His dissertation, advised by Ohio State University Professor Jared Gardner, relates to the areas of American literature, film studies; television studies; trauma studies; supernatural fiction; detective fiction; haunted houses; the uncanny and fake documentary. Hauser required that his full text not be available until December 14, 2013, therefore, at present, researchers who do not have access to the Ohio State University library, where the printed copies are currently held, can

[22] "Lesbian Gothic" is a newly categorized form of fiction that, among other things, describes women's potentially problematic relationship with their bodies, female sexuality and its transgressions and female bonding. The term was originally coined by Paulina Palmer in the book *Lesbian Gothic: Transgressive Fictions*, published by Cassell/Continuum in 1999. Palmer is a recently retired senior lecturer from the English Department at the University of Warwick, UK.

only gain admittance to its online abstract. Hauser suggests that spaces can be just as traumatized as people. He introduces the concept of the 'chronotope' of the traumatized space. Then, he applies the concept to *The Haunting of Hill House* and its several film and television adaptations, in order to argue that the influential haunted house tales he mentions along his dissertation have helped repress scientific research into the paranormal as a reputable field of inquiry and the paranormal researcher as a commendable vocation.

Also in 2008, Ann Lucille Patten, an English Literature professor at Trinity College Dublin, defended her Ph.D. dissertation at that same university. She examined socio-historical references in the uncanny fiction of Edith Wharton, Shirley Jackson and Joyce Carol Oates. The title of her text is not available online at this moment.

In 2009, Heather D. Strempke Durgin defended a 75-page long master's thesis, entitled *Patriarchal Power and Punishment*: The Trickster Figure in the Short Fiction of Shirley Jackson, Flannery O'Connor, and Joyce Carol Oates, with the intention of exploring the ways in which the male trickster figure behaves in the Gothic fiction of twentieth-century American female writers. She explores Jackson's 1949 short story "The Daemon Lover", among others, to see how the trickster figure operates to maintain male standards and to force them upon female characters. Her literary analysis gives rise to broader topics such as society and its internal relations in post-second world war America. She uses the trickster figure also as lenses with which to view issues of gender politics and feminism. The full text of Strempke Durgin's master's thesis, advised by Oregon State University Professor Peter Betjemann, can be found at that institution's library in Corvallis, OR, and online in the digital service *Scholars Archive* of the same university.

In 2010, Chiho Nakagaua defended her doctoral dissertation, entitled *Looking for the gaze of love*: paranoia, hysteria, and the masochism in the Gothic (Charlotte Dacre, Charlotte Bronte, Ann Radcliffe, Shirley Jackson), focusing on the representations of masochism and subversion in Gothic novels by woman writers. Her study also revises the significance of paranoia and hysteria in the Gothic framework, arguing that that helps guide and administer the gaze. To her, the gaze is what produces the heroine's subjectivity and feeds the strength to deal with and to overcome patriarchal domination. Jackson's story is used to demonstrate a drastic solution in managing domination, which is, evading the men's gaze by retreating to a hidden place. Without it, she concludes, there is a manageable promise of life, achieved through the Gothic, outside patriarchy. Nakagaua's doctoral dissertation can be found at the Arizona State University library and is not available online at present.

The collection of theses and dissertations presented in this subsection is small sample of the totality of graduate level research conducted about Jackson and her works. Other than what has been previously mentioned, the intention is to help in the visualization of the variety of themes and approaches this subject can hold. Its purpose is also to allow future researchers to find the scientific contribution that dedicated scholars have to offer to Shirley Jackson's scholarship more easily. It will hopefully aid in the view of what subjects have already been explored and what elements still need more investigation. Unfortunately, few of the researches shown here allow free access to their full texts. Others are simply not yet digitized and therefore unavailable for researchers who are not in their physical places of storage, namely their institution's libraries.

2.2. The Unexpected Phenomenon

The set of critical works presented and discussed in the previous section represent a relatively accurate picture of the totality of the leading critical enterprises concerning Jackson's works (some texts presumably stand unacknowledged). As can be clearly noted when compared to the critical output dedicated to other writers considered as her peers, they represent a very small critical contribution to such fecund and sterling author.

One exception stands out. Despite her prolific writing, most critical discussions of her work focus solely on the chilling short story *"*The Lottery*"*, as highlighted by many critics (KENNEY, 1999, MURPHY, 2005). To sum up, "a great deal of Jackson's critical obscurity is the result of the readers' single-minded identification of Jackson with her short story, *"*The Lottery*"* (LAPPE, 1992, p. 3). In the introduction to the novel *The Bird's Nest*, Peter S. Prescott points out that nothing "irritates a productive writer more than to be identified with only one of his or her works, and that one inevitably written early in life" (p. xi) and he considers *"*The Lottery*"* "the most famous short story published by an American since World War II" (p. xi).

2.2.1. "The Lottery"

On June 28, 1948, the commendable American literary magazine *New Yorker* published the story that would cause the most widespread public outrage in its history, i.e.

*"*The Lottery*"*. Astonished by its reception, its publishers remarked that it prompted more mail than anything the magazine had ever published and "readers responded to the story with an unexpected degree of anger, outrage, disgust, and confusion" (MICHELSON, 2006, p. 34). This uncomely response provided its author with a lasting reputation that would outlive her in many years. This section presents and discusses, at an introductory level, the history behind this phenomenon. The intention is to aid in the understanding of the reasons and causes that have spurred such rave criticisms to that short story and rendered such a lingering detrimental label to its author (in particular, that she was a one-story writer). The following commentaries are based on the historical reception of that text working as an annotated review of the literature on it; a critical-historiographic approach ensues.

The storyline of *"*The Lottery*"* is quite simple. In a very small unnamed New England town, its inhabitants gather in the central square for the annual lottery. There is the familiar discussion of mundane events surrounding village life – crops, taxes and local gossip - intermingled with commentary, often questioning, often endorsing, the maintenance of the traditional yearly lottery. Every villager picks a blank folded piece of paper. When they are all through, they open it, and the one who gets the ballot with a black dot in it is the winner. That year, it was Mrs. Hutchinson who was to receive the prize, which consisted of being stoned to death by her neighbors, family and friends. Even her four-year-old son, Davy Hutchinson, is given stones to help kill his own mother. What critics seem to agree is that this story best represents Jackson's bleak view of human nature, and it is her staple writing style, with all its disturbing elements, at its peak. It is also commonly viewed as a modern version of an ancient scapegoat ritual. As a matter of fact, no account of scapegoating is more strikingly powerful in the Shirley Jackson fictional universe. To McGrath, "*"*The Lottery*"* is the most vivid and terrifying expression of this idea in all of Shirley Jackson's work; which is why, of course, it is so famous. And its capacity to shock is as potent today as when the story first appeared more than fifty years ago" (2000, p. *ix*).Other than that, there is little agreement among critics.

Taking into consideration solely the aspects grazed in this small retelling of the story, it is not surprising that elements such as 'familiar surroundings turned violent' and 'putting tradition above sanity' touched undesirable issues for mid-twentieth century American audiences. The prissy, prim readers of *New Yorker* magazine – as a distinguished sample of the reading society of those times – would never openly condone their appreciation for such barbaric acts being conducted, even if fictionally, in towns just like theirs; interestingly, much of the hate mail received by the author and by the magazine editors did not only speak evil of the tale but some of them demanded to know where these lotteries were being held and if they

could go there and watch them. The aftereffects of its publication set up a chain of events of unexpected proportions; in a sense, its reception was downright histrionic.

Looking at the bright side, even today "The Lottery" is considered "one of the most anthologized stories in the U.S" (HWANG, 2009, p.104) along with Ambrose Bierce's "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" and Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man's Hard to Find". To American critic Roger Miller: "it's a fair bet that James Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" and Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" are two of the most popular American short stories of this century" (1997, p.1). To American critic Monica Dickens: "it should be in every classic collection" (1983, p.1). To Judy Oppenheimer, Jackson's biographer, the short story is possibly the most chilling horror tale of all time (In: CALDWELL, 1988; DIRDA, 1988). Pulitzer Prize winning book-critic Michael Dirda, writing for the *Washington Post*, sensibly inquired if there is "any story in modern American fiction more widely known than "The Lottery"?" (DIRDA, 1988, p. 1). University of Wisconsin-Madison professor Dale Bailey, once speaking about the readers who were familiar with "The Lottery", rhetorically asked: "what college freshman is not?" (1999, p. 25). According to Miller (1997) it is almost impossible to graduate from an American high school without having been assigned "The Lottery" to read. This is so true that writer Jonathan Lethem used to play what he called a "minor parlor trick" when people asked him who his favorite author was. He would answer Shirley Jackson and would assert with a solid degree of confidence that his interlocutor had already read her: "The Lottery" he would say, "counting seconds to the inevitable widening of [his] victims eyes: they'd not only read it, they could never forget it" (LETHEM, 2006, p. vii).

In an attempt to make sense of the commotion stirred by the short story, English novelist Patrick McGrath wrote, referring more specifically to the scapegoat-theme, that "The Lottery" is "the most vivid and terrifying expression of this idea in all of Shirley Jackson's work; which is why, of course, it is so famous. And its capacity to shock is as potent today as when the story first appeared more than fifty years ago" (2000, p. *ix*). It is, nevertheless, not so obvious for readers of other countries other than the United States that "The Lottery" became such a national staple to the point of actually becoming part of not only the American folklore but also their imaginary *subconscious* (Canada included). So much so that in schools across North-America students read "The Lottery" as a "national classic" and teachers turn to it for various reasons other than its, admittedly, "spare, evocative prose" (LOOTENS, 1994, p. 160). Taking its vast academic usage and its encompassing history also into consideration one may arguably conclude that the story, though "initially controversial, (…) has [really] become a staple in U.S. classrooms" (O'NEILL, 2002; ZEITCHIK, 2009). In fact, it is "a scary

favorite of English teachers across the nation" (SLATER, 2008, p. 2). According to Miller (1997), it is almost impossible to graduate from an American high school without having been assigned "The Lottery" to read.

Not only in America, but in unexpected places, such as the Atlantic Bilingual School in Puerto Cortés, Honduras, where Shirley Jackson is taught for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders (WIGFALL, 2007). Semi-anecdotal but true, another school case is registered in an essay about the literary legacy of Shirley Jackson (edited by Bernice Murphy), in which the following account of a parent coming to her kid's school to talk to the teacher who had given a reading assignment she [the mother] deemed unacceptable:

> About a decade ago, the coldly irate parent of a college student confronted me, the English Department chair, with 'I knew that some day I would have to face this nightmare.' Trying to imagine what assignment had so upset this well-dressed, well-coiffed, suburban matron - maybe Lolita, maybe Lady Chatterley's Lover, maybe Ulysses - I braced myself for what literary catastrophe I would have to defend. Girding her loins in righteousness, the aggrieved mother spat out, "The Lottery" (In: MURPHY, 2005, p.1).

Looking at the down side, reactions to "The Lottery" were led to extremes, for good or for bad. Some examples are so far-fetched they are hard to believe. It has been insinuated that some people have become opposed to capital punishment after reading "The Lottery" (SILVERMAN, 2010). The term *provincial fascism* has been said to have been coined to describe the story (DALTON, 2006). Scholar David Michelson examined one hundred and twenty-seven letters sent to Jackson following the publication of the short story in the *New Yorker*; he was seeking reasonable explanations for such exaggerated reactions:

> Based upon an examination of 127 letters written to the author after publication, I argue that the angry, outraged, and hostile responses result from incongruities between the author's representation of human social life, and aspects of human nature that are believed to aid in group survival -- cooperation, fairness, and in-group amity. I discuss how mid-century American cultural values, such as the rhetoric of American moral exceptionalism, may have made the story's representation of human social behavior even more disagreeable to readers. Finally, I suggest that the story persists because it functions as a cautionary tale, which instills adaptive social values (MICHELSON, 2006, p. 34).

Interestingly, nobody bothered to ask its author for clarification regarding what she originally portended. When finally Jackson herself was inquired as to what the story really meant, she is reported to have said: "well, really it's just a story" (In: KUNITZ & HARCRAFT, 1955, p. n). According to a stub published in the *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture* Jackson herself once let on that: "It was not my first published story, nor my last, but I have been assured over and over that if it had been the only story I ever wrote or

published, there would be people who would not forget my name" (In: PENDERGAST & PENDERGAST, 2000).

Regardless of how history might have unfolded, her name was not exactly forgotten – though it was fairly marginalized in some instances – and that makes her relatively accurate in her foresight. Be that as it may, Jackson has become a denizen of that special – commonly unfair – *hell* reserved for writers remembered for a single work (DISCH, 1997; MILLER, 1997). The creature, in this case, has become more famous than its creator. As an example, to this day, Jackson features in Stanford University's *The Culture Guide Index* in the list of authors *Known Primarily for One Work* (SEWELL, 2010).

Her editors played a relevant role in the determination of this *monochromatic* reputation. University of Mississippi Professor Joan Wylie Hall addresses this concern in her novel-length study entitled *Shirley Jackson: A Study of the Short Fiction.* She claims Jackson's editors explored (more negatively than otherwise) the issue of thematic unity in the writer's works in order to sell; in other words, they encouraged the labels that helped dampen the diversity and the thematic richness of the whole of Jackson's fiction in order to advertise them all as one big horror fling. When one thinks using marketing as goal, one sees the potential success to be achieved by using the widespread reputation of "The Lottery" and its author. Booksellers and editors have purposefully attributed to the collection where it was published (*The Adventures of James Harris*) a plethora of single-minded labels, from the mildly misleading "the most eerie and haunting work of our time" (HALL, 1993, p. 3) to far out excesses such as "a gem of satanic shock" (p.3). The majority of these labels meant to induce readers to believe that Shirley Jackson was a writer of horror fiction and nothing else, and that "The Lottery" was her undisputed (and single) masterpiece that everybody must buy.

When inquired as to the editors' wishes, Jackson herself stated: "I won't write love stories or junk about gay young married couples, and they won't take ordinary children stories, and this sort of a thing is a compromise between their notions and mine, and is unusual enough so that I am the only person I know of who is doing it" (In: HALL, 1993, p.55-56). She could clearly see the distinction between her more *serious* stories from the marketable ones such as "The Lottery" (or better, such as what "The Lottery" had become); and that was what the editors incessantly asked for. In her own way, Jackson complained about the publisher's unsanctioned marketing strategies that were, in the least, impairing if not seriously disruptive of her more committed literature.

The publication of "The Lottery" was not Shirley Jackson's first association with *The New Yorker* magazine. As a matter of fact, it had started some five years before, as early as

1943, with the publication of the short piece *After you, my Dear Alphonse*, an elucidative tale of prejudice and of human nature. After that, a significant portion of her short fiction was published in *The New Yorker*, contemporary with the 'Chas' Addams cartoons. Other portions were published in magazines as improbable as *Mademoiselle* and *Ladies Home Journal*, which only fed her dilemma in writing fiction marketable to such publications. None held much enthusiastic response, though. Their quality was, nonetheless, equal or superior to "The Lottery". The range of her themes was immense, as fittingly noted by Murphy (2005), who said that despite all this prolific writing, the majority of critical discussions of Jackson's work focus only on this one chilling story that is "The Lottery".

Still trying to understand the whimsical and erratic outcome of that fatidic publication, the question of *niche* seemed (and apparently it is still does) a constant to some critics. It is known that many of her stories were published in magazines intended primarily for women (housewives more specifically), such as *Mademoiselle* and *Ladies Home Journal*. That somewhat limited not only her reading public but also jeopardized the respect with which history (predominantly male-written history) would credit them for.

From another angle, being looked upon as a horror writer did not really help Jackson's reputation as a serious writer, and again restrained the reach of her fiction. Oddly enough, she recurrently endorsed and hence sabotaged her own reputation by accepting, or at least not denying, much of the gothic stamps she was often labeled with. Many wished to know and/or understand her reasons – and probably still do – hence, they turned to the search for her inspiration as a venue for finding the answers that seemed so elusive.

Many inquired as to the origin of "The Lottery"; some demanded to know what the events that inspired it were, if any. Following its success, a sort of mythical unreachable image was created around Jackson. At the time she lived in the small town of North Bennington, Vermont. Her townsfolk, in a gossipy fashion, suggested that once, when she was a child, Shirley herself had been pelted with stones and had, thus, gone home and written the story. Though not true (Shirley wrote the story as an adult), it indeed helped with the construction of the myth surrounding its author anyhow. Should similar event had in fact happened, it would not have been more than another seed in the foundation of the Shirley Jackson *myth* (that resulted in the *Sorceress of Bennington* stigma).

Reclusive, Shirley did not say much in public, which left so much room for the onset of imaginative gossip regarding herself and her work, such as the one that held that Jackson, years after writing "The Lottery", told a friend that it was inspired by anti-Semitism (CALDWELL, 1988a). Her husband was Jewish and as such the family was seen. Though the

family may indeed had suffered with prejudice (for religious causes or otherwise), it is not necessarily the sole source (or an important one, for that matter) for the inspiration to write that tale. In a quite brief personal sketch produced for *Twentieth Century Authors* (edited by Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Harcraft in 1955), she stated that: "I very much dislike writing about myself or my work, and when pressed for autobiographical material can only give a bare chronological outline which contains, naturally, no pertinent facts" (p. n).

In 2010, literary critic and senior editor at *The New Republic*, Ruth Franklin, wrote in an essay included in the new Library of America collection that, allegedly, the idea for *"*The Lottery*"* first came when, in a given day, Jackson was pushing her baby daughter's stroller heading home; as soon as they arrived, she put the baby down in a playpen, laid the groceries on the kitchen counter and sat down and started writing *"*The Lottery*"* in a single thrust, from beginning to end. The myth and the mystery live on. At any rate, Jackson conceived of the most shocking and bitter-sweetly deprecated publication the New Yorker magazine had ever had in its history.

The search for understanding that scary woman and her scary story went on. If the events that preceded the publication of *"*The Lottery*"* were not being very illuminating, critics thus turned to the events that succeeded that uncanny day in 1948. In an interview granted to Library of America in 2010, American writer, critic and Professor Joyce Carol Oates was inquired as to why the publication of *"*The Lottery*"* in the *New Yorker* caused the outrageous stir it did. She replied that the magazine was, at the time, in 1948:

> (…) far less than now a sort of bastion of proper middle-class/Caucasian-American values. The magazine tended to be prim, prissy, self-regarding, its tone annoyingly arch. Jackson's story suggests that ordinary Americans—like the readers of *The New Yorker*, in fact—are not so very different from the lynch-mob mentality of the Nazis. Of course, Jackson's (…) is the art of radical distillation, like Flannery O'Connor, not subtly observed social drama like that of Henry James, Edith Wharton, or John Updike (LOA, 2010, p.1)

Special attention to this fear of identification alluded by Oates was to return later in time. It is interesting to consider that, as previously mentioned, some of the letters Jackson and the *New Yorker* received that year asked to see where those lotteries were held and if people could go there and watch. No one wished to have their names associated to those cogent samples of "human cruelty [and] pointless violence" (SULLIVAN, 1986, p. 3). That outwardly prim 1940s and 1950s society that felt and demonstrated disapproval of anything it regarded as improper was just not ready to accommodate the 'radical distillation' of Jackson's infusions of reality existing in her texts. They feared it as much as they desired it.

The desire for fear is one of the main reasons horror stories appeal so much to readers, as theorized by Glennis Byron, David Punter, Julia Kristeva and Stephen King. In a symbolic way, horror stories offer readers a chance of evincing emotions that would not otherwise have the chance to; they are cathartic. In this sense, stories such as "The Lottery" are:

> (…) an invitation to indulge in deviant, anti-social behavior by proxy – to commit gratuitous acts of violence, indulge our puerile dreams of power, to give in to our most craven fears. Perhaps more than anything else, the horror story (…) says *it's okay to join the mob*, to become the total tribal being, to destroy the outsider (KING, 2001, p. 43, my italics).

The fear of identification is revisited by Stephen King in his fundamental 2001 work *Danse Macabre*. In it, he claims that the indulgence in deviant behavior has never been done better or more literally than in "The Lottery", where the whole concept of the outsider was but symbolically created by a black dot on a white piece of paper. According to him: "there is no symbolism in the rain of stones which ends the story; the victim's own child pitches in as the mother dies, screaming "It's not fair! It's not fair!" (2001, p. 43).

The message that outraged readers in 1948 when the story was first published in the *New Yorker* and that, needless to say, still shocks readers today warns us of the dangers of repressing emotions – of course Jackson's fiction took the perils of not hearing the signs to a whole new level and that probably fed even more the supernatural aura that surrounded her. Furthermore, readers today are supposedly better informed and, thanks to the ease of access to information, are also more familiar with the ailments of the mind and its effects both on an individual or a group. All things considered:

> Shirley Jackson understood the cost of maintaining the false facade before that insight was commonplace. She gave it fictional flesh in a large body of work, and in particular in a short story of such succinct compressed power that it cannot be read today without a shudder of horror and recognition; and no one who reads it ever forgets it (McGRATH, 2005, p.*x*).

That passage was written in 2005, which corroborates the idea that the story is as shocking today as it was at the time it was published. Its probable message, if any, carries a universal appeal that some critics such as Harold Bloom fail to perceive. Bloom's conservative ideology is quite telling in the first words of the introductory section of his book on Major Short Story Writers, in which he questions whether Jackson's most celebrated short story will ever be regarded as canonical. Bloom makes a series of short-sighted comments. Firstly, the *tendentiousness* he mentions, just as much as the *predictability* in some of her stories, are not necessarily their highlights or main aims. It is the case of the not-as-famous short story "Charles", originally published in the magazine *Mademoiselle*, in July 1948, in

which a cunning reader very early in the text is able to perceive where the story is heading – it is actually quite predictable – but that is far from being its central ambition. There are so many other aspects that make the story so great that its predictability is evanescent. Bloom misses the point. Aspect of the story such as the relationship between parents and children regarding the latter coming to school for the first time are much more cogent. Questions such as how blind a parent can be when it comes to his or her own children are foremost in that narrative. Jackson's prose is as simple, elegant and sterile as Hemingway's.

There are definitely layers of meaning that Bloom's proficient reading fails to access. These meaning can be accessed mainly through the knowledge gained by the reading of her other works. They carry a source of valuable information; they serve as keys to breaking the dormant codes that lie in a single Jackson story. The unraveling of this self-contained intertextuality is what allows for that access and is what makes her stories complex and multi-layered (see more on Part 3).

At any rate, the reception of "The Lottery" can be described as full of dismay and stupefaction. Jackson herself said that of the three-hundred-odd letters she received that summer, she could count only thirteen that spoke kindly to her and they were mostly from her friends (POWERS, 2000). Even her mother scolded her by saying that: "the ending of this story came as quite a jolt to my wife and, as a matter of fact, she was very upset by the whole thing for a day or two after" (In: FRANKLIN, 2010, p.1).

When readers finally came to their senses and realized that the character chosen for death was a mother, they understood, though not necessarily agreed, that she was striking a universal chord there. What is important to bear in mind is that those letters of complaint were neither ill-saying the quality of her works nor her personal talent, but the contents of her stories and the underlying ideology that often times surfaced mercilessly in her fiction that so poignantly touched many people's sensitive nerves.

Concomitantly, the episode of the letters paints a picture of the complexities and contradictions of culturally-accepted gender norms in post-World War II America. Her literature carried domestic and gender ideology that were, as pointed out by Jessamyn Neuhaus (2009), received (especially) by women readers in contradictory ways. On the one hand the letters partially supported the assertions made by Betty Friedan (1963) that the 'housewife writer' and 'domestic-humor literature' did reinforce the dictation of domestic gender norms. On the other hand, the letters demonstrated that the figure of the housewife writer represented a very specific strategic response to the rigid gender norms of Friedan's *feminine mystique*. Housewife writers did not offer answers to clarify the blurred and

subverted lines between the work of the housewife and the work of the writer (NEUHAUS, 2009) – and perhaps that was not their intention is the first place.

Attempts at feminist criticism abound in *"*The Lottery*"*'s critical reception. Interpretative efforts took - and still take - the most intriguing shapes, ranging from the learning of larger-than-life lessons (such as decision-making about the death penalty) up to the search for meaning in minute details (such as the pretentious look at the three-legged stool beneath the lottery box to see if it may or may not be significant as a symbol (FRIEDMAN, 1975).

In an article published in *The New Orleans Review* in 1985, author Peter Kosenko conducts a Marxist-feminist reading of *"*The Lottery*"*. In it, Kosenko explains that the lottery in the story represents an attack on the "essentially capitalist (...) social order and ideology" (1985, p. 27) of the town in which it is set. Though he acknowledges that Jackson was not a Marxist, he claims the story clearly possesses Marxist undertones. His arguments border the debatable, especially because they seek meaning in details that its author would most likely not have attributed meaning to. One example is the color of the dot (black) painted in the lottery's ballot. Kosenko believes there is an association between the *blackness* of the black dot and the coal business led by Mr. Summers, one of the organizers of the event and the man who drew the dot in the blank slip of paper. To Kosenko, blackness is associated to evil which in turn is associated to business and ultimately leads to an association with Capitalism. It is true enough that: "[the] most powerful men who control the town, economically as well as politically, also happen to administer the lottery" (KOSENKO, 1985, p. 27) but the color of the dot's purposeful link with capitalism sounds too far-fetched. In the story, the victor (and victim) Tessie Hutchinson, who holds the ballot containing the black dot, is *forced* to open it by her husband, Bill Hutchinson. The narrator exclaims: "It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with a heavy pencil in his coal-company office" (2005, p. 301). To Kosenko, at one level, the evil present in the lottery is linked to a disorder, promoted by capitalism, in the material organization of modern society – which ultimately encourages the stronger to make their wills accepted by the weaker (male over female), even if by *force*.

A feminist reading of *"*The Lottery*"* was also presented by Darryl Hattenhauer in his 2003 novel-length study entitled *Shirley Jackson's American Gothic*. He claims the story primarily deals with the subjugation of women in an oppressive patriarchal society. He adds that "a married woman minimizes her chances of being selected by delivering babies early and often" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 44). The way Hattenhauer puts it, within the story,

the boys' roles are to (apparently leisurely) collect stones, the men's, to discuss politics and farming and other so-called *important* matters, and the girls' is to stand aside, looking over their shoulders; finally, the women's role is to engage in gossip. That way the story is meant to suggest clear gender roles as well as the establishment of pre-defined power relations. Despite being very aware of Jackson's political inclinations, Hattenhauer is at times too conclusive in his arguments per chance overshadowing the fictional text under analysis.

Besides the abundance of feminist and Marxist critique, the *scapegoat* theme seems to be one with fewer dissentions among critics. Wilfred Guerin, writer of *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, has nicely described and commented upon the scapegoat archetype leaning on Frazer's *The Golden Bough* to described it as a:

> motif centered in the belief that, by transferring the corruptions of the tribe to a sacred animal or person, then by killing (and in some instances eating) this scapegoat, the tribe could achieve the cleansing and atonement thought necessary for natural and spiritual rebirth. Pointing out that food and children are the primary needs for human survival, Frazer emphasizes that the rites of blood sacrifice and purification were considered by ancient peoples as a magical guarantee of rejuvenation, an assurance of life, both vegetable and human. If such customs strike us as incredibly primitive, we need only to recognize their vestiges in our own civilized world--for example, the irrational satisfaction that some people gain by the persecution of such minority groups as blacks and Jews as scapegoats, or the more wholesome feelings of renewal derived from our New Year's festivities and resolutions, the homely tradition of spring-cleaning, our celebration of Easter and even the Eucharist. Modern writers themselves have employed the scapegoat motif with striking relevance (for example, Shirley Jackson in *"*The Lottery*"*, Robert Heinlein in *Stranger in a Strange Land,* and Tom Tryon in *Harvest Home*) (GUERIN, 1992, p. 157).

In 2003, Seymour Lainhoff, also using Frazer's seminal work as theoretical background, wrote that Jackson's "The Lottery" is a: "modern representation of the primitive annual scapegoat rite" (LAINHOFF, 2003, p.1) and that, according to the story, the rite still flourishes in some typical modern American community. To him, there is a double purpose to the rite, that is: "to exorcise the evils of the old year by transferring them to some inanimate or animate objects, and with that (…) to appease the forces of the new year, to insure fertility" (LAINHOFF, 2003, p.1). To Don D'Ammassa, writer of the *Encyclopedia of Adventure Fiction*, "the lottery is also representative of the human tendency to choose a scapegoat, an individual or individuals who can be blamed when things go wrong and punished so that people do not have to accept any blame or punishment" (2009, p. 130). In the 2000 Modern Library edition of *The Lottery and Other Stories*, Patrick McGrath, writer of the introductory section, states that Jackson effects a ritualized scapegoating experiment, one which allows the release of a year's worth of repression in a community that outwardly passes as placid and self-contained – in a way corroborating the cathartic notion expressed earlier by Stephen

King. The hypocritical placidity gives place to plain cruelty as it is converted into a physical form of expression that unites this unordinary New England community composed by men, women and children, around this traditional event that reaches its climax in achieving human sacrifice through stoning, and: “that is what it takes, [Jackson] seems to say, to keep our towns pleasant and peaceful. That is the price we pay. And none of us is innocent in this regard, not even the children” (McGRATH, 2000, p.*x*). Not being ashamed of highlighting the evil that children naturally carry is one of Jackson’s greatest triumphs.

*“*The Lottery*”* still represents the peak and the primal example of what a community can do when it channels its aggression towards a chosen victim – that can be random or purposefully selected, though the short story’s title suggests the former, the proficient Shirley Jackson reader has several reasons to understand that the story strongly points to the latter. Rows still rage, however, over Jackson’s intentions. Few are the themes in which common accord is found among critics (the search for theme, and for thematic unity, is the main concern of the following section).

2.3. A Pattern Emerges: The Search for Thematic Unity

For what it is worth, “The Lottery” was responsible for Jackson’s everlasting fame, as well as for her infamous reputation. The horror inflicted by it became impregnated in the imaginary that surrounded its author, and that rendered her the label of a one-story writer – a horror writer at that, the similar fate that befell Bram Stoker with *Dracula* and Mary Shelley with *Frankenstein* (and even Robert Louis Stevenson, who despite being famous for more than one story – e.g. *Treasure Island* – is remembered by only one which is gothic in nature, i.e. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*). The more traditional criticism still celebrates Jackson as a writer of horror fiction only (Branson, 2003).

> American author Shirley Jackson is, perhaps, best known for her short story “The Lottery” and her novel *The Haunting of Hill House*. While much is written about these two pieces, she wrote much more which has not yet attained the same level of popularity or critical attention (DURGIN, 2009, p. 19).

Few *seem* to be the ones who realized that much more than half of her works have absolutely no ghosts on them, no liaisons with the devil, no paranormal activities of any kind. Horror and witchcraft often have nothing but mere supporting roles in the core of her literature. If anything, Jackson played a key role in “reconfiguring the tropes and conventions

of existing gothic and horror literature in order to skillfully dissect the mores and anxieties of the modern age" (MURPHY, 2009, p. 17).

And few *are* the ones who consider her independent of genre, simply as part of the list of America's foremost writers in literary history (THOMAS, 1982; KELLMAN, 2003), without *niche* affiliations or literary-school labeling. It is known by now that, despite her thematic diversity, her stories which did contain supernatural or gothic elements somehow greeted the media more easily.

Alison Flood, writing about American literature's hidden gems, lists Shirley Jackson as the fourth most underrated author, who to her is:

> honestly, the scariest author I think I've ever read, making the likes of James Herbert and Dean Koontz look like a cozy evening in front of the fire, while also – unlike many (most?) horror authors – managing to write beautifully (FLOOD, 2010, p. 1).

Peter Straub, one of the most acclaimed living writers of the horror genre has selected Ms. Jackson to integrate his collection of 42 short stories by top-name writers called *American Fantastic Tales: From the 1940s to Now* from Library of America.

Should it be the case, perhaps it is best to tag Ms. Jackson as *sui generis* (instead of sustaining that she fits no category, or has no distinctive individual style): "critics (…) recognized that Jackson had a haunting, eerie style all of her own" (WADEN, 1970, p. 2), hence "Shirley Jackson is one of those highly idiosyncratic, inimitable writers" (LOA, 2010, p.1). Actually, her writing style has often been tagged "deceptively simple" and she has been called a "master of perfectly skewed narratives" (REYNOLDS, 2010a, p.1). About the disarming power of her narrative style, critics have said that Jackson: "in her calm pacing and detached, humorous tone, one hears the admirer of Richardson and Austen. As serious as she is unpretentious, Jackson seeks to disarm her audience. And she often succeeds" (LOOTENS, 1994, p. 162).

With incredibly disparate opinions (bordering erratic, at times), critics could never seem to agree as to where to best place Jackson, and they "never have known quite what to do with Jackson. They often resist canonizing writers who dabble in genre categories and enjoy mass appeal" (MILLER, 2009, p. 1).Professor Jed Esty (2010) of the University of Pennsylvania categorizes Ms. Jackson in the period of the resurgence of moral realism after 1950 and considers her one of the writers concerned with fundamental questions of good and evil. Professor Holly Blackford of Rutgers University categorizes Ms. Jackson under the *niche* of 'coming-of-age writers' (2010). It has been argued that she tackles the "treacherous psychological terrains" (KELLOGG, 2010, p.1) in works "filled with tainted landscapes

(DAYNARD, 1999). Psychology, surreal art and even mystery (LAUTERBACH, 1987) are but some of the genres suggested. Author Victor LaValle (2010) lists Shirley Jackson side by side with Stephen King, Herman Melville and the book of Esther. She was said to belong to "the social-realist wing" of American artists (MORRIS, 2004, p.1). For that, she has become even a metonym. *Los Angeles Times* reporter David C. Nichols (2010) creates an opposition between what he calls the *Shirley Jackson-flavored overview* as compared to the *Wes Craven-tinged plot* when correlating psychological horror versus gory horror respectively. This correlation has been further explored by Stephen King, who argues that Jackson changes the familiar Gothic Bad Place (the haunted castle or house) from a *womb* (which symbolizes sexual interest and fear of sex) to a *mirror* (which symbolizes interest *in* and fear *of* the self) (KING, 2001). On the other hand, Haggerty (2006) argues persuasively that same-sex desire is the prohibited specter that haunts the pages of Gothic writing and cites Ms. Jackson as example. Still in a metonymical guise, works by distinct authors have been branded under the "slow-moving magic realism-cum-Shirley Jackson" (STARR, 2010) type, further corroborating King's view.

Many critics contend that Ms. Jackson heavily influenced Stephen King (NORDEN, 1983; SNYDER, 2006; HWANG, 2009; ZEITCHIK, 2009) who says he sees himself following her footsteps (DOWNEY, 2006). Needless to say, the two authors take very different, at times, diametrically opposed approaches to the horror motif; especially that of the haunted house as a personified and actively malignant entity. According to Downey (2006), the points of contact between the two authors constitute a dialogue on the nature and source of evil. This makes perfect sense since what can be seen in Jackson's houses often is the presence of a pre-existing evil regardless of human interaction, whereas in King, in many of his stories, evil is created as a result of human actions. In a 1983 interview for *Playboy* magazine, King said that the movie *The Shining* "was influenced by Shirley Jackson's marvelous novel *The Haunting of Hill House*" (In: NORDEN, 1983, p. 2).

She has been compared to Henry James. During an interview for Library of America, American writer, critic and Professor Joyce Carol Oates, while discussing whether the motifs in *The Haunting of Hill House* were psychological or supernatural, Oates describes Jackson's point of tangency with Henry James:

> Shirley Jackson was much influenced by Henry James—you can register the Jamesian rhythms in her sentences—and so it is doubtful that she would have been drawn to write about the supernatural as an end in itself—only its psychological manifestations would be of interest to her. In brief, this is the distinction between the

> "literary" Gothicist and the more popular Gothicist—in the latter, the ghosts are real(In: LOA, 2010, p. 3).

Haggerty (2006) describes how Henry James and Shirley Jackson carry on a dialogue both with psycho-sexological and earlier gothic traditions in their novels *The Turn of the Screw* and *The Haunting of Hill House.* He understands James's and Jackson's heroines as characters who embrace the death drive as the only figure of their desire.

Another critic, S. T. Joshi (2001), the author of *The Modern Weird Tale*, claimed that "Shirley Jackson and Ramsey Campbell are the two leading writers of weird fiction since Lovecraft" (p.13). In making this assertion, Joshi faces two distinct potentially problematic issues. The first is that one could claim he is bypassing other important writers who also have a claim – or aspire – to that title, namely Stephen King, Peter Straub, Clive Barker and Anne Rice. The second and perhaps the most interesting problem is the assertion that Ms. Jackson is a writer of weird fiction. Joshi acknowledges that, of her six full-length complete fictional novels, only one, *The Haunting of Hill House* is "avowedly supernatural (…) while others are weird only slightly or not at all" (2001, p.13). Fortunately Joshi also acknowledges that something quite similar may be said of her short fiction; according to him, "only perhaps 15 or 20 of her 100-odd short stories can be said to belong to the weird tale or to the mystery story or to science fiction".

Conscientious critics see how much she distances herself from horror:

> Shirley Jackson's fiction continues to be placed within the gothic horror genre because of its supernatural and horror images. I contend the major focus of her work is her critique of the social norms constructed for women by an archaic and inauthentic patriarchal system of rules and domestic expectation for women that result in madness for the resisting female (PEARSON, 2008, p.1).

About being considered a horror writer, it has been suggested that "such positioning is ironic, for if the roots of Jackson's domestic demonism lie in the Child ballads or the gothic novels of Ann Radcliffe, they draw just as deeply (and as explicitly) upon the satires of Austen and Thackeray" (LOOTENS, 1994, p. 160). Horror, much like fantasy in general and science fiction in specific, is, in the hands of Shirley Jackson, a hotbed for social criticism with satiric concerns.

Conscientious critics also recognize her humor, especially of the domestic kind. They also see how horror and comedy are close relatives, hence: "terror likes to warm its feet at the domestic hearth" (DISCH, 2005, p.46). Critic Nancy Walker, of Stephens College, stated that Jackson's style is a sample of popular humorous prose and light verse of the late 1940s and

1950s and that: “writers such as Phyllis McGinley, Jean Kerr, Margaret Halsey, Betty MacDonald, and Shirley Jackson made comic material of ordinary domestic life” (WALKER, 1985, p. 98). Horror and comedy do have much in common after all. According to Yuschik (2008), both are about danger (see Jackson’s “The Possibility of Evil”[23], featured in the collection *Just an Ordinary Day* and in “The Witch”[24], included in *The Lottery and Other Stories*). In addition, at the heart of gothic horror, in the genre’s biological core and in its psychological elements, lies a more *transhistorical* conception of the gothic, one related to comedy (MORGAN, 2002). Because of that or in spite of all that, Jackson was never really acknowledged as a serious writer by canonical standards. And American literature does have examples of so-called serious writers who also happen to write with humor:

> Some American humorists are avowedly that: Marietta Holley, whose work sold as well as Mark Twain's; Dorothy Parker; Erma Bombeck. Others are humorous in addition to being "serious" writers Edna St. Vincent Millay as "Nancy Boyd"; Emily Dickinson and Anne Bradstreet in wry moments (CARPENTER, 1994, p. 68).

Carpenter adds that: “[Jackson] wrote happy housewife humor to earn a living, [and] she was a careful craftsperson who gave all of her writing an edge that distinguished it from that of her ladies' magazine neighbors. Shirley Jackson deserves our consideration” (1994, p. 68). Furthermore, Jackson’s comic strain has been constantly received as feminist in nature, in the wake of Betty Friedan’s statement that the *housewife writer* and *domestic-humor literature* reinforced domestic gender norms. Lynette Carpenter called Jackson’s comedy "housewife humor" (In: LOOTENS, 1994, p. 160). Housewife comedy is “a genre haunted by mother figures and rooted in a female body coded as an abject body” and “housewife humor can be theorized through looking at the genre's haunted/haunting spaces that provide its powerful and sustaining aspects as well as protest the entropic, liminal nature of work required of women (DIAMOND, 2005, p.1). In that same fashion, Jackson’s comedy (just as Anita Loos’s and Alice Childress’s) works as a way of countering the stereotypes that a male-identified culture has created (WALKER, 1988).

What lies in the heart of the confusion is the incessant search for theme (and/or thematic unity). Theme is understood here as the meaning provided by a piece of work when one takes all of its aspects in their entirety into account, or more simply, it is the meaning of

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[23] In “The Possibility of Evil”, the protagonist, aptly named Adela Strangeworth, goes great lengths to mess up with her neighbors’ lives through insidious anonymous letters, causing confusion and disorder. Her fate serves as comic relief for an otherwise venomous outcome.

[24] In “The Witch”, the little boy that sits beside a stranger during a train travel talks about (what is to him) funny yet murderous ideas to administer in his small sister. He is, however, unaware of the real risk he is in (sitting beside James Harris).

the story or its central or dominating idea. A description that fits this definition is that theme is:

> a common thread or repeated idea that is incorporated throughout a literary work (…) a thought or idea the author presents to the reader that may be deep, difficult to understand, or even moralistic. Generally, a theme has to be extracted as the reader explores the passages of a work. The author utilizes the characters, plot, and other literary devices to assist the reader in this endeavor." (SEVERSON, 2009, p.1)

Severson adds that the importance of recognizing theme lies in the opportunity that it allows the reader to understand part of the author's purpose in writing the fictional piece. Its relevance is historically free of questioning, for along with *setting*, *plot*, *character*, *structure*, *style* and *atmosphere*, *theme* is recognizably considered as one of the fundamental components of fiction (GUERIN, 1992).

One example is the *house* theme, which looms large in Jackson's fiction; especially in her novels. Of the six complete novels, three are situated in distinctively gothic mansions which are as significant as any other (human) character of hers (MURPHY, 2009). The important was not the historic-mythic concept of the gothic castle *per se*, with all its accoutrements, but that of a house and the idea of insulation that comes along with it. Its walls are, importantly, its confines, where inhabitants are "barricaded against the intrusion of the outside word" (CARPENTER, 1984, p. 32). More than that, the walls of Jackson's house form its own world – see. This house reflects the insanity of its occupants and also serves as a "fitting microcosm of the madness of the world" (PARKS, 2005, p. 243); in Irving Malin's words, this house is a: "metaphor of confining narcissism, the private world" (MALIN, 1962, p. 4) of its inhabitants; all elements that can be found both in Jackson's novels, such as *The Sundial*, *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, and in her short stories "The Very Strange House Next Door" and "Come Dance with me in Ireland".

To Ms. Jackson, her houses were like her people (her fictional characters, that is): "they not only reflected the egos and foibles of their original owners, who often had unusual tastes, but they also exerted a mysterious force of their own" (In: MURPHY, 2009, p. 18). These mysterious forces can be understood as the causal agents of the attitudes and choices of its dwellers and guests; the same walls that affected them and sequestered them from the world enticed Jackson and her creative drives. Nevertheless, the same house that fascinated her and captured her attention so enthrallingly also enslaved her and made her sick.

Historically, the presence of houses in horror fiction grows as women start to view across time the home as the source of their oppression; besides, this process is further nourished by "underlying inherited anxieties resulting from women's legacy of domesticity"

(PALLEJÁ-LÓPEZ, 2010, p. 6). In conclusion, the presence of the house in horror fiction grows in relation to women's envisioning of the home as the source of their oppression.

In the introduction to the 2000 Modern Library edition of the collection *The Lottery and Other Stories* (originally published in 1948), Patrick McGrath selects three themes as the most recurrent. They are: *displacement*, *prejudice* and *scapegoating*. According to him, "displacement is perhaps the most persistent theme in the work of Shirley Jackson" (2000, p.*ix*). He argues that in several stories in that collection the displacement is literal. For example, in one of the short stories entitled "Like Mother Used to Make", one of the main characters, the hapless David, prepares dinner for the girl who lives in the apartment down the hallway, Marcia, who bursts into his apartment to eat the dinner he has prepared. Out of a sudden, a Mr. Harris appears calling for Marcia. He is invited into David's apartment and settles on the couch with Marcia while David meekly washes the dishes. After a while, David sees himself leaving his own apartment and going to Marcia's shabby place to give them privacy: "It was cold, it was dirty, and as he thought miserably of his own warm home he heard faintly down the hall the sound of laughter…" (JACKSON, 2005, p. 40). McGrath contends that David has been quite literally displaced, with the aggravation that he accepts it. This story comes to illustrate a complicated truth about human nature, the fact that sometimes one tends to assume the identity that, inadvertently or not, is imposed upon them.

Prejudice is roughly the second theme approached by McGrath in his *Introduction*:

> Racism, most pernicious of all form of emotional displacement, is the subject of several of these stories. Often the approach is subtle and oblique, as in the creepy few pages of "A Fine Old Firm" where the aptly named Mrs. Concord puts a Jewish woman firmly in her place. Or "After You, My Dear Alphonse," where no mention of ethnicity is required to identify the patronizing and stereotyping tendency of a certain sort of well-meaning liberal mind. But it is in "Flower Garden" that Shirley Jackson harnesses the ugliness of racism with the hypocrisy of small-town life to most telling and chilling effect (McGRATH, 2000, p. *ix*).

Indeed, in *Flower Garden*, we see one of the two main characters, a young widow who has recently moved into town, employing a "colored man" to work on her garden. She allows the gardener's son to play with her son, thus fueling a *quasi* silent outrage from the townspeople, who suddenly exact an unwarranted cold treatment on her. When she asks her friend, the other main character, who happens to have just moved into town as well, this woman (significantly) says nothing to her and thus helps perpetuate the invisible (an oppressing) prejudicial force that hovers around that town and that, as the reader may soon realize, has already taken over one more (the recently-arrived) member. The *new* woman pretends nothing is amiss instead of being honest. She, clearly to the reader and furtively to

the other protagonist, takes the townsfolk's side, and: "it is in just this way, Shirley Jackson seems to be saying to us, that society transmits those blind narrow rigid conventions and prejudices that bedevil human connectedness and divide people one from another" (McGRATH, 2000, p. *ix*).

Thirdly, the practice of singling out a party for unmerited treatment or having him or her receive the blame for a non-committed offense (known as *scapegoating*) takes place in many Jackson stories (as stated in the subsection 2.2.1., it is the case with "The Lottery"). In the collection *The Lottery and Other Stories* the tale entitled *The Renegade* stands out as example of scapegoating in the fiction of the author. In it, the Walpoles, city folk, recently arrived in a rural country town, receive a phone call accusing their dog, *Lady*, of killing the neighbor's chickens. Mrs. Walpole is constantly nagged by her neighbors to get rid of Lady. She struggles to find balance between her desire of take revenge on her neighbor and, for that matter, on the townspeople (on all of those who wanted her dog dead but whom she knew were not exactly bad people nor were committing a crime). On the other hand, she wished to defend Lady's honor against the vile punishments being suggested to her:

> Nice Mrs. Nash next door, cooking doughnuts, comfortably tells her that "'once they get the taste of blood...they'd rather kill than eat!'" Then old Mr. White, sitting on his porch, cheerfully calls out to her as she passes, "'Guess you're not going to have any more dog!'" The only solution, it seems, short of shooting the dog, is to tie a dead chicken around it's neck. The idea is, that as the chicken rots the dog becomes so sick of chicken it's cured of its bad habit. Various other revolting possibilities are outlined to Mrs. Walpole; but the worst of it is when her children come home for lunch, talking just as sadistically about poor Lady's fate as the rest of the town. (McGRATH, 2000, p.*ix*)

The story ends with Mrs. Walpole virtually feeling in her flesh the poor fate of her family's dog. In the last lines Mrs. Walpole closes her eyes: "suddenly feeling the harsh hands pulling her down, the sharp points closing in on her throat" (JACKSON, 2005, p. 83).

The recurring theme of scapegoating can also be seen in *Flower Garden*, perhaps the most complex of the short stories in the collection, and in *Elizabeth*, the longest one. In both stories the characters are forced to undergo adaptation to the traditional rules, values and social mores of the community they have recently moved into. As is the case with the majority of Jackson's characters, the victims in these two stories are women – rare exceptions are meek David, from "Like Mother Used to Make" and the dog Lady from *The Renegade*: "Shirley Jackson returns again and again to the figure of the human scapegoat, often a young woman who comes as an outsider to a rural community, where she discovers cruelty and

hypocrisy seething below the surface of apparently tranquil social waters" (McGRATH, 2000, p.*ix*)

As expected, it is sometimes possible to notice overlap in theme attribution across critics. According to Abby Werlock, author of *The Facts on File Companion to the American Short Story*, Ms. Jackson's early fiction "often dealt with socially sensitive topics such as racism (…) and mental retardation" (2010, p. 361). She cites *After you, My Dear Alphonse* and *Flower Garden* as examples of the former and *Behold the Child Among His Newborn Blisses* as example of the latter. Werlock also claims that the stories included in *The Lottery and Other Stories* often combine "Realism with the fantastic and typically portray a significant threat to at least one character's well-being, usually a woman's" (WERLOCK, 2010, 361). This *threat*, or the potentially synonymous *harm* is, in fact, the most pervasive and widespread theme of all. Werlock goes on to say that Ms. Jackson's later works included stories that explored "unbalanced minds and bizarre situations, as well as humorous sketches about family life, many based on personal experience" (p.361).

Her first novel, *The Road through the Wall*, published in 1948, had as its subject matter the spitefulness and snobbery of affluent people in a respectable suburb. The theme is characteristic of Jackson's bleak view of human nature. Her second and third novels, *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest*, published in 1951 and 1954 respectively, showed the author's interest in the complexities of the human mind and in mental and emotional pathologies. The former had as its subject matter the treatment of a young woman on the brink of a mental breakdown, whereas the latter, showed a girl afflicted by multiple personalities at war for dominance. Gothic themes heavily influence her next – and last – three complete novels; *The Sundial*, published in 1958, *The Haunting of Hill House*, in 1959, and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, in 1962. The three are examples of Jackson's life-long interest in the weird and in the supernatural, though these motifs, as usual, serve only as background to more important themes, and are never the ultimate objective. They were considered by critics, at different instances, as adult gothic fiction or psychological thrillers – and have been rated as such.

Yet another theme is discussed by *The New Republic*'s senior editor Ruth Franklin, who claims that Jackson's fictional world is dominated by women; in her words: "secretaries a bit past their prime and still unmarried, or mothers stuck at home with their children, longing for companionship yet terrified of their neighbors' gossip" (2010, p.1). Franklin adds that most of the stories take place in interiors; whether on houses, offices or apartments. These locations further demonstrate a peculiar fascination for the efforts that home-making requires:

"the grocery shopping, the painting and decorating, the small repairs". Franklin reminds us that Jackson was exploring topics such as the claustrophobia that often accompanies marriage and motherhood nearly a generation before Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* appeared - the book that brought about the first evidence-based explanations for the desperation that drove women. Jackson offers beautiful examples of the side-effects of housekeeping:

> The men are notable mainly for their absence; it's the women who perpetrate cruelties ranging from the petty to the shocking. In "Elizabeth," a career woman—she is a literary agent specializing in fiction—appears to make a pact with the devil. "Flower Garden" describes two women who are the best of friends until one of them flouts unspoken town rules by hiring a black man to help her in her garden. In "Behold the Child Among His Newborn Blisses," two mothers waiting in the pediatrician's office join forces against a third for her peculiar handling of her retarded son, but later one of the first two demonstrates her own deeper viciousness (FRANKLIN, 2010, p.1).

Through a skillful as well as distressing use of gothic techniques, Ms. Jackson "shatters entirely the myth of the happy patriarchal family with its properly *oedipalized* womenfolk" (DREW, 1993, p.12). By that Drew means not only the absence of a mother in the story but also the justifiable questioning of the presence of a flawed father figure. Also, Ms. Jackson's heroines tend to occupy, more than often, the margins of discourse, always functioning improperly as subjectivized characters so as to highlight the female subjects. As it happens in *The Haunting of Hill House* and in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle,* the female protagonists are granted access to fictionally-generated behaviors that "transgress the norms of female subjectivity (including sexuality) and include, in their figurations of desire, homosexual love and a drive towards dominance in excess of femininity" (p.13). In addition, Ms. Jackson's texts also figure madness as a kind of *textual strength*, in other words, a way of speaking about and, at the same time, through gender differences that make an *insane* response to conformity not only comprehensible but compulsory. In both novels, the maternal position dominates the rhetoric, in fact, it may even be said to structurally inform *The Haunting of Hill House.*

In conclusion, there has been no full accordance between scholars as to thematic divisions or unity regarding Jackson's literature. Why is it important to understand the search for thematic concurrence in her works? It is vital to try and satisfy the analytical needs of demanding critical investigations of writers who, because of public relations (mainly), receive labels of monochromatic nature. In Jackson's case, that she was solely a horror writer. The diversity, richness and complexity of her themes should aid in demystifying this inaccurate tagging. The failure of finding diverse thematic elements, by both professional critics and

readers in general, may have helped in the lukewarm (or non-existent) reception of everything she ever wrote (*"*The Lottery*"* and *The Haunting of Hill* house exempted). The objective of Part 3 is to begin the unraveling of the layers of Theme (thematic diversity and unity) and of meaning that lie dormant (and apparently unseen) in the deep layers of her texts.

3. THE UNTAPPED LEGACY

No account, written or oral, critical or fictional, illuminates Jackson's stories like Jackson's stories themselves. With this resolute statement the third and final Part of this dissertation presents the explanatory power of Jackson's fiction (willingly or not) in the interpretation of her own fiction.

What seems necessary is a critical account of the whole, a holistic critique that aims at binding the intricacies scattered throughout her oeuvre. This chapter attempts to be, at least, the initial driving force to this immensely overwhelming task – considering that a critical account involving the totality of an author's fictional production would be far too great for even an oversized doctoral dissertation (it would be the work of years and years of careful correlation that would absolutely pay off once the illuminating evidence found in one single story would demonstrate its usefulness in the revolutionary interpretative potential to (re)view another).

To aid in the analysis of the four short stories that compose the corpus ("The Intoxicated", "The Daemon Lover", "Like Mother Used to Make" and "The Villager") an informal method that contrives two hypothetical readers was devised. This system is intended to service as an example of how pervasive and coalescing the cryptic elements found in the Shirley Jackson Lore (henceforth SJL) can be when viewed by means of perceptually varying insights as potentially attainable by different hypothetical readers, namely a "novice Jackson reader" and an "experienced Jackson reader". The expression *novice* here does not refer to an unskilled reader but rather to one who has no (or scarce) prior familiarity with the author's work. The distinction was systematized pursuant to the assumption that there are layers of meaning that even the most proficient of readers may fail to access. The rationale is that these latent meaning-messages can only be retrieved – when analyzing *one* particular story – through intelligence garnered from *other* works by the same author. The *other texts* – that

make up the totality of Jackson's *oeuvre* – hold valuable information in that they serve as sources, or keys, to breaking the dormant codes that ordinarily lie in a Jackson story individually. This means, in other words, that there is a self-contained kind of intertextuality that allows for these connections to exist and, at the same time, renders her stories much more complex and multi-layered then otherwise alleged (as in BLOOM, 2001). Awareness of the elements that constitute the SJL does not provide essentially a *better* understanding of the author's stories, but a different one, in that it allows insight into layers of meaning otherwise imperceptible to the novice Jackson reader.

The first section helps the reader to find out how the 1949 short story "The Intoxicated" can be elucidated by other Jackson stories from the collection *The Lottery and Other Stories* as well as from elsewhere in the author's fiction.

3.1. "The Intoxicated"

One evening, Jackson's husband, Stanley, and herself were receiving a couple of friends for a game of Monopoly when suddenly Shirley started to sell her property in the game – which was quite odd given her competitive nature – and she quickly left the living room off to Stanley's study and started typing. A few moments later she came back with a piece of paper in hand and began reading aloud to her audience. She attentively heard their comments and went back to revise the original draft. Later that night the story was ready for publication (OPPENHEIMER, 1988). And this was how the first draft of "The Intoxicated" was created.

This story is special for a number of reasons. It is the first story from her first published collection of short stories that came out in the wake of "The Lottery"'s success, in other words, the general reading public who read Shirley's story in the *New Yorker* and who never read anything else by her *and* who bought the book, was having the opportunity of taking their first step into the larger Jackson world. Ergo, this means being granted access into the Shirley Jackson Lore.

The themes that would appear (in disguise) throughout her oeuvre spring first in "The Intoxicated". The story takes place at an ordinary house party in an unnamed American suburb. One of the guests escapes to the kitchen pretending to get more ice but with the real intention of sobering up a bit.

Despite being the first story in the book, it is not the first mention of a festive gathering. One has already been announced in the epigraph to the first part of the book. Four passages from Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus Triumphatus; or, Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions*, originally from 1689, divide the volume roughly into groups of six short stories (only the second group has seven)[25].

The epigraph to the first part reads[26]:

> … she saith, that after their meetings, they all make very low obeyances to the Devil, who appears in black clothes, and a little band. He bids them welcome at their coming, and brings wine or beer, cakes, meat, or the like. He sits at the higher end…they eat, drink, dance and have musick. At their parting they use to say, merry meet, merry part. (In: HALL, 1993, p. 7).

Hall writes that: "the passage colors the reader's perception of the cocktail party in "The Intoxicated" (1993, p. 7) and adds that the drink, the music, and especially the preview of global disaster at the kitchen are unpleasantly reminiscent of the gathering described by an alleged witch in Glanvill's record of confession.

The excessive drinking that goes on in the house party is also neither incidental nor accidental, for Jackson was accustomed to such gatherings herself (without the devil worshipping, of course): "the Hymans entertained often-big parties and smaller get-togethers, many of which involved bridge" (OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 121).

In the story, the guest encounters the daughter of the party hosts in the kitchen. She is a young girl named Eileen, who is drinking coffee and doing homework. She is seventeen years old and a senior in high school. One of the first pieces of information that she volunteers regarding herself is the fact that she stayed back one year out of school due to pneumonia.

In real life, Jackson was also not unfamiliar to diseases that keep her from outdoor commitments. This scenario got worse as she grew older and culminated with bouts of depression and agoraphobia.

In the story, Eillen offers the unnamed guest black coffee, exactly what he was looking for in the hope of clearing his head from all the drinking. She comfortably remarks how lively and entertaining the party must be, connoting no attraction or aspiration to be in it. The guest experiences a sort of quagmire that the reader cannot at this point tell if it is actual or perceived in relation to Eileen. He is having a hard time estimating what to talk about with

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[25] Friedman notes that the Glanvill references were suggested by the original publishers to make *The Lottery and Other Stories* look more mysterious and therefore more "salable".

[26] Hall notes that the passage is omitted from the 1982 paperback edition she cites in her study. Interestingly, the passage does not appear in the original 1949 American version either. It is, however, included in the first British edition published in 1950. It is not featured in the 2005 Farrar, Giroux and Strauss American paperback edition used in this research.

the girl, wondering whether boys or basketball are the appropriate topic of conversation – he unsuccessfully chose the latter. What he finds more aggravating is his struggle to talk to her. He finally asks Eileen about her homework, to which she replies "I'm writing a paper on the future of the world" (JACKSON, 2005, p. 5[27]), and confesses she finds it silly. Interestingly, his reply was: "your party out front is talking about it. That's one reason I came out here" (p. 5).

The man notices the girl seeing through his lie, since that was not at all the reason he was out there in the kitchen; somehow this may lead to the reasoning that she somehow has access to the man's thoughts quicker or better than he himself. In this particular moment, as in few others – even acknowledging his alcoholic state -, she sort of outwits him. It is not unlike this type of character to have an acute sensitivity towards other people or future events (see the protagonist of "All She Said Was Yes"[28]). As if discovered in his harmless – and careless – untruth, and to quickly bring the subject about, he quickly enquires: "what are you saying about the end of the world?" (p. 5). The girl reveals her prophetic conjecturing by saying that she does not think she has much of a future and "well, after all, it isn't as though we didn't know about it in advance" (p. 5).

The man almost sees the words blurting out of his mouth before he thinks about them: "It's an interesting time to be alive" (p.5) he says as if he is still in a party-mode. His sentence may be viewed as a consequence of his being intimidated by the girl's precociousness allied to her unhesitating earnestness to speak her mind; and as an attempt at condescendingly dismissing her opinion, something that happens more and more as the conversation progresses. The guest becomes a little restless and slightly more irritable with Eileen and starts giving her rather snappy retorts, only this time, he ponders before he speaks: "In my day," he said, overemphasizing, "girls thought of nothing but cocktails and necking" (p. 5). She retaliates with resolution that that is partly the problem: "if people had been really, honestly scared when you were young we wouldn't be so badly off today" (p. 6). "When I was young" he exploded thinking that his voice had come out with more of an edge than he would have liked it to. His reaction was to step away from her to indicate the half-interest of an adult towards a child, amused as though he was being graceful towards her childish ways. He tries to be mature about it saying that it is normal for kids this age, around sixteen,

[27] The following page numbers refer to this same publication (JACKSON, 2005) unless noted otherwise.
[28] In the short story "All She Said Was Yes", the main character is a young girl who blandly predicts her parents' deaths in an accident and reacts numbly to it.

seventeen to be scared and that probably his generation was also scared, after all, this was part of a phase youngsters go through: “like being boy-crazy” (p. 6).

Eileen remains unperturbed by his mocking attitude. She softly and clearly describes her vision of the end of the world:

> Somehow I think of the churches as going first, before even the Empire State Building. And then all the big apartment houses by the river, slipping down slowly into the water with the people inside. And the schools in the middle of Latin class maybe, while we’re reading Caesar. (…) Each time we begin a chapter in Caesar, I wonder if this won’t be the one we never finish. Maybe we in our Latin class will be the last people who ever read Caesar (p. 6).

Eileen’s visions is comparable to that of Aunt fanny, from *The Sundial*, who predicted that a catastrophe would wipe out everyone and everything and only a selected group of people would survive. Eileen’s attitude is also comparable to that of Janice, the protagonist of the homonymous short story, the first ever published by Jackson (at a Syracuse university newspaper), the girl who wants to shock the people at the party she is at by saying that she tried to kill herself. Oppenheimer’s biography suggests that Eileen shares the personality with Sally, Shirley’s third daughter. The fact of the matter is, nonetheless, that Sally was not even born when Jackson wrote “The Intoxicated” and perhaps this is one of the reason *Private Demons* is considered, at times, such a *mystical* text (not in the good sense): “

> The oddest element in the story, however, was the identity of the girl. There is no doubt in anyone’s mind that the girl was a dead ringer for Sally (…) there was only one problem (…) sally was yet to be born (OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 121).

Back at the story, the guest responds rudely and playfully to Eileen’s predictions. He thinks it silly for a girl like her to fill her mind with what he calls *morbid trash*, and advises her to buy a movie magazine and to settle down or something like that. Running out of patience, he stands up and feels like saying something adult and scathing but he realizes that by doing just that he would only reveal that he had been paying attention and he does not want that to happen. He thinks that *when he was young* was not that long ago, and that people did not think like that; “if you have any trouble with your Latin, he says finally, “I’ll be glad to give you a hand” (p. 7). One critic went as far as saying that Eileen actually sobered the man up with her “with a coolly imagined vision of the end of civilization” (RAFFERTY, 2010, p. 16). To the guest’s surprise, she giggles. Back in the living room he sees his hostess: “deep in an earnest conversation with a tall, graceful man in a blue suit” (p. 8).

This is an epic moment. Though outside the scope of the vast majority of criticism regarding Ms. Jackson’s works, this seemingly trivial occasion is the unprecedented

introduction of one of the most pervasive and memorable characters of all of her literature. It is the first time the reader meets this elegant tall gentleman in a blue suit, a.k.a. James Harris, a.k.a. the Daemon Lover, the mythical creature that inhabits the SJL inspired by the homonymous creature from the Anglo-Scottish Ballad No. 243 by Francis James Child. In the SJL, Harris's mere presence is an omen of unfortunate deeds and pernicious circumstances. His mere presence is a synonym of harm, in the widest and more far-reaching possible sense of the word (though his absence – when announced – may as well commend similar misfortune).

James Harris is a constant figure in the texts that comprise *The Lottery and Other Stories*. The first editions of this collection were originally published with the subtitle *The Adventures of James Harris*, alluding to the capricious and mercurial roles played by this demon in several of its stories. The saga of the medieval myth of James Harris is registered within the monumental work by folk scholar Francis James Child entitled *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, originally published between 1882 and 1898. Child ballad number 243 tells the story of a sailor (Harris) who, after a period of absence, returns to Ireland to see his betrothed married to another man, generally a house carpenter, and with two children. Harris persuades her to leave her new family and come with him. When at sea, he sinks the ship and the story ends in tragedy. In the SJL Harris, much like the devil in traditional Christian mythology, is deceitful and uses of pretence to confound his victims (see "The Daemon Lover" and "The Witch"). The outcome is often unpredictable. He usually has the power of piercing through the characters' minds (both male and female) and reading their thoughts (see "Seven Types of Ambiguity" and "The Renegade"): "Jackson will use Harris to figure women's illusions (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 35). He is cunning to the point of manipulating dreams, desires and expectations. He enters and destroys, generally with vile and detestable aftereffects.

"The Intoxicated" ends when the guest returns to the party and finds Eileen's father and comments that he had been just having an interesting conversation with his daughter, who was doing her Latin homework. The father nonchalantly exclaims: "kids nowadays".
Jackson writes that the father shakes his head *ruefully* while he commiserates with the guest, implying his disappointment with contemporary youth. He is a reflection of what future characters will display, i.e., the attitude of disapproving parents (or of parents who are simply oblivious to their children). These parent-characters will be either not aware or not concerned with the lives and needs of their offspring and will, most of them, suffer dire ends (see "All She Said Was Yes").

It has been argued that the title of the story is meant to reflect the guest's inebriated state (and there one may include the states of all the other guests of the party as well as that of the host and hostess). Hall posits that the title is also relevant to describe the "excited intensity of Eileen" (1993, p. 9). Eileen's behavior-type can be traced back to Marilyn Perlman, the protagonist of Jackson's first novel, *The Road Through the Wall* and forward to Natalie Waite, from *Hangsman* (1951) and even Mary Katherine Blackwood, in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962). The four girls can be described as belligerent teenagers with vivid imaginations. Eileen's discussion with the inebriated guest foreshadows more verbal altercations to come in *The Lottery and Other Stories* (most of them contained and collected – see "Trial by Combat" and "Like Mother Used to Make").

The stories original ending was a bit different, more somber and more menacing. In the earliest of three drafts found in the Shirley Jackson Papers, the story does not end with the host's rueful words, but with the guest's realization that he was not the only one who shared a fear of what was about to come:

> Suddenly in his host's eyes and tightened mouth he found the fear, the insistent nagging, ("When they come, when they come with their songs and their bright new worlds, with their gaiety and their cruelty, where will we hide? What will preserve us, who will protect us, what can save us then?"). And he said brightly, looking down into his glass, "she's going to be a fine woman someday. (In: HALL, 1993, p. 10)

Jackson decided to improve the story by editing this ending off. As a contemporary of Hemingway, she seemed to make free use of the iceberg principle, leaving the crux of the story lying below the surface of the text. Another important change was the outfit of the man who was talking to the hostess at the end of a story, that went from a "heavy red-faced man in a grey suit" (In: HALL, 1993, p. 10) to a tall graceful man in a blue suit, exposing thus, Jackson's voluntary and conscientious effort at building her half-hidden lore.

3.2. "The Daemon Lover"

In her first writings as a young girl Shirley Jackson alluded to a fictional character in specific that inhabited what was to become her personal private mythology, a shadowy figure that intermittently appears to her, sometimes in a dream, others in what could be described as a vision: "a figure that would eventually take form in her mind as the demon lover" (OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 48). This figure lends its name to the title of the short story

presently under analysis, which uses, nonetheless, the spelling *daemon* as it originally appears in the medieval Anglo-Scottish ballad that fittingly inspires it (see section XXX Child's ballad)."The Daemon Lover" was first published in the February 1949 edition of *Woman's Home Companion* magazine (originally under the title *The Phantom Lover*).

Another figure to inhabit Jackson's fictional universe is the *dazed woman*, generally a young adult who either begins the narrative at a dazed state of mind and maintains it throughout the narrative or, more commonly, starts in an unexceptional state of mind which then gets ever more benumbed as the story progresses. In both cases, these female characters present a disorganized state-of-mind in the sense that they "lack a core of identity [which] forces them to seek meaning and direction in the world outside themselves" (HAGUE, 2005, p. 76) and *there* is where they usually get lost. In the SJL, the comfort lies within oneself or within symbolical, or real, walls, a notable symptom of the author's agoraphobic tendencies.

A representative example of the first case is Clara Spencer, the protagonist of "The Tooth" (also featured in *The Lottery and Other Stories*), who spends the whole tale under the effect of codeine tablets to ease her toothache (to which she responds in varying degrees). In that story, Clara's first line of dialogue to her husband is: "I feel so funny" (p. 265), which, with no delays, presents her to the readers with the initial symptoms of the previously mentioned dazed state of mind. She soon adds: "light-headed, and sort of dizzy" (p. 266), thus reinforcing her condition. At the end of that story, when Clara leaves the dentist's building in New York City, she is still "oblivious of the people who stepped sharp along the sidewalk (…) [as she] she ran barefoot through hot sand" (p. 286), demonstrating the continuation of her sedated, dreamy state to the very end.

A representative of the second case is Margaret from *The Beautiful Stranger* (a short story that appears in the 1968 collection *Come Along with Me*), a lucid woman who in the beginning of that story goes to a railroad station to pick up her husband, who had been out of town in business, and take him home. She, however, starts slowly and gradually to get suspicious of the man who has returned thinking that he might not be her husband. At the end, she does not know even who *she* is any longer, nor where she lives; as the narrator puts it: "the evening was very dark and she [Margaret] could see only the houses going in rows, with more rows beyond them and more rows beyond that, and somewhere a house which was hers, with the beautiful stranger inside, and she lost out [t]here" (JACKSON, 1995, p. 65). Coincidentally (or not), another character named Margaret, from the story *Pillar of Salt* (also featured in *The Lottery and Other Stories*), sees her mental state coming apart gradually through the tale which culminates with her becoming momentarily paralyzed, like the biblical

wife of Lot[29] (thus, the title), in the middle of the street amidst a crowd in a busy bustling modern American town. Both Margaret-characters can be described as "wom[e]n (…) subject to anxiety and crisis" (HALL, 1993, p. xiii) fed still by "the fantasy that arises from the gentle crumbling of reality" (HALSBAND, 1949, p. 19). Hall was actually referring to Jackson's urban, unmarried female protagonists, which is the case of the first Margaret and of the unnamed main character of "The Daemon Lover". In all three cases, the reader is likely to sense, as the stories progress, an "ever-increasing nervousness" (DURGIN, 2009, p. 15); the eminent characteristics that constitute the *dazed woman* in Shirley Jackson's creative universe.

Contextually-wise, the main character in "The Daemon Lover" is "presumably living in the United States in the late 1940s" (DURGIN, 2009, p. 6). The story opens with the delivery of a *double entendre*, thus leaving at least two early doubts in the reader's mind. Following the words of the narrator to the letter, one learns that the protagonist wakes up alone in her apartment – that much is sufficiently established –, however, there is a latent possibility that, in the previous night, she had gone to sleep with her fiancé. His potential evasion somewhere in the middle of the night is particularly intriguing and sets the persistent tone of doubt that is to linger for the remainder of the story. Casting assumptions aside and trusting the amount of certainties provided by the narrator, the reader then learns that the woman assuredly had not slept well; again, very significant, since she had woken up and gotten back to sleep a number of times during the night "remembering over and over" (p. 9) the narrator does not say what. One can assume it is the engagement circumstances she keeps recalling, however, this inference can only be drawn further down the text, ergo, at this point, the reader cannot possibly know what she was brooding about. It may be interesting to indicate that a continuously interrupted period of sleep may yield undesirable effects upon a person's cognitive faculties. To aggravate this contingency, during the night, she had been intermittently "slipping again into a feverish dream" (p. 9) – a remark which is not only the trigger for a sufficiently ambiguous perception of the events that are to come, but also that securely places the protagonist in the *dazed woman* category asserted by the SJL.

According to scholar Jerry Wadden, the frustrations and individual rages of Jackson's characters led them to seek refuge in imaginary worlds. He contends that: "people are forced to search for love and happiness in fantasy when these goals are impossible in the real world" (1970, p. 1). Curiously, many of Jackson's worlds of fiction were not exactly pleasant; and

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[29] In the biblical book of *Genesis*, Lot's family, just before leaving the city of Sodom, is told by God not to look back as they flee the city limits. Lot's wife does not obey and is thus transformed into a pillar of salt.

that is curious but not surprising, since the message she was probably trying to convey was that life in that moment of the twentieth century she lived in was not exactly pleasant for a woman: "“The Daemon Lover” in particular (…) critique[s] a society that fails to protect women from becoming victims of strangers or neighbors” (WERLOCK, 2010, p. 162). Her works painted a sensitive and accurate picture of those times: “Man's inhumanity to man--the apathy of parents, the cruelty of society, the perversion of human values--screams that her view of the world in the twentieth century was distressingly realistic (WADDEN, 1970, p. 71).

Jackson produced an assortment of texts that explore the relationship between women and their society and how that relationship may or may not lead to madness. In her plots, several of her female characters seek to come to terms with society and with the patriarchal system that so often subdues them and, when all else fails, they sort of seek mental illness as a means of escape.

Back in “The Daemon Lover”, the protagonist, after getting up, spends almost an hour over coffee. The reader learns that the original intention was to have “a real breakfast *on the way*” (p. 9, my italics) – though the destination is not revealed. She then decides to use the spare time to write a letter to her sister to inform her about the upcoming wedding. She tells the sisters that she herself is not yet accustomed to the idea of being married and that the circumstances that led to this are even stranger – the reader again does not know what she meant by *stranger* but can only assume that is nothing fundamentally out of the ordinary but rather involving some uncanny coincidence or something of the sort. To Jackson Scholar Heather Strempke Durgin: “In a letter written to her sister, the fiancée expresses disbelief that anyone would want to marry her” and “is surprised, and even expects her sister to be surprised, by the strange notion that anyone would want to marry her.” (2009, p. 15-16).

Interestingly the sister is an off-stage character who would be in the receiving-end of a message and therefore not in a position to attest or verify information in this story. As a matter of fact, the third-person narrator is so subordinate and trustful of the insights and discernment of the point-of-view character to the point of being dependent, almost unsustaining – which is not unusual for the author’s narrators, who have a sort of tradition of being unreliable. Jackson scholar Daryl Hattenhauer described this narrative trace stating that: “the third person narration looks so thoroughly through the protagonist’s perception that the narrator reports on the protagonist’s delusions as if they are verifiable” (2003, p. 35). Still according to him, the consequence of this is that the narration ends up fashioning a tantamount illusion in both the protagonist’s mind and the reader’s mind. Rosemary Jackson

explains that "the uncertain vision of the protagonist of the fantastic is spread to the reader through a conflation of narrator and hero" (1981, p. 30), which is quite adequate to this case, with the exception that the author does not overtly use any other feature of the fantastic in this story.

The protagonist, apparently for no apparent reason, decides against sending the letter and tears it. She then spends a considerable amount of time choosing a dress to wear when, in the meantime, she comments "I'll have a headache if I don't get some solid food soon (…) all this coffee, smoking too much, no real breakfast" (p. 10). The headache is a potential precursor to the stupor that befalls women in the *dazed* category of the SJL.

As "The Daemon Lover" continues, the dowdy woman goes into the bathroom closet and gets an aspirin from a tin box – an action that may also go unnoticed to the novice reader but that may be symptomatic of some greater pathological state considering the characters' history of chemical abuse. Out of a sudden, in horror she realizes that she had forgotten to put clean sheets on the bed – another obsession similar to that of Clara Spencer from "The Tooth", and of Constance Blackwood from *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, i.e, the domestic theme of compulsive tidiness and cleanliness.

In the tale under scrutiny, the reader learns that the protagonist saw "the laundry was freshly back and she took clean sheets and pillow cases from the top shelf of the closet and stripped the bed, working quickly to avoid thinking consciously of why she was changing the sheets" (p. 10) – the theme of female subservience may be approached there as well, as her action may be construed (as it has been before in NOACK, 1994) as a reaction to the male dominance, in this case, the obsession with order and extreme organization in the house with the purpose of servicing and pleasing the husband (whether or not upon his request or forced by his imperious order).

In the SJL, when physical organization reflects the character's mental organization, a tidy room mirrors a sane character, and the opposite is also true, i.e., a messy apartment is an echo of a character with a disturbed mind. Upset peoples and places yield unreliable and delusive stories, which, in turn, dangerously play with the reader's potential interpretations of them.

Back in "The Daemon Lover", when the woman looks at the clock and ascertains that it is already past nine o'clock, she begins to hurry: "she took a bath, and used one of the clean towels, which she put into the hamper and replaced with a clean one" (p. 10-11) – one more instance to corroborate the cleanliness element of the SJL and one more example of the male subservience element can be found in the following passage:

> The blue dress was certainly decent, and clean, and fairly becoming, but she had worn it several times with Jamie, and there was nothing about it which made it special for a wedding day. The print dress was overly pretty, and new to Jamie, and yet wearing such a print this early in the year was certainly rushing the season (p. 11).

Still undecided about what to wear she thinks about going shopping for something suitable when she realizes it is close to ten o'clock and she will only have time to hair and make-up. It is remarkable how much of herself the author transfers to her characters, thus the pervasiveness of the author's self-figure in the SJL. The narrator comments about the character's pallor and the lines around the eyes. It is known that in real life Shirley herself looked much older than she really was in the later life some years before she died at age 48. Jackson has pictures of her in her forties of what looks like an elderly woman; she had alcohol and tobacco to thank for that. The protagonist in "The Daemon Lover" is thirty-four years old, though it says thirty on her driving license – and even that is a reflection of Shirley's issues with real age, for though she was born in 1916, she often produced her date of birth as 1919, so as not to seem older than her husband Stanley who was indeed born in 1919.

She heated the coffee for the third time now – harbingers of compulsive behavior – and still unsatisfied she accepted her impotence at improvement. Reconciled with the way she were, she tried to think of her fiancé but failed to picture his face on her mind: "she cannot remember his physical features, his face, etc. (…) but the sense that he loves her is still there" (NøRJORDET, 2005, p. 52); something very significant as one of the first most important clues in weighing the reality of his existence:

> Settled, she tried to think of Jamie and could not see his face clearly, or hear his voice. It is always that way with someone you love, she thought, and let her mind slip past today and tomorrow, into the farther future, when Jamie was established with his writing and she had given up her job, the golden house-in-the-country future (p. 12).

It should not be a coincidence that Stanley Edgar Hyman, Jackson's actual husband, was a literary critic – as close to the writer in the passage as it can get – and that Shirley dreamt of living this American dream described in the passage above (OPPENHEIMER, 1988).

The fiancé that goes by the name of Jamie in the story is the cornerstone for one of the most important connections to be made concerning the SJL. The ultimate thematic concurrence, that which binds (and feeds) almost all stories in the collection *The Lottery and Other Stories* (2005) which, notwithstanding, was originally subtitled *The Adventures of*

James Harris, alluding to the delusive and untrustworthy role played by the demon James Harris – a.k.a. Jamie – in several of the stories of that collection.

In many instances in the SJL, Harris has the power of piercing through the characters' minds (both male and female) and reading their thoughts (see *Seven Types of Ambiguity* and *The Renegade* – both featured in *The Lottery and Other Stories*): "Jackson will use Harris to figure women's illusions (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 35). He is cunning to the point of manipulating dreams, desires and expectations. He enters and destroys, generally with vile and detestable aftereffects.

This is the fiancé the protagonist is preparing to see. At ten thirty in the morning, she dials for the time delivered over the phone and hears the operator's metallic voice saying ten-twenty-nine, however: "half-consciously she set her clock back a minute" (p. 12) the night before, a piece of information which provides the reader with potentially misguiding information. The events that take place the previous day with her fiancé must have been real, since the *present* telephone call corroborates the disparate time between her clock and the *real* time of the story, nonetheless, her doing the changing happened half-consciously, which brings doubt as to whether those events really happened or the time given over the phone was simply different from the time displayed in her watch – which should not be considered uncommon – and, in this case, *yesterday*, as she recalls, may not have happened at all. The drowsy state she finds herself in brings incongruities and raises questions in the best delusive and unreliable Jackson style.

It is eleven o'clock already and Jamie has not showed up. There is nothing to eat in the apartment and the woman is having coffee again – the effects of the lack of food are serious candidates for the dazed feeling that seem to hover over the character and the excessive ingestion of caffeine is liable of increasing the foggy state she finds herself in. Yet, one cannot help but question the potential ambiguity in ingesting high amounts of a stimulant such as coffee and, at the same time, being in a state of languor and lethargy. This supports the previously mentioned unreliability of the narrator which, according to Hattenhauer, "begins to emerge with the report that the protagonist drinks a lot of coffee and yet falls asleep" and he adds that "while it is possible to drink coffee and fall asleep, the ambiguity of that report seems to be a result of the narrator's immersion in the protagonist's mind" (2003, p.35).

She expects him home at any minute now. All the food that there actually is in the house is unopened and she wants to keep it that way for she is saving for the honeymoon-breakfast the following day, however: "by eleven-thirty she was so dizzy and weak that she had to go downstairs" (p. 13). A few minutes before she had thought about going downstairs

to a drugstore to find something to eat and of leaving a note on the door in case he arrived. She feared he would find the apartment alone and not know where she had gone. The thought was rejected. She also considered calling him but Jamie – importantly – had no phone, so she finally decides to go with the recently rejected decision. The fact that he has no phone is in itself another substantial clue in the weighing of the decision for or against his existence in this story.

By eleven-thirty she is so weak that she has no other choice but to go downstairs to buy food, which strengthens her unreliability. While leaving the note she stains her fingers with ink from the pen that leads her to wash her hands and to dry them in a clean towel she then replaces – bolstering the obsession with cleanliness of the SJL. In the drugstore she cannot find anything to eat that pleases her so she asks for more coffee, in turn reinforcing the addictive substance abuse of the SJL – a harbinger of unreliable manners of conduct. Upon finding no one at the apartment, the message untouched and all, she sits down and falls asleep only to wake up startled at twenty to one – once again alternating between lethargic-sleep and waking-stupor – augmenting the unreliable behavior.

She leaves the apartment and takes a taxi to Jamie's address. During the ride she "suddenly realized how imprudent it would be to drive brazenly up to Jamie's door, demanding him" (p. 14). Because of that thought she asks the taxi driver to let her off on the corner of the target destination. Though she knows where the place is, the reader learns from the narrator that the she had never been there before and that: "the building was pleasant and old, and Jamie's name was not on any of the mailboxes in the vestibule, nor on the door bells" (P. 14) – which clearly argues against his existence and is not atypical of the James Harris persona in the SJL. Moreover, the fact that the bride-to-be has never been to her fiancé's apartment is also evidence to help question his existence.

Upon confirming that she is in the correct address, she rings the superintendent's number and is let in. In the corridor, a door opens at a distance and a voice offers assistance without much enthusiasm. It is a man on his shirtsleeves. The protagonist explains she is looking for a person who lived there, one James Harris – and here is where the reader has access for the first time to Jamie's full name. The man does not know who this Harris person is and asks a woman inside his apartment who also claims there is no one under that name living in the building and that the enquirer might have the wrong address: "sorry", the man said "you got the wrong house, lady (…) or the wrong man". He and the woman laugh; a little pun Jackson's plays on the reader, but even though comic in effect, it is no less relevant than the others as a hints of the fiancé's (non)existence. Furthermore, their laughter is also quite

significant for it would not be the last time people will laugh at her – laughing at women (especially when done by men) is another recurring element from the SJL: ""The Daemon Lover" is a demonstration of the extent to which oppressive systems can be internalized and an investigation into the psychological damage that such internalized hegemony does" (DURGIN, 2009, p. 7).

As the couple was about to close the door, the protagonist insisted and the woman still inside the apartment asked for a description of this Harris person, to which it was replied: "he's rather tall, and fair. He wears a blue suit very often. He's a writer" (p. 15). This description confirms Jamie as the James Harris of the SJL with all common characteristics attributed to him since the first moment of his appearance in the short story "The Intoxicated" (also from *The Lottery and Other Stories*). In it, Harris is described as: "a tall, graceful man in a blue suit" (p. 8).

In "The Daemon Lover", after having heard Harris's description, the woman from the apartment hypothesizes that they *could* be talking about a man who lived on the third floor: "there was a fellow (…) he wore a blue suit a lot, lived on the third floor for a while (…) he stayed there about a month" (p. 16), moreover, she sends the inquirer to talk to the Roysters, the couple who rented the room to the elusive tenant. The protagonist goes to the third floor without knowing what apartment number to look for when she hears music coming from inside apartment door 3B; she also hears voices. She knocks on the door and Dottie Royster opens. The questing woman explains she is looking for Mr. Harris, the person who had previously occupied her apartment. "O Lord" Mrs. Royster exclaims twice and calls for her husband, Ralph, who is of no assistance. In an altercating manner, Mr. Royster ends the conversation. His wife informs the woman that the tenant had left that very morning and that: "everything was fine, though, perfectly fine (…) not a thing out of place (…) everything just the way we left it" (p. 18). Through Mrs. Royster's assertion that nothing had been altered, the narrator increases the idea of Jamie's nonexistence.

The failing bride-to-be leaves the building not knowing what to do. She thinks about reconstructing Jamie's footsteps from his apartment to hers and inquires to herself what choices had he possibly made. With that, the reader learns that the woman does not know the man she is looking for all that well, what stresses the idea that perhaps it is all in her mind. Attempting to retrace Jamie's steps, she asks a man behind a counter in a delicatessen on the way between his house and hers but finds no help. She asks yet another man at a newsstand but once more is met with no assistance. Both men treat her with disdain and insolence and laugh at her when she leaves; as previously mentioned, a characteristic of men in the streets,

or rather from anywhere in the SJL. She asks a third time to a (male) florist whom she hopes has seen a tall man in a blue suit; she hoped Jamie had bought her flowers that morning. The florist is positive that a man with the description she provided bought chrysanthemums around ten o'clock. She thinks the buyer the florist is referring to might not be her fiancé because a wedding is not an occasion where chrysanthemums are brought to. Be that as it may, the florist does not escape the fresh male profile from the SJL; his last words to the hopeful young woman are: "I hope you find your young man" (p. 23), but he delivers it with a *nasty sound*, according to the narrator. Her next thought is to resort to the police and this is how the author puts it:

> There was a policeman on the corner, and she thought, Why don't I go to the police—you go to the police for a missing person. And then thought, What a fool I'd look like. She had a quick picture of herself standing in a police station, saying, 'Yes, we were going to be married today, but he didn't come,' and the policemen, three or four of them standing around listening, looking at her, at the print dress (…) smiling at one another." (p. 23).

This smile certainly does not imply sympathy nor compassion, but rather mockery and derision. In her mind she imagined telling the policemen she acknowledged how silly that was, after all she was all dressed up trying to find the man who had run away from her on her wedding day.

The protagonist finally discards the *police idea*. On the way back to her own apartment (there was a distance of about six blocks between his building and hers) she stops at a shoeshine stand and enquires to an old man that worked there about the tall man in a blue suit; now adding that he was carrying flowers. To her surprise, his answer was affirmative, that is, he had seen a fellow with that description and he did stop by around ten o'clock that morning. The old man said: "I remember I thought, You're going to see your girl, young fellow. They all go to see their girls" (p. 24). The reader ought to realize that although this is good news for the enquirer, the old man involuntarily lets out (emphasizing) that this is a quite common affair. This means that chances are that it was not the man she was looking for, even though the morning customer *did* fit the description the woman provided. The narrator does not highlight this tricky probability, though. Jackson's ambiguity is ingenious, however:

> the tantalizing possibility remains – that the incident of the courtship of the character of Harris is a product of the lady's anxious imagination; for the reader has never met him; no one seems to know him or – considering the many young men who might be wearing blue suits – has never seen him (FRIEDMAN, 1975, p. 51).

With the information provided by the old man at the shoeshine stand, the protagonist is now certain in her mind that when she arrives home Jamie will be there waiting for her, so

she rushes home almost running in the last three blocks. She runs upstairs to find nothing but an empty apartment. Frustrated and back on the street, she asks the shoeshine man once again, and he points to the last direction he had seen the man. She follows his direction to the street where there is a house with a woman at the window rocking a baby to sleep. The protagonist enquires, already proficient at the question by this point, if the lady had not seen this man carrying flowers. A twelve-year-old boy who had been listening to the conversation answers affirmatively. The boy says that the man gave him a quarter and said it was a big day for him. This boy had followed the man in order to receive the promised quarter so he knew where the man had gone to. The protagonist gives him a dollar and asks him to point in that direction. The boys says: "top floor (…) I followed him till he give me the quarter. Way to the top (…) You gonna divorce him? (…) You gonna divorce him, missus? You got something on him?" (p. 26). The boy asks this same question repeatedly. Leaving the boy screaming about the divorce and the mother laughing at her, the narrator goes to the said building and finds the outer door unlocked. As it can be observed, the laughter directed to potentially delusional characters is a recurrent image stemming not only from male characters. Minor characters laugh at the protagonist as if to mock her, to ridicule her, to call her crazy, and perhaps that last one is the most powerful image the author wishes to impinge upon the reader: "everywhere she searches she encounters couples who mock her with not-so-subtle insinuations that she is crazy" (GOLD, 2010, p. 162).

There were no bells on the building and no list of names at the vestibule. The protagonist goes upstairs and sees two doors. There was a crumpled florist's paper in front of one of the doors and a knotted paper ribbon – as if the final clues in a mad treasure hunt.

> She knocked, and thought she heard voices inside, and she thought, suddenly with terror, What shall I say if Jamie is there, if he comes to the door? The voices seemed suddenly still. She knocked again and there was silence, except for something that might have been laughter far away (p. 27).

Her concern was certainly justified – What *do* you say to the person who has run from you at your wedding day? The fact that there were voices and, upon knocking, the voices disappeared is in accordance to the behavior of one who wishes to hide. Hearing voices is also ultimately a sign of schizophrenia or, in more lay terms, of being crazy – one of the images that the author may wish the reader to come to question as the story progresses. Not only does the laughter enhance the theory that questions the protagonist's sanity but it also reiterates the mischievousness and the devilry associated to the James Harris character.

The protagonist is sane enough to reason in her mind that Jamie could have seen her as she was approaching the building since the window of that apartment faces the front of the structure, and the little boy made sufficient a scandal raising his voice and asking her those ominous questions about divorce.

She waited a little longer in silence and knocked again. There was just silence. She then decides to go to the other, the remaining door and knock on it. It swings open to reveal an empty attic, filled with nothing but bags of plaster, piles of old newspapers, a broken trunk: "there was a noise which she suddenly realized as a rat, and then she saw it, sitting very close to her, near the wall, its evil face alert, bright eyes watching her" (p. 27). The appearance of the rat is reminiscent of that in Bram Stoker's 1891 short story *The Judges's House* which displayed a "great rat with baleful eyes" (1992, p. 42) that would "disappear through a hole (…) on the wall" (1992, p. 39). To Jackson scholar Lenemaja Friedman, Harris is "indeed a demonic creature" who "pursues thirtyish females (…) *appearing* and *disappearing* at will" (1975, p. 51, my italics).

The story ends with the protagonist certain that there is someone inside that apartment because she knew she could hear low voices and sometimes laughter. The following days and weeks she returns but: "no matter how often or how firmly she knocked, no one ever came to the door" (p. 28). The reader is left without a definitive answer as to the fiancé's existence and perhaps still questioning the poor woman's sanity – and this is Shirley at her best: "Jackson has cleverly built suspense through the complicated search so that the reader is almost as anxious as the unfortunate lady to discover what is behind the closed door" (FRIEDMAN, 1975, p. 51) even though Harris "seems (…) unwilling to form an alliance with [the] desperate woman" and leaves her "dreaming about her future (…) and looking forward to meeting him" (NøRJORDET, 2005, p. 52).

The protagonist gets herself into the gothic trope of "a circular voyage, a journey with no ending and no exit" that maroons her in an "eternal present (HELLER, 1987, p. 69). Following this logic, she is forever trapped in her doubt.

The SJL itself offers some possibilities: "indeed at the end of the story she may well have become insane; the narrative is ambiguous on this point. Critics at the time the story was published were fairly certain of her diagnosis: As she grows more desperate and searches more frantically, we realize that she is suffering from a delusion" (HALSBAND, 1949, p. 19). Approximately sixty years later, critical opinions have changed: "significantly (…) if the nameless woman has indeed lost her mind, it is James who is responsible" (GOLD, 2010, p.

162). The dichotomies sane-insane for the distraught lady and real-unreal for her evasive groom are not necessarily applicable as such:

> The protagonist of "The Daemon Lover" is not mad, nor does James Harris seem to exist like every other human being: he is both and neither, since he is physical enough to (probably) have made love to her, and metaphysical enough to never leave a trace and evade the senses. He clearly exists very much in the protagonist's mind, but that does not necessarily mean that she is mad. Neither natural nor supernatural, then, he is a being somewhere "between here and there" (NøRJORDET, 2005, p. 44).

Quite open-ended as it is, "The Daemon Lover" "deal[s] with the demon lover motif (…) without providing the closure one might expect" (NøRJORDET, 2005, p. 69). On the other hand, the mythical narrative of James Harris suggests that the fiancé will later return to claim his betrothed (as it happens in Child's Ballad No. 243 and in Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen's short story *The Demon Lover*). Along with Katherine Anne Porter, Elizabeth Bowen has been ranked by Jackson as one of the best contemporary short story writers (GOLD, 2010).

The story that can be simply summed up as the misadventures of a "single woman (…) who sets off in search of the fiancé who abandoned her on the morning they were to be married (and may not, in fact, ever have existed)" (ARMITAGE & SCHWARZMAN , 2009, p. 1) is far from being simple, as a matter of fact: "["The Daemon Lover"] is actually quite sophisticated (…) one of Jackson's most haunting pieces" (DURGIN,2009, p. 6).

A significant number of thematic elements that constitute the Shirley Jackson Lore manifest through barely tangible means. In this sense, the novice Jackson reader cannot have access to them if not for the careful harvesting of elements that should take place during the reading of the author's other stories.

Within the SJL, the unnamed lady in "The Daemon Lover" "is one of many Jackson characters who have failed in their youthful aspirations (…) and now face a mundane, repetitive, *entropic* life" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 32, my italics). The other observation, on a more gentle and inspiring note, is that women like her in the SJL also "adjust to a life that has become a series of disappointments, [and] they are not yet ready to recognize themselves as failures" (FRIEDMAN, 1975, p. 63). To the former observation one can accept that the life of the protagonist does demonstrate signs of entropy, of decay, of collapse, of deterioration. As for the latter, the idea of not recognizing oneself as a failure might account for the woman's persistence, regardless of being possibly misguided, in trying to find her betrothed. Even the namelessness of the character is consistent with the SJL because, "just as

she remains unknown to the reader, she is unable to know her fiancé" (REISCH, 2001, p. 22). Sadly but truly, her quest has been referred to elsewhere as a journey "into darkness" (HALL, 1993, p. 18), and this seems to be the only faith one can expect to when searching for a dishonest, devious, crafty demon who is able to "figure women's illusions" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 35).

Jackson's simple but accurate words craftily build the foundations that provide stability to her fiction and balance and cohesion to her lore.

3.3. "Like Mother Used to Make"

Shirley Jackson's first novel, *The Road through the Wall*, came out in 1948 to lukewarm reception. That same year *New Yorker* magazine printed "The Lottery". At the wake of the huge success of this publication, a short fiction collection appropriately entitled *The Lottery and Other Stories* appeared, published by Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. This collection was important for several reasons. It brought some of Jackson's best pieces, such as "Charles" and "The Tooth" and, naturally, the title story. It also paved the way to the foundation of the author's mythological universe, referred to here as the Shirley Jackson Lore. Furthermore, practically all the individual stories that were scattered in serial publications such as *Mademoiselle*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *The Hudson Review*, *New Republic*, *New Yorker*, among others, were together for the first time in a single handsome printed edition (for the contentment and convenience of fans).

This group of stories established many of the noteworthy thematic elements that comprise the SJL. Interestingly their interrelatedness renders most of them invisible to the reader of one single story. By reading more than one story is that these otherwise cryptic elements appear. Their presence is so relevant that the knowledge of their existence can radically alter the reader's interpretation of *one* given story.

The present concern is to analyze how these inconspicuous elements contribute to a better understanding of "Like Mother Used to Make", the third short story of *The Lottery and Other Stories*. The intention is to surface and decode some of these recondite elements and study their contribution to the interpretation of the tale.

"Like Mother Used to Make" has been chosen for unique reasons, especially those regarding the architecture of its characters, more specifically their (failed) gender expectations

and their (unexpected) power relations. These factors ultimately threaten the conventional notions of familial homes in mid-twentieth century America and beyond.

Historically, literary critics have had much to say concerning the cardinal role of women in Gothic fiction (as Jackson's literature is often categorized), but "have sometimes neglected both the figurative nature of the feminine and the presence of feminized and suffering male characters" (SCHMITT, 1997, p. 11). Schmitt's assertion finds resonance in Jackson's "Like Mother Used to Make", which features as main character the male young-adult David Turner.

The protagonist of this story is exceptional for the simple fact that it is a man. This is not an isolated incident in Jackson's literature, though. Other stories, such as "Charles" and "The Witch" (both featured in *The Lottery and Other Stories*), also display male characters in main roles. In the specific case of "Charles", the story's protagonist is a child, a little boy entering kindergarten called Laurie. In "The Witch", four-year-old Johnny performs a central function in the plot. It is safe to uphold, however, that the vast majority of Jackson's protagonists are indeed women, and consequently her plots are weaved around female characters and issues traditionally (yet retrogradely) associated with women, such as family and domesticity. More importantly, her stories foster a variety of themes of social, cultural, political, and psychological – in sum – of human nature.

At the beginning of the story David is returning home by bus and, as he gets off, he remembers he must do something: to buy butter. He enters a grocery store on the way home and, despite being a familiar face to the clerk, is treated *unkindly*. Baffled by the prices, as well as by the treatment he receives, he buys a quarter of a pound of butter and half-dozen rolls. This seemingly unpretentious and domestic introduction of the character in the storyline is supposedly meant to garner the reader's *sympathy*, for he does not seem to be a necessarily well-to-do person – he is certainly not successful or wealthy – considering that he comes home by bus and still has to walk a little. Besides, he complains about the price of the butter *and* is treated carelessly even by a person who knows him (though not very well), that is the grocery clerk. This unpretentious introduction sets the tone and fulfills its role in eliciting the reader's affinity to David.

More details as such are provided in order to strengthen the rapport between reader and character. When David arrives at his building there is a letter from his mother at the mailbox, possibly establishing an existent rapport between mother and son, endearing even further David's connection to the reader. He lives on the third floor and, upon coming up, he sees no light in Marcia's apartment, the only other neighbor on that floor.

The description of the interior of David's apartment is rather meaningful:

> Tonight, as every other night when he came home, the apartment looked warm and friendly and good; the little foyer, with the neat small table and four *careful* chairs, and the bowl of little marigolds against the pale green walls David had painted himself (p. 30, my italics).

It is as if the narrator is saying softly that the dear poor man, resigned with his routine and with his small furniture (in a narration most likely and non-obtrusively meant to invigorate the bonds with the reader), is taking care of his plants (imparting upon him a sense of responsibility to other life forms other than himself) and of all his little things *and* all alone. The reader learns more about who David really is while learning about his dedication to his possessions. The narrator describes a man who takes such good care of his personal belongings that even the very objects themselves seem to repay his respect by being *careful* to him in return.

A series of elements of this description are invisible to the eye of the novice Jackson reader. The experienced Jackson reader is able to see the setting of twin apartments as reminiscent of a kindred setting from the story "The Daemon Lover" (the second story featured in *The Lottery and Other Stories*). As Jackson scholar Daryl Hattenhauer points out: "the setting of twin apartments trope the doubles who occupy them" (2003, p. 29). The double and the disunified subjects are to be recurrent themes in the SJL. More details concerning David's apartment deserve attention. In the big room where David reads and sometimes sleeps: "the *plaster* was falling in one corner and no power on earth could make it less noticeable" (p. 30, my italics).

The confluence of details in these last descriptions make it hard to ignore the fact that one of the twin apartments mentioned by Hattenhauer and the narrator (in accordance to the SJL) belonged, even if temporarily, to a mysterious character from "The Daemon Lover" called James Harris. Harris's apartment was also curiously filled with bags of *plaster* and had piles of old newspapers in it. In "The Daemon Lover", the landlady explains that: "there was a fellow (…) he wore a blue suit a lot, lived on the third floor for a while (…) he stayed there about a month" (p. 16). Unknowingly, she is referring to the demonic figure that inhabits the depths of Jackson's mythology, the daemon lover himself, James Harris (a.k.a. the tall man in the blue suit in the SJL).

To the experienced Jackson reader, this information is enough cause for concern and apprehension. If David or his neighbor Marcia should be living in the apartment that was once to James Harris's then, invariably, one may begin to expect something harmful to come to any

one of them. Though the James Harris figure is known in the SJL to scourge women, meek David also seems a perfect prey. Since the plaster is in David’s apartment and not in Marcia’s, the experienced Jackson reader may expect harm to come to him rather than to her. Then again, the newspapers may be there solely to protect the floor from the paint and/or from the plaster. This ambiguity displays Jackson at her best.

The continuation of the story delineates this foreboding warning:

> David consoled himself for the plaster constantly with the thought that perhaps if he had taken an apartment in an old brownstone the plaster would not be falling, but then, too, for the money he paid he could not have a foyer and a big room and a kitchenette, anywhere else (p. 30).

The apartment *had* been cheap, and suspiciously so. The owners might have wanted to get rid of that apartment for a reason. The experienced Jackson reader, bearing the intelligence garnered from “The Daemon Lover” and from elsewhere in the SJL, is endowed with the knowledge to understand what these reasons might have been. The fact that David was powerless to make the falling plaster less apparent further indicates the impotence that permeated his character.

David considers his living room, which he calls the big room, charming. He thinks that it is the most comfortable room he has ever had and so much so that from time to time he lets his eyes move slowly around the big room and then sighs with satisfaction at the end. He takes a neat notepaper that is infallibly sitting in the appropriate desk cubbyhole and writes Marcia a message that reads: “Dear Marcia, don’t forget you’re coming for dinner tonight. I’ll expect you about six” (p. 31). This invitation translates a man that is not all soft but who is also able of showing some initiative. His relationship to Marcia helps establish his identity.

He has a key to Marcia’s apartment in case the laundryman comes, or the man who fixes the refrigerator or the telephone or the windows since she is never at home. She, however, does not hold a key to his apartment and he has never offered – certainly not out of suspicion or distrust, it is just that it reassures him to know that the only key to enter his apartment is his, and so he keeps it safely in his pant pocket.

Critics have justifiably asserted that David’s relationship to Marcia is deeper than that:

> as in much of Jackson’s fiction this story uses architecture as a metaphor of the subject, and it uses doubles to disrupt notions of a unified subject. In the case of these doubles, the similarities of the apartments contrast with the differences between the two characters. Each subject is a mirror opposite of the other, but is also the mirror opposite of traditional gendering (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 29).

Just as the architecture of David's apartment mirrors who he is (and the same goes to Marcia's), their architecture mirror their relationship. David goes to Marcia's apartment and finds it empty. Her apartment is not very agreeable. Though its rooms are set in the same position as his, hers are oddly bare and look arbitrary. The objects are crooked and the rooms cluttered. Marcia has left her bed unmade and her dirty laundry on the floor. The window has been left open so there are papers scattered on the floor. On the piano keys he leaves the note he wrote reminding her of their rendezvous and goes back to the harmony of his own place in order to begin preparations for dinner. The night before he had prepared pot roast so that his only work then was to slice it and place it on a plate with a touch of parsley. Very fittingly:

> his plates were orange, almost the same color as the couch *cover*, and it was *pleasant* to him to *arrange* a salad, with lettuce on the orange plate, and *thin slices* of cucumber. He put *coffee* on to cook, and sliced potatoes to fry, and then, with his dinner cooking *agreeably* and the window open to lose the odor (…) he set *lovingly* to *arranging* his table (p. 32, my italics).

One should notice the abundance of congenial qualifiers associated to actions related to neatness and organization: *pleasant* and *lovingly* and *arranging*. Other words denote David's marked dedication to detail, such as having a *cover* over his couch and cutting *thin slices*. Interestingly, David's relationship to coffee seems parsimonious when compared to that of other characters in the SJL (see the unnamed protagonist in "The Daemon Lover" and, for all intents and purposes, her *addiction* to the substance – vice is to be another recurrent element in the SJL).

As previously mentioned, by observing the trends set in the SJL the experienced Jackson reader can almost foretell that this orderly balance is bound to be upset by some dreadful event. The novice Jackson reader does not hold the necessary intelligence garnered from her other works to realize the subtle harbingers which operate in the narration are forerunners of the presence of the demon James Harris. Importantly, his name has not been mentioned so far in the story, though, as argued, meager yet sufficient data has been cryptically announced to warn the experienced Jackson reader of his coming.

Evidence to support such claims can be found extra-textually, more specifically within the missing title of the short story collection which this short piece originally integrates. *The Lottery and Other Stories*, first published in 1949 (in the wake of "The Lottery"'s success), was originally subtitled *The Adventures of James Harris*. This piece of information provides the attentive reader with a hint James Harris's appearance is to be expected; even if anywhere in the tales that comprise the collection. Due to marketing reasons

the illuminating subtitle has been completely omitted in the following editions leaving the readers with one less token of intelligence to rely upon for interpretive purposes.

After setting the table with the utmost care and methodical planning David admired it, shining and clean. Marcia suddenly bursts the door open and comes in: "with a shout and fresh air and disorder" (p. 33). She is described as a tall attractive young woman with a loud voice; she is wearing a dirty raincoat. Hattenhauer properly describes her as "a stereotypical bachelor [who] leaves her bed unmade and her laundry on the floor [and who] is oblivious to the place setting and correct silverware" (2003, p. 30).

Their ties seem to strengthen. David announces that dinner is ready and pulls a chair for Marcia. They eat and she compliments him for the wonderful meal and for such a nice house and says she wishes she were more like him. Despite the obvious differences they seem to get along pretty well. Everything seems perfect. He had made cherry pie for her – David confesses he had made pie only twice before but that that one was better than the others; what he does not say, though it is implied, is that the reason is he had made that one especially for *her*. Critical as always with his things, the perfectionist David comments that the pie is too sour for him, that he had run out of sugar. Marcia says she appreciates a sour cherry pie and that is the way she likes it – all small but very significant details.

David is pouring her coffee when, out of a sudden, she hears her bell ringing from inside her apartment. Using the buzzer in David's apartment she opens the downstairs door. They can both hear *heavy footsteps* climbing up the stairs and neither of them knows who it is. Marcia yells hello and, leaning back on her chair to see through the open door to the hall, she utters surprised: "why Mr. Harris (…) Come in" (p. 35). Like a vampire, he is invited in. Before his name is mentioned, the heavy footsteps, one could argue, may be faintly reminiscent of the sound of hooves on the stairs (James Harris has historically been described as having cloven-feet). At the instant his name is mentioned a series of otherwise innocuous minutia suddenly spring to sight (to the experienced Jackson reader). Some of these details are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The moment Harris comes in the apartment his eyes rest curiously on the coffee cups and empty plates on the table: "I just thought I'd stop by" (p. 38) he says. His gaze at the cups is significant. For one, in the SJL, coffee is nearly a synonym of obsession and of vice; bad things come out from too much coffee drinking, too often with unexpected (in the negative sense) outcomes (see "The Daemon Lover"). In the SJL, Harris smells vice, chases it, encourages it, and ultimately causes it. His detrimental influence is, to a great extent, undesirably pervasive.

Harris's gaze at the coffee cups and especially at the empty seats around the table can indicate his yearning to occupy that space. Marcia welcomes him and introduces him to David as a man who works in the same office as hers (see *A Fine Old Firm*, another story featured in *The Lottery and Other Stories*). She asks Harris to sit down and asks David to pour him a cup of coffee and offers him a piece of the cherry pie David had prepared for her. Since Harris's arrival Marcia has changed her behavior towards her host, she has been calling him *Davie*. The difference in treatment suggests the new order she establishes among the males, yielding the authority to the demon, whom she calls *Mr.* Harris, and the subordinate role to David, now demoted to *Davie*.

According to the narrator, David's plans for the evening had not been anything too extravagant; a movie perhaps if it were not too cold out or at least a talk with Marcia about the condition of her apartment (which all but supplements David's humble and unpretentious nature). David puts the pie in front of Harris, who stares at it admiringly before he tastes it. Interestingly but not by all means unexpectedly, Harris has so far been nothing but amiable and polite, though admittedly ill-timed.

Since the novice Jackson reader does not have access to Harris's real nature (as gathered from Jackson's other stories), it is difficult at this point to see anything that may raise suspicion (outside the untimely appearance) about this stranger. The reader knows so far (at this point in the narrative) that Harris is a friend of Marcia's from work and that he apparently involuntarily interrupted his colleague's dinner with a neighbor.

Though the experienced Jackson reader may wish that Harris sees his welcome at that place backlash, nothing of the sort happens, on the contrary, his presence becomes more and more influential (and unfortunately far too invasive); like a vampire, he feeds on vital energy:

> "say, (…) this is certainly some pie (…) this is really good pie" [Harris] said. "You like it?" Marcia asked modestly. She looked up at David and smiled at him over Mr. Harris' head. "I haven't made but two, three pies before," she said (p. 36).

Marcia's innocent lie may seem to the novice Jackson reader quite innocent, certainly unprovoked, bearing no more than the intentional touch of soft mischievousness that lies in the heart of all white lies. The experienced Jackson reader is aware of Harris's pervasive influence when it comes to lying (see "The Villager", another story from *The Lottery and Other Stories* that also feature James Harris as character). In "The Villager", Harris asks the protagonist, an unmarried failed dancer, if she is an artist: "'no,' Miss Clarence said. She took a deep breath. 'dancer,' she said" (55). At that moment (and thanks to

Harris) Miss Clarence sees an opportunity to *live* the life she has dreamed but could not achieve. Even if fictionally and temporarily, her acting may be viewed as something positive *because* it is cathartic. It may, however, also be viewed as something negative. The experienced Jackson reader can perceive this scene with darker, more detrimental undertones, in other words, as the constitution and achievement of a *lie*, recognizably so mainly due to the demonic presence and influence of James Harris himself. Certainly, if it were not for his attendance on that locale, Miss Clarence would not have had the opportunity of exercising this untruth – harmless as it admittedly was, but a lie nevertheless. The mere creation of the opportunity from Harris's part fits his profile consummately in the SJL in the sense that, wherever he goes, he brings along lies and deceit which are seldom devoid of deleterious harm. In the case of "The Villager", Miss Clarence escapes fairly free from harm. She goes home with nothing but an uncomely reminder, unsuspectingly rubbed on her face, that she did not succeed in life. In "Like Mother Used to Make", David's fate seems to be bound to Miss Clarence's. So far the experienced Jackson reader has had enough warnings that David's life (or part of it), is bound to be vandalized (with any luck, only psychologically) by this demon too.

Marcia's character has not been described as a bad person; according to the narrator she is just *loud*. The tale brings the reader no explicit reason to believe that she told that lie to hurt David's feeling – though one might think her careless with his feelings alright. This is, however, the first hefty piece of evidence of Harris's malicious and venomous powers in this story.

When Marcia offered Harris a piece of pie: "David raised a hand to protest, but Mr. Harris turned to him and demanded, 'Did you ever eat any better pie in your life?'" (p. 36). What may seem as an inadvertent interruption is, to the experienced Jackson reader, the demon's attempt at keeping the truth from surfacing. It is not enough to motivate and stimulate lies, Harris's task seems to be also to withhold the truth from emerging (thus indicated the SJL); as the narration puts it: "'I don't think Davie liked it much,' Marcia said wickedly, 'I think it was too sour for him.' 'I like a sour pie,' Mr. Harris said. He looked suspiciously at David. 'A cherry pie's *got* to be sour.'" (p. 36). Harris has already contaminated Marcia. Through her actions she seems to like that playful wickedness that accompanies role-playing. She evinces outwardly what Mr. Harris is inwardly. With that, the belligerence that legitimizes the choice and origin of her name is thus validated.

The hapless David begins to wish to be rid of them both. He thinks: "his clean house, his nice silver, were not meant as vehicles for the kind of fatuous banter Marcia and Mr.

Harris were playing together" (p. 37). As David is taking the empty cups of coffee to the kitchen to clean them up Marcia says: "Don't bother, Davie, honestly, (…) I'll do them tomorrow, honey" (p. 37). Marcia speaks to him smiling as if she and he were now conspirators against Mr. Harris. Once again, what may look to the novice reader as an unfortunate and unpleasant move from her part is precisely what the SJL authorizes as Harris's influence at sowing discordance and dissension: "'sure,' Mr. Harris said. He stood up. 'Let [the dirty coffee cups] wait. Let's go in and sit down where we can be comfortable" (p. 37), he invites Marcia. She gets up and leads Mr. Harris to the living room couch and calls David, who is looking at the dirty dishes getting crusty on his nice clean table. David puts on an apron and begins to wash the dishes carefully and slowly. Meanwhile, Marcia and Harris's conversation on the couch is interrupted a number of times by Marcia's calling out for David and asking him to stop doing the dishes and to come over to sit with them: "Davie, won't you stop all that and come sit down? (…) Davie, I don't want you to wash all those dishes,' and Mr. Harris said, 'let him work, he's happy'" (p. 37); Harris lets this little comment slip, a comment that reveals what is really in his devilish mind; and that overall helps create more distress in the lenient David.

David has his own (emotional) defense mechanisms. The following passage does not only portray David's anguish to be rid of those people but also the psychological transfer of his woe to the obsessive tidiness and orderliness of his china and silverware:

> First the forks all went together into the little grooves which held two forks each – later, when the set was complete, each groove would hold four forks – and then the spoons, stacked up neatly one on top of another in their own grooves, and the knives in even order, all facing the same way, in the special tape in the lid of the box (p. 38).

In turn, the passage also reflects the author's ambiguous obsession with domestic work (see *Life Among the Savages*). It is as if David is using his organization as a defense mechanism to block the reality of what is going on in his cherished apartment.

By the time David is finished with the dishes Marcia and Mr. Harris are still talking, sitting close together on the couch when she says: "Davie, you were so nice to do all those dishes yourself" (p. 38). David replies it is alright, ungracefully, having Mr. Harris staring at him impatiently. Marcia asks David to sit down the same way hostesses do when they do not know what else to say to a guest or when a guest arrives too early or overstays his or her welcome. In fact, it was the kind of tone David was expecting to use on Mr. Harris. After an awkward moment in which they realized they had nothing to talk about now that David was

there, Mr. Harris picks up an ashtray an puts it on the treasured couch between Marcia and himself and casually asks if Marcia (not David), if she does not mind him smoking a cigar there; Harris kiddingly announces that "cigar smoke's good for plants" (p. 39). Marcia laughs. The cigar is also referenced in "The Witch" (another story from *The Lottery and Other Stories*) where one learns more about Harris's personality.

In "The Witch", which also features a James Harris character, he is described as "an elderly man, with a pleasant face under white hair; his blue suit was only faintly touched by the disarray that comes from a long train trip" (p. 64). He is carrying a cigar as he approaches a little boy, one of the protagonists of the story, who is in a train trip with his mother and sister. Harris asks the boy what he is looking out the window of the train. The boy gladly replies:

> "Witches," the little boy said promptly. "Bad old mean witches."
> "I see," the man said. "Find many?"
> "My father smokes cigars," the little boy said.
> "All men smoke cigars," the man said. "Someday you'll smoke a cigar, too." (p. 64)

With this, the reader learns more about the distinctive qualities that make up Harris's character and the crypto-thematic concurrent elements from the SJL. His blue suit is reminiscent of "The Daemon Lover" and his pleasant face of "The Villager" (both stories from *The Lottery and Other Stories*). This is the real contribution of the SJL to a fuller and better understanding of one individual tale.

In one of the final crucial moments in the narrative of "Like Mother Used to Make", David stands up expecting to dismissively thank Mr. Harris for the visit. What he says instead is that he (David) is better be getting along, to what Mr. Harris quickly replies just as dismissively that he had enjoyed meeting him. They shake hands. Marcia's reaction was saying that she was sorry that he (David) had to leave so soon. David retorts that he has a lot of work to do and Marcia, really incarnating her role, tells him not to forget his key. Both Marcia and David surprised themselves as to what great actors they were being. David also surprised himself when he grabbed the keys to her apartment from her hands and said good night to Mr. Harris: "'Good night, Davie honey, 'Marcia called out, and David said 'Thanks for a simply *wonderful* dinner, Marcia,' and closed the door behind him" (p. 39). He goes down the hall and passively withdraws into Marcia's apartment. It is still messy and things are still awry: "the papers were still on the floor, the laundry still scattered, the bed unmade" (p. 40). The epicene David sits down on the bed and looks around the cold and dirty apartment and, at the same time, hears faint conversation and laughter from inside his cozy, cherished,

warm apartment – faint voices and laughter much similar to what the unnamed protagonist of "The Daemon Lover" encounters in Harris's alleged apartment in that story.

At the end of "Like Mother Used to Make", David, inside Marcia's apartment, leans over to the floor and picks up a piece of paper, and then another, and then another, and when he realizes, he is picking them up one by one. The story ends with this authoritative display of human nature: "David's obsession with domesticity has led to a bizarre role reversal, a transformation (…) having had his own domesticity interrupted, he begins to create it again in a different location, a fantastic reversal of stereotypical male and female familial roles" (EGAN, 1989, p. 17). Egan's words comprehensively summarize the character's final demise.

Jackson Scholar Joan Wylie Hall, commenting the end of "Like Mother Used to Make", states that: "the situation is humorous but almost as incredible as the plight of the jilted fiancée in "The Daemon Lover", and finally almost as disturbing" (1993, p. 15). Hall is referring to the incident previously mentioned in that the unnamed woman is locked outside the apartment where she wanted to get in to be with her fleeting-fiancé: "in both stories James Harris precipitates the protagonists exclusion, not only from a physical place but also from emotional sustenance" (1993, p. 15). Whereas the nameless bride-to-be from "The Daemon Lover" insistently returns to the door where she thinks her escaped-groom is, David tries to restore what he thinks of as order by organizing Marcia's apartment. Each one of the characters tries to cope with their losses the best way they can, thus, they remain true to their nature (or better, to the description of their fictional selves in both short stories).

David's own name says something about him. To Hattenhauer, David "lives up to his biblical namesake only by being dwarfed by his counterpart. Rather than slay a giant, David Turner continues his role of turning into a diminished, feminized victim", on the other hand, Harris "fits the era's prototype of the masculine male. He is big and smokes a cigar. He is empowered in the workplace [and] his assumption that the woman made the dinner leads him to the deduction that the apartment he has entered is hers" (2003, p. 30). Hattenhauer's discussion about "Like Mother Used to Make" moves from a feminist perusal into a Marxist reading. After stating that Harris is further masculinized in the story and Marcia is further feminized in relation to Harris and masculinized in relation to David, the conclusion is that David is further feminized in relation to both; Hattenhauer goes to on to say that Marcia is both exploited and an exploiter, since: "the gender reversal shows Jackson's Marxist notion that the central factor in this social formation is not sex but class" (2003, p. 31). This indeed establishes a new order, in which Harris is more powerful at work (and probably holds a position of authority at the office and consequently earns a higher income) than Marcia. She,

however, is more powerful economically than David (the reader does not see Marcia complaining over the price of butter or counting rolls to buy at the grocer). Hattenhauer ends his discussion claiming that "Jackson does not gloat over the empowerment of a woman or the feminization of a man" (2003, p. 31) – and he is right; her motivation *was* different, as one can observe in Jackson's own biography.

Through *Private Demons: The Life of Shirley Jackson* (1988), one learns that Jackson inserted in her stories (often imbuing with evil) events that occurred to people she knew in real life. Jackson's biographer Judy Oppenheimer explains that "Ben Zimmerman and Taissa Kellman, who lived in apartments next to each other became the subjects of (…) a tale, "Like Mother Used to Make"" (1988, p. 102). Ben Zimmerman was Stanley Edgar Hyman's (Jackson's husband) colleague at Syracuse University. It was Ben who showed Stanley Shirley's first published short story, "Janice". Ben explained that "Like Mother Used to Make" grew out of an incident in which "Stanley and Taissa were sitting in his apartment and refused to leave even though he was expecting a guest" (In: OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 102). Ben never minded his fictional portrayal at that story whereas Taissa was not pleased. Ms. Kellman thought that Shirley was jealous that she [Taissa] was quite good-looking and Stanley, even after marriage, had a weakness for female beauty (Jackson was never beautiful): "maybe this is what Shirley felt resentment about", declared Taissa (In: OPPENHEIMER, 1988, p. 102). She was terribly bright and terribly overweight and she suffered bouts of depression and manic unpredictability throughout her adult life (CALDWELL, 1988a; BELLMAN, 1994).

As one can notice, a story as simple as "Like Mother Used to Make", is packed with nuances that render it quite complex. Originally, in its early drafts, the story had another ending. David was then named Jamie Turner, Marcia was called Billie and Harris was simply and innocently called Harold Lang. The most radical change involves Jamie Turner's attitude when he leaves his apartment at the end of the story. This Turner is amused that he and Billie had made a fool out of the *big guy*. He whistles while he picks up Billie's papers from the floor, confident he can get everything organized in little over an hour while the couple (Billie and Harold) is chattering away in his apartment. Interestingly, the names were more androgynous than in the revised version (both Jamie and Billie are names that can be easily used for both sexes).

Arguably, this is a much more complex story than the textual surface allows a novice Jackson reader to perceive. It involves love, hate, desire, passion, self-determination, self-reliance (which touches a cornerstone of American mythology); it also deals with universal

human conflicts involving psychology, work relations, exploitation, class struggle, gender roles, domesticity, and ultimately, reality and fantasy. The convergence of such numerous themes into such a short story makes it even more fascinating. Nevertheless, if the majority of these themes go unnoted during the reading (and they will to the novice Jackson reader), than just "for its insight into two different personalities, the story is a gem" (CHRIST, 1996, p. 125).

3.4. "The Villager"

Ms. Jackson saw the publication of "The Villager" in the August 1944 edition of *The American Mercury* magazine (pages 186-190) and, four years later, in *The Lottery and Other Stories*. The present concern is to investigate how the more inconspicuous thematic elements of the SJL contribute to the understanding of "The Villager", since they are not only recurrent, but in a complex way, cryptically interconnected in the whole of Jackson's literature.

Many theories of intertextuality reference the rapport between the text under scrutiny and the texts of writers of generations past, however, no intertextual theory (to my knowledge) mentions the affairs between texts of the same author, thus, in this sense, they fail to establish the restrictions which are necessary to theoretically support the present enterprise. Furthermore, one theory could account for a limited set of themes and would inevitably leave others unattended. Using one method would "miss Jackson's multivocality" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, 12), ergo, it would take several methods to address the author's thematic diversity, which is not viable at the present set up.

Awareness of the elements that constitute the Shirley Jackson Lore does not provide essentially a *better* understanding of the author's stories, but it allows insight into layers of meaning otherwise imperceptible to the novice Jackson reader. One of the dominant traits of the SJL is the presence of a character, in any given story, that represents the author's self-figure, recurrently a woman, predominantly a young adult who shares enough features with actual biographical data from the writer that evince and inspire identification. In the collection *The Lottery and Other Stories* there is a series of evident cases; they are: the abandoned wife in "The Daemon Lover"; the inconsequential employee in "My Life with R. H. Macy", the mother of two on a train trip in "The Witch", the burdened big-city figure in a small country-town in "The Renegade", the unaware mother of a crafty and impertinent boy

in “Charles”, the lethargic-aching wife in “The Tooth”, the ill-fated housewife and mother Tessie Hutchinson in “The Lottery”, among others.

The short story “The Villager” begins with the description of one of these character types, one that graciously fits the author-fictional-self arrangement. Hilda Clarence, the protagonist, has the intention of assessing, in order to buy, some pieces of furniture she finds advertized in a newspaper. She arranges to meet the seller, a Mrs. Nancy Roberts, but arrives earlier than expected. She therefore waits at a place called *Whelan’s* and buys a pack of *Kools* cigarettes – though this latter piece of information does not seem too relevant, it actually approaches the main character to a well-established fact about Jackson’s real-life habits, i.e., her obsessive smoking. Clarence, “sitting (…) at the soda counter, [opens] the pack and lit a cigarette” (p. 49). Novelist, editor and journalist Elizabeth Benedict (1999), writing about literature and addiction, stated that Jackson not only smoked too much but also drank too much. One can add the abuse of coffee and pharmaceutical drugs, such as sedatives, to the list. Her biographer Judy Oppenheimer reported that: “for several years (…) she [Jackson] had suffered from headaches and taken large prescription doses of codeine to alleviate them. Her teeth had always been bad, the endless cigarettes, coffee, and candy doing them no good” (1988, p. 147). Her life was “harrowed by the personal furies of drink, tobacco and amphetamines” (TAYLOR, 1993, p. 1) which led to her ill health. She was said to be a “daily user of amphetamine for two decades, and she counteracted its effects with quantities of bourbon and tranquilizers” (CALDWELL, 1988a, p. 1).

Instances of such vices, more specifically their erratic use, can also be found in characters of other stories: “Hilda Clarence in several ways resembles the unlucky fiancée of “The Daemon Lover”(BENSON, 1998, p. 18), who complains: “I’ll have a headache if I don’t get some solid food soon (…) all this coffee, smoking too much, no real breakfast” (p. 10). At any rate, this unhealthy habit brings the Clarence character closer to a Jackson-type figure, allowing the experienced Jackson reader not only to emotionally bond with the character, but also to create expectations and raise hypotheses regarding her. These mirrored sensitive ties involving care and zeal towards Hilda Clarence will be important considering the subsequent events of the story. The absence of such identification by novice Jackson readers deprives them of these prompt feelings of affinity and communion with the protagonist. More instances of this author-character identification are seen in the continuation of the story, when more compatible cues are disclosed; as in the forthcoming description of Miss Clarence’s past.

Inside *Whelan’s*, Miss Clarence is holding a copy of “The Villager” – the newspaper that serves the West and East Village, Chelsea and Soho burroughs of NYC; and that lends its

name to this tale – and a pocketbook version of Stendhal's *The Charterhouse of Parma* – the 1839 French novel about the adventures and misadventures of a young Italian nobleman from his birth to his death – which she had read up to page fifty and, according to the narrator, only carries now for effect. The thirty-five year old Clarence has been living in Greenwich Village for twelve years now: "when she was twenty-three she had come to New York from a small town upstate because she wanted to be a dancer" (p. 49). This is yet another retelling of events that reflects the author's real-life move to that city, with the exception that Jackson had – so far as is documented (OPPENHEIMER, 1988) – no intention of becoming a dancer, though, one can argue, to become another kind of professional in the field of arts, in her case, a writer. The narrator apprises the reader that every person who wishes to study dancing or sculpture or bookbinding, for that matter, moves to Greenwich Village: "usually with allowances from their families to live on and plans to work at Macy's (…) until they had enough money to pursue their art" (p. 49) – When Jackson moved to NYC in the 1940s she did not receive any allowances from her family, however, in the fall of that year she did work at Macy's selling books, a whole event in itself that received special (fictional) treatment in the short story *My Life with H.R. Macy*. The author of the first novel-length study on Jackson, Lenemaja Friedman, wrote that: "she [Jackson] wrote of the loneliness and frustration of the out-of-town career girl who makes the city her home" and she added that: "as the years pass, the dreams of glamour and success fade; and the heroine becomes unlovely, lonely and selfish" (1975, p. 62), a dire prediction that is to be actualized in Jackson's fiction.

Much like what happened in the author's real life, Miss Clarence's had not faired exactly as she had planned. She took a course in shorthand and typing and became a stenographer in the coal and coke industry. Fortunately, she has successfully worked for twelve years as private secretary in the same coal and coke firm, earning her an income which allowed her to accumulate sufficient funds to live "in a good Village apartment by the park and buy herself smart clothes" (p. 49). Though Miss Clarence is satisfied with how well she is able to take care of herself financially, she, in some such way, keeps her old dreams alive, and occasionally still attends dance recitals with a girl-colleague from her office. Within the SJL, Hilda "is one of many Jackson characters who have failed in their youthful aspirations (…) and now face a mundane, repetitive, entropic life" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 32), however, on a more gentle and inspiring note, girls like Hilda in the SJL also "adjust to a life that has become a series of disappointments, [and] they are not yet ready to recognize themselves as failures" (FRIEDMAN, 1975, p. 63).

As the story ensues, Hilda's bad habit is once again reinforced in the reader's mind and receives that narrative shade that exposes an obsession. When the arranged time arrives, Miss Clarence heads to the apartment whose ad she had seen in "The Villager". She climbs the stairs to the third floor: "she stopped and rested on the third landing, and lit another one of her cigarettes" (p. 50).

She finds the intended apartment and a note from Nancy Roberts, the owner, on the door explaining that she had to leave but would be back at three-thirty and that she (the buyer) should make herself comfortable and that all the prices were attached to the pieces of furniture. The door was left purposefully unlocked. Miss Clarence enters a messy room, with half-empty boxes and piles of books and papers in seemingly complete disarray. Jackson several times uses architecture to endorse character identity, hence, she describes Hilda going to the window expecting to find a beautiful view, however, she sees little but dirty rooftops and a high building with flower gardens that she covets: "someday I'll live there, she thought, and turned back to the room" (p. 51). It is as if the character's life was nothing but dirty rooftops but she, in fact, coveted a more beautiful existence. The text's design points to the narrator's possible wish that the reader notices that Miss Clarence's dreams and aspirations are still very much alive. In reality, Jackson's dreams and aspirations constantly suffered hefty blows in her lifetime. The duality of being a professional writer and a mother of four with sturdy domestic strings weighed heavily upon her physical and mental health. This duality is encountered in her fiction, and not only in the ones about domestic life, as it can be observed in the main character of the celebrated 1959 Gothic-prone novel *The Haunting of Hill House*. Eleanor Vance is an ambitious woman torn between her loyalties to her family and her personal dreams, and: "for Jackson that was a painfully real conflict" (BAILEY, 1999, p. 26).

After inspecting the other rooms and finding their contents predictable, Miss Clarence returns to the crowded room in order to make herself comfortable to wait for Mrs. Roberts: "she [Miss Clarence] lifted a suitcase and a typewriter off one of the chairs, took off her hat and coat, and sat down, lighting another one of her cigarettes" (p. 51). Her obsession reinforced yet one more time.

The narrator taps on the protagonist's dreams and wishes once again. Although Miss Clarence decides she cannot use any of the furniture, she thinks about offering to buy some of the books. Nonetheless, the ones which are exposed on top of the boxes are mainly art books and portfolios and some of them have the name Arthur Roberts written on them. This leads Miss Clarence to think that Nancy's husband is the artist of the couple: "Arthur and Nancy Roberts, Miss Clarence thought, a nice young couple. Arthur was the artist, then, and Nancy

(…) could Nancy be a dancer?"(p. 52) – in her mind, she clearly projects her dreams and wishes into the outward evidence she sees from that couple. The reader knows that Hilda is single, there is no evidence that she has ever been married, and the reader is also reminded that she has been working for years in a job that, though well-paying, is definitely not her first choice for a successful professional life. She imagines affectionately Nancy as a dancer, married to an artist and living in a well-located apartment and perhaps, in a glimpse, imaginarily sees herself in Nancy's place. To add a little to her craving, the phone rings and it is Mr. Roberts wanting to speak to his wife, Nancy. She then learns that the reason the couple is selling the house appliances and furnishings is because he, the husband, is moving to Paris, while his wife is moving back to Chicago to her parents. The reader, however, does not receive any information as to Hilda's reaction to this piece of news.

The story, at this point, shifts its conjuncture. After hanging up the phone, Hilda picks up a book that reminds her of the days she was practicing to be a dancer before she came to New York. Significantly, she stands up and tries to imitate her old dance pose but encounters some difficulty. While she is doing that she hears a knock on the door. A young man timidly enters claiming apologetically that the door was half open and asks Hilda if she is Mrs. Roberts when: "Miss Clarence, trying to walk naturally over to her chair, said nothing" (p. 54). Her silence seems to indicate that she is thinking of doing exactly what she does, that is, to falsely pass off as the owner of the apartment simply by not revealing her identity; as mischievously as lightheartedly, she assumes her new role, explaining that the prices are marked on everything. The young man introduces himself: "My name's Harris. I've just moved to the city and I'm trying to furnish my place" (p. 54).

To the novice reader, Harris is but a new character that appears at the middle of the narrative, meek, unassuming. To the experienced Jackson reader, his arrival is laden with terror and consternation. Literarily-wise, it is a formidable moment; the very instance of Harris's appearance was later described as a journey "into darkness" (HALL, 1993, p. 18). The novice Jackson reader is offered no clue as to whom this seemingly innocent young man is (besides his surname, of course), and consequently perceives no indication of the grave danger Hilda Clarence has involuntarily gotten herself into. The experienced Jackson reader appreciates the danger that alters the fabric of the text; after all, Miss Clarence *is* inside a half-empty apartment with a vindictive demonic creature known in the SJL to cause unprecedented harm of many sorts; and *especially* to women.

Ever so cunning, in "The Villager", Harris intentionally acts humble and plays victim, suggesting that he himself is in a struggle to find better things:

> "this must be the tenth place I've been. I want a filing cabinet and a big leather chair."
> "I'm afraid…" Miss Clarence said, gesturing at the room.
> "I know," Harris said. "Anybody who has that sort of thing these days is hanging on to it. *I write*," he added.
> "Really?"
> "Or, rather, *I hope to write*," he added. He had a round agreeable face and when he said this he smiled very pleasantly.
> "Going to get a job and write nights," he said (p. 54, my italics).

In order to seek identification from Hilda's part, he acts as if he is still trying to achieve his dreams – much like she is – and he sounds bashful about his plans and intentions, artfully availing himself of mannerisms that could be endearing to a woman in her situation – although this may not, of course, be generalized. The experienced Jackson reader can conceive that Harris may be able to gain access to Hilda's mind and thoughts and even learn that she wishes she had a husband who was in the arts business. His devilish acuity might inform him that. And that is why he says he wishes he could get a day job and write nights – he knows she wanted to do the same. All these details may go unnoticed to the novice Jackson reader who is understandably unsuspecting of both the identity and prowess of the nefarious fiend.

Using his deftness, Harris asks if someone at the apartment is an artist, to what Miss Clarence replies that Mr. Roberts is, still talking as if he [the latter] were her husband:

> "lucky guy," Harris said. He walked over to the window. "Easier to draw pictures than write any time. This place is certainly nicer than mine," he added suddenly, looking out the window. "Mine's a *hole in the wall*" (p. 54-55, my italics).

The *double entendre* of this last statement can be both suspicious and unsettling. As Harris downplays his place of residence, still acting modest and feeble, he makes an enigmatic reference to the damaged walls in the previous living quarters known to have been inhabited by him mentioned in "The Daemon Lover". In that apartment, with "bare lathe on the walls" (p. 27), there were bags of plaster, piles of old newspapers and a broken trunk, plus: "there was a noise which she [the unnamed protagonist of "The Daemon Lover"] suddenly realized as a rat, and then she saw it, sitting very close to her, near the wall, its evil face alert, bright eyes watching her" (p. 27) – the portrayal of the rat is reminiscent of that same animal's appearance in Bram Stoker's 1891 short story *"The Judges's House":* "the great rat with baleful eyes" (1992, p. 42) that would "disappear through a hole (…) on the wall" (1992, p. 39). It is possibly also not a coincidence that Stoker's most famous character was able to change into animal form for disguise. Jackson was certainly aware of that. The

broken trunk and the coffin Dracula slept in may also not be coincidental. On the other hand, the expression "hole in the wall" *is* a known American idiom and the presence of plaster may simply indicate the apartment was under repairs. The ambiguity is ingenious.

Harris asks Hilda if she is an artist too: "'no,' Miss Clarence said. She took a deep breath. 'dancer,' she said" (55). At the same time Hilda sees an opportunity to *live* the life she has dreamed but could not achieve – even if fictionally and temporarily – her acting may be viewed as something positive, because it is cathartic. It may also be viewed negatively. The experienced Jackson reader – without any intention of being a moralist – perceives this scene with darker, more detrimental undertones; in other words, as the constitution and achievement of a *lie*, recognized as so mainly due to the demonic presence and influence of James Harris himself. Certainly, if it were not for his attendance on that locale, Miss Clarence would not have had the opportunity of exercising this untruth – harmless as it admittedly was, but a lie nevertheless. The mere creation of the opportunity from Harris's part fits his profile consummately in the SJL, in the sense that, wherever he goes, he brings along lies and deceit – which seldom are devoid of deleterious harm. In this case, Hilda escaped fairly free from harm. She goes home with nothing but an uncomely reminder, unsuspectingly rubbed on her face, that she did not succeed in life.

Along this line of thinking, even what seems like a completely innocent conversation gains an undercurrent of evil:

> "Dancer," she said.
> He smiled again, pleasantly. "I might have known," he said.
> "When I came in."
> Miss Clarence laughed modestly.
> "It must be wonderful," he said.
> "It's hard," Miss Clarence said.
> "It must be. You had much *luck* so far?"
> "Not much," Miss Clarence said.
> "I guess that's the way everything is," he said (p. 55, my italics).

Harris does not waste the opportunity of letting Hilda know that she has failed – and of embarrassing her to boot. Additionally, his choice of words is emblematic, for he does not ask if she has succeeded, he asks if she has had any *luck*, perhaps referencing another idiomatic expression typically associated with creatures of his sort, i.e., *devil's luck*. The conversation suddenly turns to cooking; and more:

> "I can't eat breakfast out, though. That's one thing I can't do," he said.
> "Do you make your own?"
> "I try to," he said. "I'm the worst cook in the world. But it's better than going out. *What I need is a wife*" (p. 55, my italics).

It can be said that his concealed intention, which is a very revealing trace of the character in the SJL, is alas announced; as the words of James Harris from Child's work: "And now I am returnd[sic] again; To take thee to my wife; And thou with me shalt go to sea; To end all further strife" (CHILD, 1857 apud NØRJORDET, 2005, p. 127). Climactically, a tragic finale indeed; however, in "The Villager", Harris leaves the apartment wishing Hilda and her (imaginary) husband nothing but good luck – what is, to the experienced Jackson reader, a relief. Although he effectively leaves her physically unharmed – with but aching shoulders – the narrator does not mention her emotional state of mind, besides: "the soreness that her [dance] pose caused will stay with her in even more debilitating ways" (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 32). In addition, "[in "The Villager"] the discomfort he inflicts is mild compared to his impact in earlier stories" (HALL, 1993, p. 18). She eventually flees the apartment before the arranged time and leaves a note saying that she had waited until three-thirty – another lie – and that she will not buy any of the furniture. She tacks the message up on the door and goes home; her shoulders still aching – an altogether small price to pay after going face to face with a misogynistic demon.

This ending makes Hilda Clarence the perfect hero of the classic Gothic form as established by M.R. James. She is a lady of "mildly interrogatory bent" and what "lures [her] to the vicinity of the ghost is (…) intellectual curiosity and occasionally, greed" (MILLER, 2006, p. ix). Laura Muller exacted this comparison with Eleanor Vance, the protagonist from *The Haunting of Hill House*, but the description seems to fit Clarence with uncanny adequacy. In this sense, Clarence is "just someone inclined to put [her]self in the wrong place at the wrong time, and to rue the consequences" (MILLER, 2006, p. ix). Interestingly, in that same tradition, what lures the ghost (in this case, the demon) is the hero's tendency to "meddle, to open the sealed room, to root around for treasure, to pocket a souvenir" (MILLER, 2006, p. ix) and that is exactly what Hilda does, she enters a house which is not her own in search for material possessions, a treasure if you will, and she pockets a souvenir which may just be almost too heavy for her to carry. Interestingly, what draws Hilda to the apartment is a newspaper ad, the same bait that attracts Eleanor Vance to Hill House (though I prefer to think the house itself attracted her).

A significant number of thematic elements that constitute the Shirley Jackson Lore manifest through barely tangible means. In this sense, the novice Jackson reader does not have the elements that must be carefully harvested during the reading of the author's other stories. To this reader, the story may as well simply end with: "Harris leav[ing] without

buying any furniture; Hilda leav[ing] shortly thereafter [and] that is all there is to the story" (JOSHI, 2001, p. 37). On the other hand, the experienced Jackson reader perceives a pugnacious encounter with a hostile creature that ends with acceptable casualty, Hilda's self-esteem. Jackson portrays much more than "a woman's loss of her dreams in the mundane realities of life and the ease with which she can indulge in wish-fulfillment fantasies of what she might have been" (JOSHI, 2001, p. 37). Harris's damage is done: "Hilda briefly relives some of her dreams and ambitions and then leaves, a bit sadder and a bit more lonely" (FRIEDMAN, 1975, p. 63) – and the demon, with his mission accomplished. Without this knowledge of the supernatural, the story has other flavor.

The meanings and the messages are *there*, like Poe's purloined letter, hidden in plain sight, on the surface of the texts, nonetheless, not even the most proficient of readers can access them without being familiar with Jackson's other texts. It is also important to realize that these are not simply recurring thematic elements, more than that, they may radically alter one's perception of a story. Jackson's texts have been accused of simple, of having no depths, and therefore, would not bear rereading (BLOOM, 2001). American critic Harold Bloom could not have been more wrong when he wrote that reading one text by Jackson, in that case, the short story *"The Lottery"*, is "as though we are at a magic show and we can see all the wires that ought to be invisible" (2001, p. 9). Reading one story may allow the novice reader to see the wires. Reading more than one provides insight into the puppeteer's mind, into his or her creative world; in Jackson's case, into her mythological universe and, if nothing else, into the bewitching crypto-thematic concurrences which are, in the least, illuminating.

CONCLUSION

When a novelist writes two novels, one is not necessarily cut out to help interpreting the other. Sometimes writers go out of their way not to make two works similar. Ms. Jackson went great lengths to establish an overarching intertextual web that made her stories three-dimensional. This feature provided Jackson's work with a special characteristic, i.e. her own work is potentially its best critic, in other words, it carries the ideal theoretical material with which to expose the secrets of its composition and consequently highlight its strengths. The greatest shame to Ms. Jackson's posterity is perhaps how critics have, for the most part, missed this potential. This thesis attempted a wide ranging survey into the critical legacy, and found few hints that pointed to a holistic understanding of Ms. Jackson's oeuvre. The awareness of the unifying devices that compose what has been called here the Shirley Jackson Lore is purported to be on one of the contributions of the present endeavor. This research, however, perhaps better lays the foundation for the enormous task of cross-analyzing each and every Jackson story than it does at actual analysis – especially because only four short stories out of more than one hundred have been selected as corpus.

It is important to highlight here that the selection of these four tales ("The Intoxicated", "The Daemon Lover", "Like Mother Used to Make" and "The Villager") was idealized according to a carefully thought group of criteria, one that allowed for an optimal onset for the cross-referencing of thematic elements, in other words, one that acquiesced the capture of the maximum exemplars of the cryptic-concurrent message-meanings. The choice was, therefore, not at random; even though it *could* have been, considering that the mark of the writer is so strong that it is visible, in varying degrees, in any of her works. By the term *mark* one should understand the features that compose the SJL. In the case of these four stories, with special attention to the following issues: a) displacement; b) alter-egos; and c) James Harris.

As for the idea of displacement as a component of the SJL, one can note that the four stories "repeat in a minor scale the notes of shock and dislocation sounded in "The Intoxicated"" (HALL, 1993, p. 14). Their main characters are "thrown off balance and scramble to secure an identity" and at times can resolve this crisis only by "assuming another identity" (HALL, 1993, p. 14). The drunken guest in "The Intoxicated" struggles to maintain a detached adult attitude before the little girl Eileen; the unnamed bride-to-be from "The Daemon Lover" struggles to be (considered) sane – by others and by herself; David struggles

to be the man Marcia wants him to be in “Like Mother Used to Make”; and Hilda Clarence struggles to be, even if only for a second, the successful dancer she always desired to be in “The Villager”. They are all displaced from their own identities and forced by circumstances to assume another identity while trying to achieve balance between their own wishes and that of the other’s.

In the SJL, displacement usually leads down one of two paths: disintegration/dissociation of identity or the doubling/splitting of personality. As far as form is concerned, Jackson achieves these effects by destabilizing the third-person narration by immersing the story in the point of view of a character (often an unreliable one). The narration sometimes slides in and out of second person, thereby merging narrator, point-of-view character and reader (HATTENHAUER, 2003). The effect is successful when the reader struggles to make sense of various possible explanations while still receiving more and more information to help balance (or unbalance) his or her decision. Sometimes matters are made worse when a character undergoes psychic disintegration in a setting that is also disintegrating. That is what happens with the unnamed protagonist of “The Daemon Lover”, who can barely hold on to her sanity in a place that hinders her goals more than it helps her. Mr. Royster, the man from the newsstand, who answers the beat-up woman’s question talking into the magazine he is holding and later in the delicatessen where the man behind the counter seems to be more interested in his newspaper than in the woman’s inquiries. And, of course, James Harris plays an essential role there too, by not answering the door she insistently knocks on (assuming he was inside the room, that is).

The doubling of personality that David undergoes in “Like Mother Used to Make” stems from Jackson’s own understanding of *aboulia*, a medical term (coined by Doctor Morton Prince) that denotes “an inhibition of will by which a person is unable to do what he actually wishes to do” (In: HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 131). This condition explains that David was not only willing to accept Marcia’s and Harris’s intrusion but was physically incapacitated to confront them. An obsessive-compulsive just like David, Shirley was many times unable to refrain from engaging in activities that were self-destructive (overeating, smoking too much, and drinking too much). On the bright side, this same condition made her unable to refrain from producing creatively (and for that readers can only be grateful for her disease): “no wonder she is unsurpassed at representing the sense of being controlled by demons that seem to originate outside the body or outside consciousness. Her diminished choice was both her blessing and her curse” (HATTENHAUER, 2003, p. 131).

The doubling of personality that Hilda Clarence undergoes in “The Villager” stems from the same condition, she had no choice but to assume the role of Nancy Roberts, the owner of the apartment whose furniture she was looking to buy, after all Nancy was supposedly leading the life that she wished was hers *and* James Harris happened to trigger the optimal chance.

Seventeen-year-old Eileen in “The Intoxicated” succeeds in creating internal psychological turmoil in the inebriated guest but does not achieve personality-splitting or character-disintegration. The older man is perhaps sufficiently intoxicated to safeguard his wits from the mind-boggling prophecies announced by the precocious kid. It just so happens that James Harris had not come into the picture as yet.

Interestingly, the displacement that disintegrates identities and splits personalities and ultimately leads to the creation of alter egos are always, in the SJL, prompted and activated by that mysterious tall man in the blue suit.

Historically, James Harris operates as a warning with a menacing tone to married women. The medieval James Harris myth is still one of the most tragic cases of jealousy and betrayal, revealing in its lines the weakness and frailty of the man who feels the need to impose his will through strength in order to conquer his betrothed. His legend has received various artistic manifestations throughout history. It is also referred to as *The Demon Lover* myth. Among the earliest representations are the ones found in English and Scottish popular ballads[30].

These ballads tell the story of a demon who, in the guise of a man, returns to his country after a long period of absence at sea. Upon arrival he finds his betrothed married to another man, a house carpenter, usually, and with children. Harris seduces her offering ships full of gold so that she runs away with him back to the ocean. She assents and leaves her husband and kids to meet (in the majority of the versions) an empty ship with no wealth and no crew. They then sail to high-seas and meet their tragic fate, generally a violent death. The register considered official by most scholars, ballad 243, is that which integrates Francis James Child’s monumental work entitled *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, originally published in five volumes between the years 1882 and 1898. Child’s opus is, however, not the first to register this chilling tale, but it is admittedly counted as the most influential. In popular culture the myth of James Harris is immortalized in several artistic manifestations, among them theatrical productions (both Professional and amateur), musical

[30] See Annex 1.

plays and dance numbers. It is in the music world that one finds the most celebrated representations, with special mention to the song entitled *The House Carpenter*, sung by various artists of various countries (e.g. Joan Baez and Natalie Merchant). The legend also receives important versions in the visual arts and in literature. Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen is an example of the latter. Her version takes place in London during the Second World War, though. Shirley Jackson's version takes place in no specific time or place (supposedly in mid-twentieth century America) and Harris occupies main roles as well as secondary and even incidental roles. His presence, however, brings ubiquitous supernatural danger to all artistic environments, often corrupting the familiar, domestic, innocent milieu mixing family and quotidian with terror and vengeance.

The practical critical attitudes applied in the interpretations of these stories were meant to highlight the interrelatedness that binds all of Ms. Jackson's fictional texts. These critical attitudes borrowed principles from several distinct literary-theoretical approaches. From Reader's Response criticism the idea that a text does not have a set meaning is borrowed, thus the current interpretation effort was guided by the notion that meaning comes from the reader rather than from the text *per se*. In other words, it is the reader's competence to retrieve dormant or latent meanings that the text relies on. Just as it is the belief that two different readers can (and normally do) have different interpretations; likewise, it is the belief that a reader who re-reads the same text can (and normally does) find it (perhaps radically) different in the second(or third or fourth) reading. One of the prevalent hypotheses is exactly that the second reading will be shockingly different from the previous if other texts by the same author are read in that interval. Contact with these other texts by the same author composes the reader's background and affects his or her interpretation during the re-reading procedure. It also informs the choice of the two hypothetical readers, the "novice Jackson reader" and the "experienced Jackson reader". In a sense, a formalist view was adopted, but only to determine how certain dormant or latent meanings work together with the text's content to shape its effects upon the reader. Also, biographical information on the author was sought after in order to discuss and arbitrate Jackson's potential view of the world and consequently its effect in the texts under scrutiny; therefore, Jackson's life experiences and their influence in her creative production were considered a critical factor. At the same time, Jackson's social and cultural contexts are investigated, in historical-critical fashion, as to the effects of the literary works under analysis upon their original readers (i.e., readers at the time of their original publishing). The purposes of the texts of the corpus were not questioned, but how issues such as how they reflect their society were considered fundamental during their appraisals. Though

feminist criticism was not exacted *per se*, the treatment of gender roles received some attention. Though psychological criticism was certainly not the focus, a study of the motivations for the behaviors of the characters was attempted – as were issues regarding neuroses, multiple personalities and other mental disorders (all at introductory levels). Mythological criticism was skimmed during the discussion of the supernatural elements contained in Jackson's fiction, such as the culture of demons[31] and their ramifications. The resulting critique, a *pot-pourri* of disparate but hopefully complementary critical views never before pursued in this fashion.

[31] "Culture of demons" is referred to here as a generic umbrella-term that encompasses myths, beliefs or studies that make direct or indirect reference to (the worshipping of) demonic creatures, and not necessarily any particular branch of theology and/or organized/systematic investigation of the subject.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Shirley Jackson's Registers

Library of Congress

There is a register of her papers safeguarded inside a repository localized in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.. It was prepared by Grover Batts and revised and expanded by Michael McElderry with the assistance of Scott McLemee in 1993. There are, in total, 7,400 items distributed in 51 containers amounting to 20.4 linear feet. The title, in the collection summary, is *Papers of Shirley Jackson* and the documents span the dates of 1932 to 1970. They are mainly correspondence, diaries, journals, notes, and outlines relating chiefly to the development of Ms. Jackson's short stories. The documents were given to the Library of Congress by her husband, Stanley Edgar Hyman, in 1967. Subsequent material was taken from the *Stanley Edgar Hyman Papers*, which were donated by Hyman's second wife, Phoebe Pettingell, in 1979. There was an addition of several items in 1991 and yet additional material was incorporated into the collection in 1993. They are divided in Part I and Part II.

Part I holds approximately four hundred items under a *Family Correspondence* series which include letters Ms. Jackson received from her parents, Leslie H. and Geraldine B. Jackson, from 1944 through 1965 and photocopies of Ms. Jackson's letters to her parents from 1948 through 1965. There is a General Correspondence series containing about 2,700 letters she received from her literary agents, personal friends, and the general public. There are also a few outgoing letters written by herself in this group. The majority of the papers comprise a *Literary Manuscripts* series consisting of Jackson's short stories, articles, and books in the form of original manuscripts, typescripts, and printed galleys. Finally there is a *Miscellaneous* series consisting of Ms. Jackson's college notebooks through the years of 1937 to 1940 and many watercolors and drawings in pencil and ink.

Part II holds papers that cover the period from 1932 to 1970, with the bulk of the material dated between 1938 and 1965. It included a diary kept by Jackson as a high-school student as well as correspondence with family and friends. There are also manuscripts demonstrating the conception and the development of many of her novels and short stories. Titles include *Come Along With Me, Famous Sally,* and *Nine Magic Wishes.* One of the most interesting and significant files holds a series of letters written to Ms. Jackson by who would be her future husband, Stanley Edgar Hyman, while they both were still at Syracuse University. In the *Family Papers* there are texts containing:

> sentiments that veer from the intellectually precocious to the sexually suggestive, the letters reflect the converging interests and emotional commitment of the couple and suggest both the endearing and passionate elements that would be characteristic of their relationship throughout their lives (Batts, 1993, p. 5).

More letters can be found in the *Stanley Edgar Hyman Papers* in the Manuscript Division of the same library. There are also *Family Papers* containing letters written to her by her parents - some suggesting the relationship with Geraldine, her mother, that would influence Ms. Jackson's personal philosophy and, consequently, her *oeuvre*; and a *Correspondence* series containing letters, from and to, family, friends, agents, publishers, literary agents and fans. Regarding the fan's letters, this series contains the famous and infamous inquiries from the public that sought clarification regarding the inspiration and interpretation of some of her works, most notably the grisly tale *"*The Lottery*"*. The *Literary File* contains manuscript drafts, notes, and outlines that document the creation, development, and execution of some of Ms. Jackson's novels and stories, rendering them specially suitable for the researcher who wishes to analyze the evolution of her form and style.

University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

At the Special Collections Department of the University of Colorado at Boulder Library system, under the title *Shirley Jackson Papers (MS 336), ca.1949-ca.1965*, there is one box, 3 inches thick, with twenty-five folders containing manuscripts and early drafts of stories by Ms. Jackson. The collection is comprised of original and carbon typescripts from short stories, essays, notes and drafts by Ms. Jackson and many of the individual typescripts have pencil holograph corrections and her notes. Even though the collection is open for

consultation, limited duplication of materials is allowed for research purposes only. The manuscripts were purchased jointly by Special Collections and Literature and Women's Studies in 1998 (SHIRLEY JACKSON PAPERS, 2008).

Appendix B: University of Rochester

The University of Rochester (a.k.a. UR) is a private, nonsectarian, research university located in Rochester, in the state of New York. It was founded in 1850 as a Baptist-sponsored institution, though nowadays it is officially non-sectarian.

The first women students were admitted only in 1900, as the result of an effort of Susan B. Anthony and Helen Barrett Montgomery. In the previous decade many women attended classes as “visitors” for they were not allowed to enroll nor their records were included in the university’s registers.

The UR’s, then, president David Jayne Hill, allowed the first woman, Helen E. Wilkinson, to enroll as a normal student, even though she was curiously not authorized to matriculate nor to pursue a degree. In the first decade of the twentieth century, thirty-three women were able to enroll and student Ella S. Wilcoxen was the first to receive a degree, in 1901.

In 1930, the new *campus,* known as “River Campus”, was finished and inaugurated, so that male students could moved there, whereas the female students remained on the University Avenue campus until 1955, the year the separate colleges for men and women merged into The College. Thus, when Ms. Jackson studied there it was a “girls’ only” college.

In the university’s official website, Ms. Jackson’s name is mentioned, *en passant,* in a list of former brilliant alumni by professor Jay Lavigne from the Department of English, instructor of the course “Reading the Tradition: University of Rochester Writers”.*

Sources:
http://www.rochester.edu/
http://writing.rochester.edu/courses/2001/fall2001.html*
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Rochester
(Access on March 1st, 2010)

Appendix C: Syracuse University

Syracuse University (a.k.a. SU, a.k.a. Syracuse and a.k.a. the 'Cuse) is a private research university located in Syracuse, in the state of New York. It was founded in 1870, as a university, though its roots date back to the foundation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1832 the year which the “Genesee Wesleyan Seminary” was founded. The seminar was located in Lima, New York, south of Rochester. In 1850, it expanded into “Genesee College”. Years later, after a dispute between ministers and the state of New York, it was finally established in the city of Syracuse, where it became the nucleus of present day SU. Since 1920, the university has identified itself as nonsectarian.

Even though female students attended classes in the early days of Genesee College, some important example are suffragists Frances Willard and Belva Lockwood, when the *campus* moved to Syracuse, the progressive “co-ed” policies soon began to find controversy. Administrators and faculty, in fact, argued that women had inferior minds and could not master mathematics and the classics. Few universities admitted very few women students in the 1870’s. It was only in the mandate of Chancellor Erastus Otis Haven, which began in 1874, that women began to find acceptance in SU. Dr. Haven maintained that women should receive the advantages of higher education and enrolled his own daughter, Frances, who was then initiated in the newly formed *Gamma Phi Beta* sorority.

Among distinguished alumni in the field of literature, besides Ms. Jackson, Joyce Carol Oates and even Stephen Crane studied there, though the latter confessed being there more to play baseball than to study. Mr. Crane stayed only one semester.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Child Ballad 243[32]: “James Harris (The Daemon Lover)”

Child’s ballad 243 (with all its variants, listed from A to H) are reproduced below[33].

A[34]

“A Warning for Married Women, being an example of Mrs. Jane Reynolds (a West-country woman), born near Plymouth, who, having plighted her troth to a Seaman, was afterwards married to a Carpenter, and at last carried away by a Spirit, the manner how shall presently be recited,” Pepys Ballads, iv, 101; from a copy in Percy’s papers.

A.1
1 THERE dwelt a fair maid in the West,
2 Of worthy birth and fame,
3 Neer unto Plimouth, stately town,
4 Jane Reynolds was her name.
A.2
1 This damsel dearly was belovd
2 By many a proper youth,
3 And what of her is to be said
4 In known for very truth.
A.3
1 Among the rest a seaman brave
2 Unto her a wooing came;
3 A comely proper youth he was,
4 James Harris calld by name.
A.4
1 The maid and young man was agreed,
2 As time did them allow,
3 And to each other secretly
4 They made a solemn vow,
A.5

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[32] Full text available at: <http://www.colorado.edu/ArtsSciences/CCRH/Ballads/ballads.html>. Access on 13 July 2012.
[33] Text within brackets are Child’s own emendations.
[34] Adapted from Nørjordet (2005).

1 That they would ever faithfull be
2 Whilst Heaven afforded life;
3 He was to be her husband kind,
4 And she his faithfull wife.
A.6
1 A day appointed was also
2 When they was to be married;
3 But before these things were brought to pass
4 Matters were strangely carried.
A.7
1 All you that faithfull lovers be
2 Give ear and hearken well,
3 And what of them became at last
4 I will directly tell.
A.8
1 The young man he was prest to sea,
2 And forcëd was to go;
3 His sweet-heart she must stay behind,
4 Whether she would or no.
A.9
1 And after he was from her gone
2 She three years for him staid,
3 Expecting of his comeing home,
4 And kept herself a maid.
A.10
1 At last news came that he was dead
2 Within a forraign land,
3 And how that he was buried
4 She well did understand,
A.11
1 For whose sweet sake the maiden she
2 Lamented many a day,
3 And never was she known at all
4 The wanton for to play.
A.12
1 A carpenter that livd hard by,
2 When he heard of the same,
3 Like as the other had done before,
4 To her a wooing came.
A.13
1 But when that he had gained her love
2 They married were with speed,
3 And four years space, being man and wife,
4 They loveingly agreed.
A.14
1 Three pritty children in this time
2 This loving couple had,
3 Which made their father’s heart rejoyce,
4 And mother wondrous glad.
A.15

1 But as occasion servd, one time
2 The good man took his way
3 Some three days journey from his home,
4 Intending not to stay.
A.16
1 But, whilst that he was gone away,
2 A spirit in the night
3 Came to the window of his wife,
4 And did her sorely fright.
A.17
1 Which spirit spake like to a man,
2 And unto her did say,
3 'My dear and onely love,' quoth he,
4 'Prepare and come away.
A.18
1 'James Harris is my name,' quoth he,
2 'Whom thou didst love so dear,
3 And I have traveld for thy sake
4 At least this seven year.
A.19
1 'And now I am returnd again,
2 To take thee to my wife,
3 And thou with me shalt go to sea,
4 To end all further strife.'
A.20
1 'O tempt me not, sweet James,' quoth she,
2 'With thee away to go;
3 If I should leave my children small,
4 Alas! what would they do?
A.21
1 'My husband is a carpenter,
2 A carpenter of great fame;
3 I would not for five hundred pounds
4 That he should know the same.'
A.22
1 'I might have had a king's daughter,
2 And she would have married me;
3 But I forsook her golden crown,
4 And for the love of thee.
A.23
1 'Therefore, if thou'lt thy husband forsake,
2 And thy children three also,
3 I will forgive the[e] what is past,
4 If thou wilt with me go.'
A.24
1 'If I forsake my husband and
2 My little children three,
3 What means hast thou to bring me to,
4 If I should go with thee?'
A.25

1 ‘I have seven ships upon the sea;
2 When they are come to land,
3 Both marriners and marchandize
4 Shall be at thy command.

A.26

1 ‘The ship wherein my love shall sail
2 Is glorious to behold;
3 The sails shall be of finest silk,
4 And the mast of shining gold.’

A.27

1 When he had told her these fair tales,
2 To love him she began,
3 Because he was in human shape,
4 Much like unto a man.

A.28

1 And so together away they went
2 From off the English shore,
3 And since that time the woman-kind
4 Was never seen no more.

A.29

1 But when her husband he come home
2 And found his wife was gone,
3 And left her three sweet pretty babes
4 Within the house alone,

A.30

1 He beat his breast, he tore his hair,
2 The tears fell from his eyes,
3 And in the open streets he run
4 With heavy doleful cries.

A.31

1 And in this sad distracted case
2 He hangd himself for woe
3 Upon a tree near to the place;
4 The truth of all is so.

A.32

1 The children now are fatherless,
2 And left without a guide,
3 But yet no doubt the heavenly powers
4 Will for them well provide

B

“The Distressed Ship-Carpenter,” The Rambler’s Garland, British Museum, 11621, c. 4 (57). 1785 (?)

B.1

1 ‘WELL met, well met, my own true love,
2 Long time I have been seeking thee;
3 I am lately come from the salt sea,

4 And all for the sake, love, of thee.
B.2
1 'I might have had a king's daughter,
2 And fain she would have married me;
3 But I've forsaken all her crowns of gold,
4 And all for the sake, love, of thee.'
B.3
1 'If you might have had a king's daughter,
2 I think you much to blame;
3 I would not for five hundred pounds
4 That my husband should hear the same.
B.4
1 'For my husband is a carpenter,
2 And a young ship-carpenter is he,
3 And by him I have a little son,
4 Or else, love, I'd go along with thee.
B.5
1 'But if I should leave my husband dear,
2 Likewise my little son also,
3 What have you to maintain me withal,
4 If I along with you should go?'
B.6
1 'I have seven ships upon the seas,
2 And one of them brought me to land,
3 And seventeen mariners to wait on thee,
4 For to be, love, at your command.
B.7
1 'A pair of slippers thou shalt have,
2 They shall be mad of beaten gold,
3 Nay and be lin'd with velvet soft,
4 For to keep thy feet from cold.
B.8
1 'A gilded boat thou then shall have,
2 The oars shall gilded be also,
3 And mariners to row the[e] along,
4 For to keep thee from thy overthrow.'
B.9
1 They had not been long upon the sea
2 Before that she began to weep:
3 'What, weep you for my gold?' he said,
4 'Or do you weep for my fee?
B.10
1 'Or do you weep for some other young man
2 That you love much better than me?'
3 'No, I do weep for my little son,
4 That should have come along with me.'
B.11
1 She had not been upon the seas
2 Passing days three or four
3 But the mariner and she were drowned,

4 And never were heard of more.
B.12
1 When tidings to old England came
2 The ship-carpenter's wife was drownd,
3 He wrung his hands and tore his hair,
4 And grievously fell in a swoon.
B.13
1 'Oh cursed be those mariners!
2 For they do lead a wicked life;
3 They ruind me, a ship-carpenter,
4 Be deluding away my wife.'

C
"James Herries," Buchan's Ballads of the North of Scotland, i, 214.

C.1
1 'O ARE ye my father? Or are ye my mother?
2 Or are ye my brother John?
3 Or are ye James Herries, my first true-love,
4 Come back to Scotland again?'
C.2
1 'I am not your father, I am not your mother,
2 Nor am I your brother John;
3 But I'm James Herries, your first true-love,
4 Come back to Scotland again.'
C.3
1 'Awa, awa, ye former lovers,
2 Had far awa frae me!
3 For now I am another man's wife
4 Ye'll neer see joy o me.'
C.4
1 'Had I kent that ere I came here,
2 I neer had come to thee;
3 For I might hae married the king's daughter,
4 Sae fain she woud had me.
C.5
1 'I despised the crown o gold,
2 The yellow silk also,
3 And I am come to my true-love,
4 But with me she'll not go.'
C.6
1 'My husband he is a carpenter,
2 Makes his bread on dry land,
3 And I hae born him a young son;
4 Wi you I will not gang.'
C.7
1 'You must forsake your dear husband,
2 Your little young son also,

3 Wi me to sail the raging seas,
4 Where the stormy winds do blow.'
C.8
1 'O what hae you to keep me wi,
2 If I should with you go,
3 If I'd forsake my dear husband,
4 My little young son also?'
C.9
1 'See ye not yon seven pretty ships?
2 The eighth brought me to land,
3 With merchandize and mariners,
4 And wealth in every hand.'
C.10
1 She turnd her round upon the shore
2 Her love's ships to behold;
3 Their topmasts and their mainyards
4 Were coverd oer wi gold.
C.11
1 Then she's gane to her little young son,
2 And kissd him cheek and chin;
3 Sae has she to her sleeping husband,
4 And dune the same to him.
C.12
1 'O sleep ye, wake ye, my husband?
2 I wish ye wake in time!
3 I woudna for ten thousand pounds
4 This night ye knew my mind.'
C.13
1 She's drawn the slippers on her feet,
2 Were coverd oer wi gold,
3 Well lined within wi velvet fine,
4 To had her frae the cold.
C.14
1 She hadna sailed upon the sea
2 A league but barely three
3 Till she minded on her dear husband,
4 Her little young son tee.
C.15
1 'O gin I were at land again,
2 At land where I woud be,
3 The woman neer shoud bear the son
4 Shoud gar me sail the sea.'
C.16
1 'O hold your tongue, my sprightly flower,
2 Let a' your mourning be;
3 I'll show you how the liles grow
4 On the banks o Italy.'
C.17
1 She hadna sailed on the sea
2 A day but barely ane

3 Till the thoughts o grief came in her mind,
4 And she langd for to be hame.
C.18
1 ‘O gentle death, come cut my breath,
2 I may be dead ere morn!
3 I may be buried in Scottish ground,
4 Where I was bred and born!’
appendix a 131
C.19
1 ‘O hold your tongue, my lily leesome thing,
2 Let a’ your mourning be;
3 But for a while we’ll stay at Rose Isle,
4 Then see a far countrie.
C.20
1 Ye’se neer be buried in Scottish ground,
2 Nor land ye’s nae mair see;
3 I brought you away to punish you
4 For the breaking your vows to me.
C.21
1 ‘I said ye shoud see the lilies grow
2 On the banks o Italy;
3 But I’ll let you see the fishes swim,
4 In the bottom o the sea.’
C.22
1 He reached his hand to the topmast,
2 Made a’ the sails gae down,
3 And in the twinkling o an ee
4 Baith ship and crew did drown.
C.23
1 The fatal flight o this wretched maid
2 Did reach her ain countrie;
3 Her husband then distracted ran,
4 And this lament made he:
C.24
1 ‘O wae be to the ship, the ship,
2 And wae be to the sea,
3 And wae be to the mariners
4 Took Jeanie Douglas frae me!
C.25
1 ‘O bonny, bonny was my love,
2 A pleasure to behold;
3 The very hair o my love’s head
4 Was like the threads o gold.
C.26
1 ‘O bonny was her cheek, her cheek,
2 And bonny was her chin,
3 And bonny was the bride she was,
4 The day she was made mine!’

D
“The Carpenter’sWife,” Kinoch mss, i, 297; from the recitation of T. Kinnear, Stonehaven.
D.1
1 ‘O WHARE hae ye been, my dearest dear,
2 These seven lang years and more?’
3 ‘O I am come to seek my former vows,
4 That ye promisd me before.’
D.2
1 ‘Awa wi your former vows,’ she says,
2 ‘Or else ye will breed strife;
3 Awa wi your former vows,’ she says,
4 ‘For I’m become a wife.
D.3
1 ‘I am married to a ship-carpenter,
2 A ship-carpenter he’s bound;
3 I wadna he kend my mind this nicht
4 For twice five hundred pound.’ ’ ’ ’ ’ ’
D.4
1 She has put her foot on gude ship-board,
2 And on ship-board she’s gane,
3 And the veil that hung oure her face
4 Was a’ wi gowd begane.
D.5
1 She had na sailed a league, a league,
2 A league, but barely twa,
3 Till she did mind on the husband she left,
4 And her wee young son alsua.
D.6
1 ‘O haud your tongue, my dearest dear,
2 Let all your follies abee;
3 I’ll show whare the white lillies grow,
4 On the banks of Italie.’
D.7
1 She has na sailed a league, a league,
2 A league but barely three,
3 Till grim, grim grew his countenance,
4 And gurly grew the sea.
D.8
1 ‘O haud your tongue, my dearest dear,
2 Let all your follies abee;
3 I’ll show whare the white lillies grow,
4 In the bottom of the sea.’
D.9
1 He’s tane her by the milk-white hand,
2 And he’s thrown her in the main;
3 And full five-and-twenty hundred ships
4 Perishd all on the coast of Spain

E

“The Dæmon Lover,” Motherwell’s ms., p. 97

E.1
1 ‘WHERE have you been, my long lost lover,
2 This seven long years and more?’
3 ‘I’ve been seeking gold for thee, my love,
4 And riches of great store.
E.2
1 ‘Now I’m come for the vows you promised me,
2 You promised me long ago;’
3 ‘My former vows you must forgive,
4 For I’m a wedded wife.’
E.3
1 ‘I might have been married to a king’s daughter,
2 Far, far ayont the sea;
3 But I refused the crown of gold,
4 And it’s all for the love of thee.’
E.4
1 ‘If you might have married a king’s daughter,
2 Yourself you have to blame;
3 For I’m married to a ship’s-carpenter,
4 And to him I have a son.
E.5
1 ‘Have you any place to put me in,
2 If I with you should gang?’
3 ‘I’ve seven brave ships upon the sea,
4 All laden to the brim.
E.6
1 ‘I’ll build my love a bridge of steel,
2 All for to help her oer;
3 Likewise webs of silk down by her side,
4 To keep my love from the cold.’
E.7
1 She took her eldest son into her arms,
2 And sweetly did him kiss:
3 ‘My blessing go with you, and your father too,
4 For little does he know of this.’
E.8
1 As they were walking up the street,
2 Most beautiful for to Behold,
3 He cast a glamour oer her face,
4 And it shone like the brightest gold.
E.9
1 As they were walking along the sea-side,
2 Where his gallant ship lay in,
3 So ready was the chair of gold
4 To welcome this lady in.
E.10
1 They had not sailed a league, a league,

2 A league but scarsely three,
3 Till altered grew his countenance,
4 And raging grew the sea.
E.11
1 When they came to yon sea-side,
2 She set her down to rest;
3 It’s then she spied his cloven foot,
4 Most bitterly she wept.
E.12
1 ‘O is it for gold that you do weep?
2 Or is it for fear?
3 Or is it for the man you left behind
4 When that you did come here?’
E.13
1 ‘It is not for gold that I do weep,
2 O no, nor yet for fear;
3 But it is for the man I left behind
4 When that I did come here.
E.14
1 ‘O what a bright, bright hill is yon,
2 That shines so clear to see?’
3 ‘O it is the hill of heaven,’ he said
4 ‘Where you shall never be.’
E.15
1 ‘O what a black, dark hill is yon,
2 That looks so dark to me?’
3 ‘O it is the hill of hell,’ he said,
4 ‘Where you and I shall be.
E.16
1 ‘Would you wish to see the fishes swim
2 In the bottom of the sea,
3 Or wish to see the leaves grow green
4 On the banks of Italy?’
E.17
1 ‘I hope I’ll never see the fishes swim
2 On the bottom of the sea,
3 But I hope to see the leaves grow green
4 On the banks of Italy.’
E.18
1 He took her up to the topmast high,
2 To see what she could see;
3 He sunk the ship in a flash of fire,
4 To the bottom of the sea.

F
“The Dæmon Lover,” Scott’s Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, fifth edition 1812, ii, 427; taken down from the recitation of Walter Grieve by William Laidlaw.

F.1
1 ‘O WHERE have you been, my long, long love,
2 This long seven years and mair?’
3 ‘O I’m come to seek my former vows
4 Ye granted me before.’
F.2
1 ‘O hold your tongue of your former vows,
2 For they will breed sad strife;
3 O hold your tongue of your former vows,
4 For I am become a wife.’
F.3
1 He turned him right and round about,
2 And the tear blinded his ee:
3 ‘I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground,
4 If it had not been for thee.
F.4
1 ‘I might hae had a king’s daughter,
2 Far, far beyond the sea;
3 I might have had a king’s daughter,
4 Had it not been for love o thee.’
F.5
1 ‘If ye might have had a king’s daughter,
2 Yer sel ye had to blame;
3 Ye might have taken the king’s daughter,
4 For ye kend that I was nane.
F.6
1 ‘If I was to leave my husband dear,
2 And my two babes also,
3 O what have you to take me to,
4 If with you I should go?’
F.7
1 ‘I hae seven ships upon the sea——
2 The eighth brought me to land——
3 With four-and-twenty bold mariners,
4 And music on every hand.’
F.8
1 She has taken up her two little babes,
2 Kissd them baith cheek and chin:
3 ‘O fair ye weel, my ain two babes,
4 For I’ll never see you again.’
F.9
1 She set her foot upon the ship,
2 No mariners could she behold;
3 But the sails were o the taffetie,
4 And the masts o the beaten gold.
F.10
1 She had not sailed a league, a league,
2 A league but barely three,
3 When dismal grew his countenance,
4 And drumlie grew his ee.

F.11
1 They had not saild a league, a league,
2 A league but barely three,
3 Until she espied his cloven foot,
4 And she wept right bitterlie.
F.12
1 'O hold your tongue of your weeping,' says he,
2 'Of your weeping now let me be;
3 I will shew you how the lilies grow
4 On the banks of Italy.'
F.13
1 'O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
2 That the sun shines sweetly on?'
3 'O you are the hills of heaven,' he said,
4 'Where you will never win.'
F.14
1 'O whaten a mountain is yon,' she said,
2 'All so dreary wi frost and snow?'
3 'O yon is the mountain of hell,' he cried,
4 'Where you and I will go.'
F.15
1 He strack the tap-mast wi his hand,
2 The fore-mast wi his knee,
3 And he brake that gallant ship in twain,
4 And sank her in the sea.

G
"The Dæmon Lover," Motherwell's Minstrelsy, p. 93.

G.1
1 'I HAVE seven ships upon the sea,
2 Laden with the finest gold,
3 And mariners to wait us upon;
4 All these you may behold.
G.2
1 'And I have shoes for my love's feet,
2 Beaten of the purest gold,
3 And linëd wi the velvet soft,
4 To keep my love's feet from the cold.
G.3
1 'O how do you love the ship?' he said,
2 'Or how do you love the sea?
3 And how do you love the bold mariners
4 That wait upon thee and me?'
G.4
1 'O I do love the ship,' she said,
2 'And I do love the sea;
3 But woe be to the dim mariners,

4 That nowhere I can see!'
G.5
1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but one,
3 When she bagan to weep and mourn,
4 And to think on her little wee son.
G.6
1 'O hold your tongue, my dear,' he said,
2 'And let all your weeping abee,
3 For I'll soon show to you how the lilies grow
4 On the banks of Italy.'
G.7
1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but two,
3 Until she espied his cloven foot,
4 From his gay robes sticking thro.
G.8
1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but three,
3 When dark, dark, grew his eerie looks,
4 And raging grew the sea.
G.9
1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but four,
3 When the little wee ship ran round about,
4 And never was seen more.

H
"The Banks of Italy," Christie, Traditional Ballad Airs, i, 138; taken down by the editor's father from the singing of an aged relative.

H.1
1 HE'S given her a pair of shoes,
2 To hold her frae the cold;
3 The one side of them was velvaret,
4 And the other beaten gold.
H.2
1 Up she has taen her little wee son,
2 And given him kisses three;
3 Says, Fare ye weel, my little wee son,
4 I'm gaun to sail the sea.